

Chapter 21

The Entrepreneurial Intention of Young Trainees in Agricultural Fields in Morocco

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this chapter is to evaluate whether early orientation and education to entrepreneurship for the first time in agricultural vocational training through activities, programs, and education proactively promotes the cognitive processes that encourage trainees to intend to be entrepreneurs. Several empirical studies indicate that education can foster entrepreneurship. Yet the impact of entrepreneurship education programs on entrepreneurial skills and values remains largely unexplored. Therefore, this study uses a survey among students and trainees in agronomic disciplines in three different regions: Meknes (Fes-Meknes region), Marrakech (Marrakech-Safi region), and Ouled Teima (Souss-Massa region). Thus, by using sample counts of 337 individuals, the results highlight the high impact of teaching coaching variables on entrepreneurial intention. Hence, these results are promising in the sustainable sense that they reveal the impact of investment in entrepreneurship education at a given point in time on the pathways of trainees.

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Entrepreneurship is one of the strategic drivers of sustainable development. It contributes to the creation of jobs, the improvement of social conditions, the reduction of spatial inequalities, and the efforts to combat social and environmental problems in the context of the 2030 Agenda (Ibourk, Raoui 2022). In rural areas as a specific case, agricultural entrepreneurship among young people is a challenge in reducing the gap between urban and rural areas (Ibourk, Aynaoui, 2023). The importance of entrepreneurship has been broadly discussed in various fields of study. Entrepreneurship is a process that requires specific skills and attitudes which can be acquired through education, programs, or training (Boussetta, 2013). These can anticipate decisions that only the creator in an entrepreneurial situation can assume and would probably promote the emergence of ideas or business opportunities and the creation of business (Block, 2015).

Upstream of the entrepreneurial process, the intention is a crucial phase that has many factors behind it (Davidsson, 1995). This step can be considered the only determinant and the best predictor of entrepreneurial behavior. Indeed, of the act of creating a business. Entrepreneurial intention is a dependent variable of personal and contextual variables. Entrepreneurial motivations can be categorized into “push” factors or necessity factors and “pull” factors or willingness factors (Amit and Muller, 1995). In the case of students, researchers have indicated that cognition has a higher potential for entrepreneurship intention (Linan and Chen, 2009). There is compelling evidence that cognitive values influence individual perceptions toward venturing. Cognition is a mental act or process of gaining knowledge and understanding through experience, thought, and pleasure.

In this study, we explore the case of Morocco. Since its independence, this developing country with an agricultural vocation has placed agriculture at the heart of its development choices, given the economic, social, and territorial issues raised by this sector. Over the decades, this sector has stood out for its knock-on effects on the national economy through its performance and interactions with other economic sectors. Hence, this is evidenced by its weight in GDP (around 12%) and its status as a provider of jobs for a significant proportion of the population (almost 38% of the employed working people), not forgetting the sector’s central role in some regions of the Kingdom. To this end, agricultural entrepreneurship is not only a means of integrating young people into the job market but also one of the main factors stimulating the agricultural and rural economy.

Today, entrepreneurship undoubtedly plays an essential role in creating wealth in the country’s economic and social fabric, and stimulating the entrepreneurial spirit will significantly contribute to local and regional growth and development. Indeed, for the entrepreneur and the community, entrepreneurship means the start-up of activities and the creation of value to contribute to development, self-fulfillment, and economic development. The spirit of entrepreneurship in Morocco has not always been a priority in the country’s education system. Indeed, Morocco has drawn up the Moroccan National Integrated Youth Strategy (2015-2030), which aims to strengthen the skills of young people and offer them more job opportunities, overhaul the education system to make it more responsive to the job market, and foster the entrepreneurial spirit.

However, despite Morocco’s ongoing efforts and the potential for economic development, some spatial and social scourges persist (Ibourk and Raoui, 2021.2022). Youth unemployment is one of the main problems encountered (CESE, 2018). In 2017, Youth unemployment affected almost 29.3% of young people, 2.8 times higher than the national average (HCP, 2018). Today, strategies to combat unemployment in Morocco, particularly among graduates, are geared towards the entrepreneurial path. Indeed, support and training policies are a strategic means of encouraging upstream the entrepreneurial intention of students and trainees and downstream the entrepreneurial initiatives of graduates of training institutions. Consequently, this study aims to identify whether early guidance and entrepreneurship

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