

ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS: A FACTORIAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract:

The recent financial crisis impacted greatly on the economies, overall, but most importantly on the economic agents' expectation. In addition, the contraction of the economic activity had a significant impact on the employment levels and, thus, the access to job positions seems to be more difficult.

The entrepreneurship alternative may be a consequence of such expectations and it reveals how younger generations see the current economic conditions.

Given these economic conditions, this seems to be the adequate time period to evaluate the graduates' expectations in terms of employment and in what regards their entrepreneurial intention.

In addition to the employment conditions, the economic environment has also caused a significant impact on the domestic demand, with firms searching more intensively for foreign markets. The combination of these two factors has been on the basis of the motivation of this paper.

The aim of this research is to investigate the entrepreneurial intention of higher education students. Our results are based on a survey administrated to 209 students of the Porto Polytechnic in order to investigate the extent to which they consider becoming entrepreneurs and to provide a number of factors explaining their intentions.

Contrary to what one would expect, the results show that, within the students with entrepreneurial intention, very few show an international orientation. Such limitation did not allow understanding the differences between students with international orientations and the remaining. However, factorial analysis was used to group the variables, and the results show that the factors that better characterise the entrepreneurial intention of the students are: self-confidence; risk; international entry; resources and creativity; entrepreneurship; technical abilities of management and entrepreneurs; innovation and information.

Keywords: international entry, entrepreneurial intention, start-ups, Portugal, higher education, risk and innovation