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Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Intention: Investigating the Moderating Role of Psychological Capital in a Tunisian Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship education is widely recognized as a key driver of entrepreneurial intention, yet the psychological mechanisms that shape this relationship remain insufficiently explored, particularly in emerging economies. This study investigates the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention, with a specific focus on the moderating role of psychological capital within the Tunisian context. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from university students enrolled in entrepreneurship-related programs across several Tunisian institutions. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was applied to examine the direct and conditional effects. The findings reveal that entrepreneurship education significantly enhances students' entrepreneurial intention. Moreover, psychological capital—comprising hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy—strengthens this relationship, indicating that students with higher psychological capital derive greater benefits from entrepreneurial learning experiences. These results highlight the importance of integrating psychological-capital–building components into entrepreneurship curricula to foster more robust entrepreneurial mindsets. The study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence from Tunisia and offers practical implications for educators, policymakers, and entrepreneurship program designers aiming to cultivate future entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Intention, Psychological Capital; Moderating Role

INTRODUCTION

There is increasing agreement that fostering and promoting entrepreneurial activity is beneficial since it not only improves the state of the economy as a whole (Gieure, C. et al., 2020), but it also considerably supports regional economic development (Barba-Sánchez, V.; et al., 2022). Additionally, entrepreneurship has a chance to increase the number of employment in society (Anjum, T. et al., 2022). As a result, entrepreneurship is being researched globally, particularly in Western nations with advanced market economies and entrepreneurial ecosystems. Younger generations are unquestionably a significant supply of entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurs are an essential component of engaging in entrepreneurial activity (Barba-Sánchez, V.; et al. 2022).

College students, who make up a significant portion of the youth group, exhibit stronger entrepreneurial potential and are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities because they have good autonomous learning abilities and are open to new ideas (Maheshwari, G.; and Kha, K.L, 2022). As a developing nation, China still has a lot of potential for economic growth. Furthermore, China needs to hire almost 10 million graduates annually (Lv, Y et al., 2021). Enhancing college students' entrepreneurial conduct can both successfully boost China's economic development and ease university employment pressure (Zhong, Y.H. 2021).

The desire to be an entrepreneur is a long-term, complicated process that shapes entrepreneurial behavior (Elnadi, M., 2021). A crucial first step in becoming an entrepreneur and launching and growing new firms is the development

of entrepreneurial intent (Baron, R.A. et al., 2018; Hsu, D.K., 2019). Without it, there would be no more entrepreneurial steps, making it the best predictor of entrepreneurial activity (Santos, S.C., and Liguori, E.W. 2019). EI is defined by some academics as a person's propensity or readiness to start their own business in the next few years (Alferaih, A. 2022). A significant amount of research in the field of business management indicates that emotional intelligence (EI) is thought to be a key component in acting in an entrepreneurial manner (van Gelderen, M.; et al., 2018). Therefore, academics have prioritized investigating the elements that lead to individual entrepreneurial goals, and they have previously studied numerous elements.

One of the key determinants of EI is entrepreneurship education (EE) (Duong, C.D. 2021). Actually, EE is now used as a policy tool to boost entrepreneurship and people's inclination to launch a firm (Otache, I. et al., 2019). Nevertheless, no additional reliable results have been drawn from earlier research (Otache, I.; et al., 2019).

While the majority of research has shown a favorable association between EE and EI (Duong, C.D. 2021), several studies have reached conflicting findings. For instance, Oosterbeek et al. (2010) discovered that EE had a detrimental impact on EI (Li, L.; and Wu, D. 2019), whereas Iwu et al. (2021) discovered no meaningful relationship between the two (Iwu, C.G. 2021). The following factors could be the cause of the disparity in results between EE and EI: (1) different sample sizes or a lack of science and standardization when analyzing data (Lopez, T. and Alvarez, C. 2019); (2) measurement tool limitations, i.e., the evaluation tool is only applicable to samples in a specific location and is not generalizable (Fernández-Pérez, V. et al., 2019); (3) Entrepreneurship education has not yet been standardized, and there are certain differences in teaching methods and training in different regions, which in turn lead to differences in entrepreneurial intentions (Fayolle, A.; and Gailly, B. 2015); and (4) Entrepreneurship education has certain differences in different impacts (Passoni, D., and Glavam, R. 2018) . BEE includes a variety of instructional strategies intended to inspire, develop, and support students' entrepreneurial.

EE includes a variety of instructional strategies intended to inspire, develop, and advance students' entrepreneurial attitudes and abilities (Nunfam, V.F.; et al. 2021). From an educational standpoint, college students' entrepreneurial behavior can be improved by giving them comprehensive knowledge, motivation, and skills through learning plans, learning experiences, and methodologies to enhance entrepreneurial intent success in various contexts (Sampene, A.K.; et al. 2022). Thus, EE is a crucial aspect to take into account while talking about EI, particularly with students (Sampene, A.K.; et al. 2022).

Although EE plays an important role in the entrepreneurial process of college students, and there is extensive empirical research evidence of it, through the above discussion, it can be found that the impact of EE on EI is still different, which also shows that the promotion of EE lacks a certain degree of replicability in different regions and different groups. Therefore, it is necessary to study the impact of EE on EI according to local conditions. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) is the most important personal factor that has a significant impact on EI (Gutiérrez, P.I.R. et al., 2019). ESE is "the strength of a person to believe that he or she can successfully complete various roles and tasks of entrepreneurship" (Neneh, B.N. 2022), and is a measure of the degree of belief in a person's ability to implement entrepreneurship on their own (Alammari, K. et al.,2019).

Even though there is a lot of empirical research supporting the importance of EE in college students' entrepreneurial endeavors, the aforementioned discussion reveals that the impact of EE on EI is still different, which also indicates that the promotion of EE lacks some degree of replicability in various groups and geographical areas. As a result, research on how EE affects EI in light of local circumstances is required.

For instance, Jena (2020) examines how EE affects EI in India based on TPB; Elnadi and Gheith (2021) investigate how Saudi Arabia's entrepreneurial ecosystem affects college students' EI based on TPB and present gender as a moderating variable. Anjum et al. (2021), using the theory of planned behavior as the research group, builds a model of the relationship between perceived creativity position and entrepreneurial intent and suggests the perception of university support moderation mechanism (Anjum, T.; et al. 2020).

In the process of developing relevant behavioral intentions, psychological capital (psycap) enables the adoption of a more optimistic and upbeat attitude, which ultimately favors the formation of intentions (Baluku, M.M.; Onderi, P.; Otto, K. 2021). As a result, the inclusion of the idea of psycap in the TPB has practical significance and continues to be a gap in the field of entrepreneurship. Based on the aforementioned ideas, this study aims to investigate methods that can strengthen students' entrepreneurial inclinations.

The main focus of the research will be the impact of EE on EI, and it will build on this foundation to create a model that may effectively enhance students' entrepreneurial aspirations. Since there is no agreement on the impact of EE on EI, the findings of this study can only serve as a complement in the field of entrepreneurship research. Additionally, previous research on IE based on the TPB model was primarily based on the initial notion of the model.

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Given that entrepreneurship is a difficult behavior, this study applies psycap as a moderating variable in the TPB model, which is still a blank in the field of entrepreneurship research, and introduces the variable of psycap, which has positive psychological characteristics, to form a model that contains both mediation and regulation. This study clarifies the major variables influencing college students' emotional intelligence (EI) in terms of theoretical significance. Practically speaking, the study's findings may offer higher education a fresh point of reference for boosting students' entrepreneurial aspirations.

This article is organized as follows: The theoretical context, research model, and hypotheses related to the variables under study are presented in the following section; research methods and data analysis are then described in sections 3; the study's discussion are describe in section 4 and conclusions are presented in sections 5.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS AND THEORY

Entrepreneurship is regarded as a planned activity (Neneh, B.N. 2022). According to the theory of planned behavior (TCP), intention is the first step toward a relevant behavior, and the stronger the intention, the greater the likelihood that it will be translated into action (Ajzen, I. 2020). According to the TPB, an entrepreneur's IE is influenced by their entrepreneurial attitudes, perceived behavioral controls, and subjective norms (Ajzen, I. 1991). However, IE is regarded as a multidimensional, multifaceted, and interdisciplinary phenomenon (Barrios, G.E.R.; 2022). Therefore, it is also necessary to investigate other dimensions that may be able to explain the base model of the TPB, such as genre (Entrialgo, M. and Iglesias, V. 2016) and psychological characteristics (Najafabadi, M.O.; 2016), among others.

Additionally, a number of recent studies highlight that entrepreneurial objectives cannot be fully understood without taking into account the sociocultural setting in which individuals live. Environmental factors, such as public policies supporting entrepreneurs, access to financial resources, or even the development of entrepreneurial models, can either strengthen or weaken the influence of TCP variables. Thus, the study of entrepreneurial intentions requires an integrative approach that takes into account the interaction between individual, psychological, and contextual factors. Understanding the entrepreneurial intention requires expanding the analytical framework beyond the TCP in order to incorporate additional dimensions that enable understanding the complexity of the entrepreneurial decision-making process. This method provides a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive an individual to convert an intention into entrepreneurial success.

The Relationship between EI and EE

The TPB notes that behavioral intention is strongly predicted by people's views toward positive or negative reactions to activity (Lavelle, B.A. 2021). The formation of an entrepreneurial mindset is the main goal of EE in higher education. When EE is successfully used, college students' perceptions of entrepreneurship can be enhanced, which can subsequently alter students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship (Sancho, M.P.L.; 2020). Thus, according to the TPB, EE positively affects EI.

Additionally, EE helps students develop confidence in their capacity to carry out entrepreneurial duties in addition to improving their entrepreneurial knowledge and abilities. This enhanced self-efficacy is directly related to the TPB's perceived behavioral control dimension, which is crucial in determining behavioral intentions. Students are more likely to acquire stronger entrepreneurial ambitions when they feel more capable of spotting opportunities, handling uncertainty, and managing resources. EE is a crucial technique for raising the overall standard of individual entrepreneurship. It can enhance entrepreneurs' skills, teach them how to start a new company (Iwu, C.G.; et al., 2021), and encourage students to pursue self-employment after graduation (Lawan, U.M.et al.2015).

Additionally, students develop more realistic expectations about entrepreneurship because to the interactive and immersive elements of EE, which include workshops, startup incubation programs, business simulations, and encounters with successful entrepreneurs. These encounters help people have a better grasp of the difficulties and benefits of launching a firm, which leads to more favorable opinions on entrepreneurial behavior.

Therefore, EE is essential to the final stage of the entrepreneurial process (Walter, S.and Block, J.H. 2016). Additionally, studies have shown a favorable correlation between EI and EE, and empirical studies conducted by researchers from many countries have shown that EE has a positive impact on EI (Iwu, C.G.; et al., 2021; Lopez, T. and Alvarez, C. 2019; Mykolenko, O. et al., 2021).

Furthermore, it is crucial to emphasize that EE encompasses not only the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills but also the development of attitudes and motives that support entrepreneurial initiative. People who are exposed

to a high level of EE exhibit a greater inclination to recognize and seize entrepreneurial opportunities, which strengthens their EI.

Thus, this study puts the following hypothesis:

H1. Entreprneeurship educational affect positevely Entreprneeurial Intention.

The Relationship between EE, Psychological Capital and Entrepreneurial Intention

The main reason is that EE makes it possible to strengthen the knowledge and skills necessary in the field of entrepreneurship, which leads people to evaluate entrepreneurial activities more favorably, increase their confidence in themselves, and improve their personal efficiency (Yousaf, U. et al.2021). Additionally, psychological capital is regarded as one of the most powerful predictors of entrepreneurial intention in entrepreneurship research (Anwar, I.; et al .2020).

Indeed, a number of studies have shown that psychological capital has a positive impact on IE and that a high level of psychological capital can encourage Additionally, those with high psychological capital exhibit greater perseverance in the face of challenges, optimism toward the success of their projects, and an increased ability to overcome setbacks. These qualities are crucial to the entrepreneurial process, which is frequently characterized by uncertainty, taking risks, and innovation. Therefore, strong psychological capital supports people's willingness to actively participate in entrepreneurial activities as well as their confidence in their ability to start their own business. a high level of entrepreneurial intention (Tomy, S.and Pardede, 2020). In this context, a number of researchers assert that in addition to enhancing entrepreneurial skills, EE can strengthen learners' psychological capital by fostering hope, optimism, resilience, and personal effectiveness. In fact, entrepreneurial training programs expose participants to practical experiences, real-world case studies, and innovative projects that help them overcome obstacles and strengthen their sense of independence. Therefore, by helping to raise the level of psychological capital, EE can indirectly increase entrepreneurial intention. Based on these theoretical reasons, it is therefore reasonable to view psychological capital as a fundamental mechanism that depends on EE for IE.

According to trait theory, psycap refers to the personality traits of people who are relatively stable and persistent (Darvishmotevali, M. and Ali, F.2020). These traits include a mix of people's positive psychological states, primarily resilience, optimism, self-confidence, and hope (Badawi, S.; et al ., 2019) . Optimism can also be defined as a person's confidence in their capacity to make a situation better. Optimistic people are hopeful and confident about the successful consequences of a future event (Luthans, F.; et al., 2015). People will be full of hope if they have both the will to accomplish a goal and a strategy for doing so. Hope can also be thought of as a positive psychological expectation that has a specific motivational effect (Avey, J.B.; et al.,2009). Resilient people are able to establish coping mechanisms and thrive in the face of challenges in order to accomplish their goals (Mahfud, T. et al 2020).

Resilience is defined as the capacity to quickly recover and bounce back in the face of adversity. Before choosing to launch a business, people frequently consider if they possess the necessary talents. According to Wardana et al. (2020), even if those who receive EE may improve their ESE, it still needs to be enhanced in order to convert ESE into EI (Wardana, L.W. et al.2020). This is due to the fact that entrepreneurship is a difficult and dangerous activity that carries a lot of dangers and uncertainties (Hsu, D et al 2020). Better outcomes will be obtained by adding a positive factor that reinforces the conversion of entrepreneurial self-efficacy into entrepreneurial ambition (Bullough, A. et al.2014). Psycap is defined as an optimistic view of events that relies on hard work and perseverance to promote success and prosperity (Corbu, A. et al ., 2021).

PsyCap is crucial in influencing people's attitudes and actions in the context of entrepreneurship because it increases their ability to overcome obstacles, stay motivated, and pursue long-term objectives in the face of uncertainty. High PsyCap encourages people to see challenges as chances for learning and development rather than as dangers, which increases their propensity to take part in entrepreneurial endeavors. As a result, a number of studies have demonstrated the positive correlation between PsyCap and entrepreneurial intention, demonstrating that people with higher psychological capital are more likely to form positive opinions about entrepreneurship and to convert these opinions into specific entrepreneurial goals.

H2: Entrepreneurship educational affect positively psychological capital.

H3: Psychological capital plays a mediating effect between Entrepreneurship educational and Entrepreneurial intention.

In summary, based on the hypothetical inference, a model containing mediating and regulating variables is designed and is shown in Figure 1.

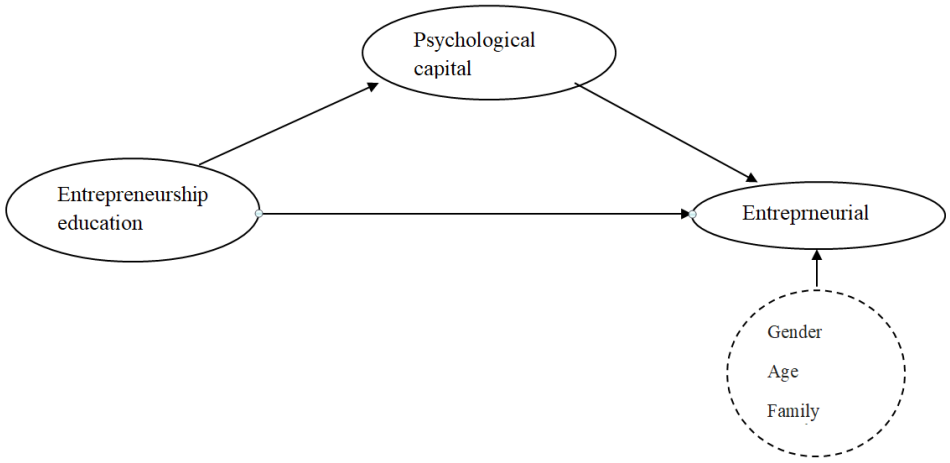

Figure 1: Conceptuel Model

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Procedure

Information gathering from surveys using questionnaires has become a standard technique in scientific research in Tunisia. However, there is a chance that the questionnaires won't be completed carefully. This is the reason this study used the commodity-based sampling method. A number of principal professors from some Jendouba universities have been chosen to assist in the collection of questionnaires because, as direct supervisors of students, they have a certain affinity and prestige for these students.

Of the 350 students who completed the questionnaire, 70 were excluded due to an excessively short response time. A total of 280 valid surveys were retained, indicating an 80% efficiency rate. Of the children, 160 (57%) are girls and 120 (43%) are boys. 98 students (35%) have previously participated in entrepreneurial conferences, whereas 182 students (65%) had no prior experience in this area. Additionally, 106 individuals (38%) reported having family entrepreneurial experience, while 174 participants (62%) did not.

Three components made up the questionnaire used in this study: EE, psychological capital (PsyCap), and entrepreneurial intention (IE). A Likert scale with five points ranging from 1 = "totally in agreement" to 5 = "totally in agreement" was used to evaluate all of the items. Shi's (2018) work served as the model for entrepreneurial education (Shi, X.H. 2020). Three university experts with expertise in entrepreneurship reviewed the survey's content and assessed its relevance, clarity, and exhaustiveness.

Zhang et al. (2010) evaluated psychological capital. There are 26 items on the sheet, such as: "Whenever I encounter revers, I must promptly return them." The entrepreneurial intention was measured using the six-item scale developed by Liñán et Chen (2009). "I am eager to become an entrepreneur" is an example of an item (Liñán, F. and Chen, Y.-W. 2009).

Preliminary Analyses and Data Preparation

The reliability of the scale was assessed using SPSS, and the t tests on independent samples and the common variance test were conducted on the samples. AMOSS 22.0 was developed to assess the convergence validity, the discriminant validity, and the adjustment of the α +chantillon model. SEM modeling is frequently used to measure the effect between the multivariate and structural relationships of the model, i.e., to assess the validity of a theory or hypothesis using data (Wang, X.-H et al 2023). Over the past few decades, SEM has been a significant research tool in psychology and education as a model of multivariate relationships (Wang, Y.A. and Rhemtulla, M. 2021).

Data Analysis

The analytical procedures in this study were conducted using SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 22.0, following a multi-step strategy to ensure the reliability, validity, and robustness of the measurement and structural models. The analysis included (1) Assessment of reliability, (2) exploratory factor analysis, (3) common method variance testing, (4) normality testing, (5) confirmatory factor analysis, and (6) structural equation modeling for hypothesis testing.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Exploratory Factor Analysis wasassess the dimensionality of the constructs. All scales exceeded the threshold for sampling adequacy: KMO = 0.847 for INTER_EDU and KMO = .868 for INTER_INTEN, with highly

significant Bartlett's tests ($p < .001$). A one-factor structure emerged for both scales, explaining 81.81% of the variance for INTER_EDU and 72.47% for INTER_INTEN, with factor loadings above .80, confirming the uni dimensionality of these measures.

Table 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Construct	KMO	Bartlett p	Variance	Loadings	Result
INTER_EDU	0.847	<0.001	81.81%	0.865–0.929	Unidimensional
INTER_INTEN	0.868	<0.001	72.47%	0.770–0.908	Unidimensional
PSY_CAPT	>0.80*	<0.001	—	0.665–0.872	Valid

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis was performed in AMOS 22.0 to evaluate the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement models. All retained PSY_CAPT items showed strong standardized loadings, ranging from .665 to .872, and all were significant at $p < .001$. Items 19–21 were removed due to non-significant loadings ($p > .05$), improving the measurement model's validity

Reliability Analysis

Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's alpha, which exceeded 0.90 for all constructs, indicating excellent internal consistency. Convergent validity was confirmed through high standardized loadings, Composite Reliability (CR > 0.70), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE > 0.50).

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Construct	Cronbach α	Loadings	AVE	CR	Interpretation
INTER_EDU	0.925	0.865–0.929	>.50	>.70	Excellent
INTER_INTEN	0.920	0.770–0.908	>.50	>.70	Excellent
PSY_CAPT	High	0.665–0.872	>.50	>.70	Strong

RESULTS

Model Fit Indices

The structural model demonstrated acceptable fit, with CMIN/DF below 5 and CFI, TLI, and IFI approaching recommended thresholds. RMSEA indicated a moderate but acceptable model fit, appropriate for complex SEM models.

Table 3 : Model FIt Indices

Fit Index	**Threshold**	**Overall Sample**
χ^2/df (CMIN/DF)	< 5	3.378
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.685
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.639
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.844
TLI	≥ 0.90	0.830
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.846
RMSEA	< .08 good / < .10 acceptable	0.093
PCLOSE	> 0.05	< 0.001
SRMR	< 0.08	Non fourni
AIC	Plus bas = meilleur	Non fourni
BIC	Plus bas = meilleur	Non fourni

Structural paths were examined to test the proposed hypotheses. All hypothesized relationships were significant at $p < .001$, confirming the theoretical model. Psychological capital significantly predicted entrepreneurial education and intention, and entrepreneurial education demonstrated a strong positive effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Table 4: Results

Hypothesis	Path	β	C.R.	p-value	Result
H1	PSY_CAPT → ENTER_EDU	0.737	12.767	< .001	Supported
H2	PSY_CAPT → ENTER_INTER	0.275	3.693	< .001	Supported
H3	ENTER_EDU → ENTER_INTER	0.721	12.860	< .001	Supported

Analysis of Direct and Indirect Effects

The bootstrap analysis revealed that psychological capital plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial inclination. The indirect effect of ENTER_EDU → PSY_CAPT → ENTER_INTEN is significant (β = 0.531, p <.001), and the corrected confidence intervals for the biais to 95% do not include zero (IC = (0.421 – 0.622), statistically confirming the presence of a strong differentiation. Even while the direct influence of ENTER_EDU on ENTER_INTEN is significant (β = 0.721, p <.001), the indirect effect by PSY_CAPT is a significant portion of the overall effect. The globalimpact of PSY_CAPT on intention is also significant (β = 0.806), indicating that entrepreneurial education has an impact on entrepreneurial intention. However, a significant portion of this impact is caused by the bias of psychological capital growth.

Path	Effect Type	Estimate	Lower BC 95% CI	Upper BC 95% CI
PSY_CAPT → ENTER_EDU	Direct	0.737	0.642	0.812
PSY_CAPT → ENTER_INTEN	Direct	0.275	0.118	0.396
ENTER_EDU → ENTER_INTEN	Direct	0.721	0.618	0.801
PSY_CAPT → ENTER_EDU → ENTER_INTEN	Indirect	0.531	0.421	0.622

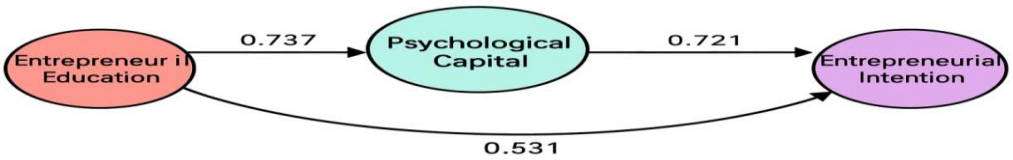

Figure 2: Structural Model

DISCUSSIONS

Disparities in Entrepreneurial intention by Gender

The results showed that there were significant differences in the entrepreneurial intention of university students of different sexes, with male students exhibiting a stronger IE than female students. According to the findings of Hassan et al. (2020) and Pan et Lu (2022), men are more confident than women in their ability to think like entrepreneurs. However, research has shown that there is no significant difference between the entrepreneurial intentions of men and women. This phenomenon may be explained by cultural differences.

In order to meet the demands of the business world and encourage entrepreneurial spirit, colleges and universities should establish a hierarchical and classified system of education in innovation and entrepreneurship. This will allow students of both sexes to select the appropriate courses in entrepreneurship based on their individual needs. As a result, they might select various entrepreneurial projects in which to engage in order to capitalize on their advantages in particular circumstances.

Differences in College Students' EI in Terms of Family Business Experience

College students with family business experience demonstrated intention entreprneurial, according to another finding of the differential analysis. The study's findings support the assertion made by Bloemen-Bekx et al. (2019) that family background plays a significant role in the development of career intentions and that young people's entrepreneurial intentions are greatly enhanced when parents with entrepreneurial experience support college students as they transition from school to society (Bloemen-Bekx, M., 2019). His influence is typically favorable,

and the child's value orientation will eventually be impacted by this ongoing home environment (Tarling, C.; 2016). Therefore, a cooperation system between the family and the school should be taken into consideration for the entrepreneurial education process.

The findings support the conclusions of Hoang et al. (2020), Shah et al. (2020)], and others by showing that EE may have a positive and significant incidence on EI. However, as we have already mentioned, this outcome is not consistent and there are some differences in the impact on entrepreneurial intents due to the differences in the period in which entrepreneurship education is provided in different regions (Fayolle, A. and Gailly, B. 2015) Regarding entrepreneurship education in Tunisia, the following are the main causes of this phenomenon: Additionally, entrepreneurship education can incorporate traditional classroom instruction and entrepreneurial practice, as well as pique students' interest in participating in entrepreneurship education;

Secondly, those who teach entrepreneurship have high professional qualifications and can provide individuals with high-quality entrepreneurship education; Thirdly, universities and higher education institutions support the theory and practice of entrepreneurship among students. This can be done, for instance, by providing appropriate diploma retention for students who engage in entrepreneurial activities, or by providing them with relevant political resources, as well as by providing experimental funds for entrepreneurs and offering them financial assistance, gratuities, and financial incentives for the establishment of businesses, all of which can promote individual entrepreneurial behaviors.

The EE helps students develop their entrepreneurial attitudes, skills, and abilities as well as their ability to look for new entrepreneurial opportunities, strengthening their desire to start a business (Mukhtar, S. et al., 2021). We recommend that universities and higher education institutions use a combination of theoretical and practical instruction to provide students with entrepreneurship training. This theoretical instruction primarily takes the form of basic courses on entrepreneurship offered in class and invitations to entrepreneurs or formation organizations to give presentations on entrepreneurship on campus, which has proven to be an effective way for students to acquire entrepreneurial skills (Mukhtar, S. et al., 2021).

The findings show that the psycap acts as a mediator in the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention; that is, a higher psycap may increase the impact of the ESE on the IE. This fully validates that the psycap is a psychological factor that can lead to positive behavior in individuals (Csikszentmihalyi, M.et al., 2014) .

In the field of entrepreneurial research, this result is also uncommon. Entrepreneurship is a challenging process, the process of forming an entrepreneurial goal can encounter many challenges and difficulties, and psychological capital is characterized by positive, optimistic, resilient, and other high-quality traits.

Psycap can also always be full of hope when faced with challenges and setbacks; he is characterized by his refusal to give up, his positive attitude toward challenges, and his belief that he can overcome them, which enables him to maintain a long-term spirit of initiative (Asimakopoulos, G. et al., 2015).

Positive psychology holds that there are two forces in an individual's inner world: positive forces and negative forces. Negative forces are suppressed or eliminated if positive forces are stimulated, nourished, and strengthened. As a result, students can develop good forces and eliminate negative ones through positive psychology.

Positive psychology holds that there are two forces in an individual's inner world: positive forces and negative forces. Negative forces are suppressed or eliminated if positive forces are stimulated, nourished, and strengthened (Yuan, L.;2022). Therefore, students with a high psychological score may lessen the negative psychological impact of these positive factors. Even more crucially, the psycap is measurable, quantifiable, and general, and it is not a difficult personality feature to modify (Yuan, L.; 2022). Based on this, developing and actively practicing psychology will help to strengthen and improve the relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial intentions.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention, with a particular focus on the mediating role of psychological capital. The results demonstrate that entrepreneurship education is not limited to the transmission of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills; rather, it significantly contributes to shaping students' cognitive and psychological readiness to pursue entrepreneurial careers. The findings indicate that well-structured entrepreneurship courses enhance students' capacity to identify opportunities, understand business challenges, and develop an entrepreneurial mindset aligned with innovative and proactive behavior.

More importantly, the study confirms the critical mediating function of psychological capital—comprising self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience—in translating educational experiences into entrepreneurial intention. This psychological resource appears to serve as an essential internal mechanism that strengthens students'

confidence in their ability to create and manage new ventures. Students who develop higher levels of psychological capital through entrepreneurship education demonstrate greater perseverance, more positive expectations about future entrepreneurial outcomes, and a stronger belief in their capacity to overcome obstacles. Thus, psychological capital acts as a bridge linking educational interventions to entrepreneurial aspirations.

These findings provide several theoretical contributions. First, they reinforce the growing body of literature suggesting that entrepreneurship education influences intention not only through knowledge acquisition but also through deeper psychological pathways. Second, the results highlight the relevance of integrating positive psychology frameworks into entrepreneurship research, thereby offering a more holistic understanding of how entrepreneurial intention is formed.

From a practical perspective, the study offers valuable insights for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers. Universities and training institutions are encouraged to incorporate teaching methods that foster psychological resources—such as experiential learning, mentorship programs, role-playing, simulations, and exposure to entrepreneurial role models. Strengthening psychological capital can increase students' resilience, boost their confidence in facing uncertainties, and ultimately enhance the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education. These implications are particularly relevant in contexts where economic instability and limited job opportunities push students to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path. Despite the contributions of this research, several limitations must be acknowledged. The study relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability or common-method bias. In summary, the findings support the beneficial effects of EE on EI, indicating the need for institutions to develop an entrepreneurial education curriculum. Therefore, at higher educational levels, various courses and instructional strategies based on cutting-edge technology can be employed to boost student involvement in entrepreneurial education courses. However, since giving students a specific entrepreneurial platform in the classroom can significantly improve their practical skills, EE shouldn't end at the academic level (Phan, H.L.T. et al.2019). The government should offer practical support for EE at colleges and universities since the platform's creation and curriculum reform require significant funding and policies (Nghia, T.L.H.; et al.2020, Tung, D.T.; 2021).

The sample is limited to a specific population and geographical context, which may affect the generalizability of the results. Future research would benefit from longitudinal designs to better capture changes in psychological capital over time, as well as comparative studies across cultures or educational systems. Scholars could also explore additional mediators or moderators, such as social support, entrepreneurial passion, or digital literacy, to expand the understanding of how entrepreneurship education shapes entrepreneurial intention.

In conclusion, the study underscores the pivotal role of psychological capital as a mediating factor that transforms entrepreneurship education into genuine entrepreneurial intention. By demonstrating that educational interventions can strengthen key psychological resources, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of entrepreneurship formation and suggests actionable strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship education programs. Ultimately, fostering psychological capital among students represents a powerful pathway for encouraging future entrepreneurs and supporting sustainable economic and social development.

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