

Academic resources driving entrepreneurial intention: an analysis of universities in the Colombian Caribbean region

Los recursos académicos como impulsores de la intención emprendedora: un análisis de universidades de la región del Caribe colombiano

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Resumen

La intención emprendedora ha sido ampliamente estudiada en el contexto universitario; sin embargo, la evidencia empírica sigue siendo limitada en escenarios regionales con características institucionales específicas, como el Caribe colombiano. Este estudio analiza cómo los recursos académicos proporcionados por las universidades influyen en la intención emprendedora de los estudiantes, incorporando el comportamiento emprendedor como un factor explicativo. Mediante un diseño cuantitativo y transversal, se recolectaron datos de 147 estudiantes universitarios con iniciativas emprendedoras potenciales, los cuales fueron analizados a través de modelos de ecuaciones estructurales. Los resultados evidencian que los programas de formación en emprendimiento y las herramientas de inspiración ejercen una influencia más significativa sobre la intención emprendedora que los recursos asociados a la incubación de iniciativas empresariales. Estos hallazgos indican que, en ecosistemas regionales emergentes, los recursos de carácter motivacional y educativo desempeñan un papel más determinante que los mecanismos estructurales de apoyo. El estudio aporta evidencia empírica para orientar a las instituciones de educación superior en el fortalecimiento de estrategias de formación emprendedora y en la promoción de emprendimientos sostenibles.

Palabras clave: intenciones emprendedoras, comportamiento emprendedor, recursos universitarios para el emprendimiento, universidades colombianas.

Abstract

Entrepreneurial intention has been widely studied in the university context; however, evidence remains limited for regional settings with specific institutional characteristics, such as the Colombian Caribbean. This study examines how academic resources provided by universities influence students' entrepreneurial intention incorporating entrepreneurial behavior as an explanatory factor. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional design, data were collected from 147 university students with potential entrepreneurial initiatives and analyzed through structural equation modeling. The findings show that entrepreneurship learning programs and inspirational tools have a stronger influence on entrepreneurial intention than resources related to venture incubation. These results indicate that, in emerging regional ecosystems, motivational and educational resources play a more decisive role than structural support mechanisms. The study provides empirical evidence to guide higher education institutions in strengthening entrepreneurship education and fostering sustainable entrepreneurial outcomes.

Keywords: entrepreneurial intentions, entrepreneurial behavior, university resources for entrepreneurship, Colombian universities.

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INTRODUCCIÓN

The continuous evolution of contemporary society, marked by technological advancement and the growing importance of digital education, has generated an environment conducive to the development of new opportunities in the field of entrepreneurship, particularly through the contribution to learning. Universities in the Colombian Caribbean region have undertaken the challenge of exploring these changes from a holistic perspective, aimed at identifying solutions and alternatives to overcome gaps and improve the quality of digital learning.

In this context, higher education institutions are increasingly recognized not only as knowledge providers, but also as key actors in shaping entrepreneurial mindsets and intentions, especially in regions facing structural and economic constraints.

Universities have been actively promoting entrepreneurship, particularly among students, so that they can take advantage of contemporary and technological demands, translating them into innovative business ideas. In this process a range of resources are employed by the academic institution to encourage the desire for entrepreneurship, but given the limited exploration of the role of these resources within the Caribbean context, this research focuses on establishing an approximation of this phenomenon which, in the end, is crucial for explaining how the future entrepreneur emerging from universities can address the limitations of the initial phase, represented by the Institutional Educational Project (PEI) (Wang et al., 2023).

However, empirical evidence on how these academic resources effectively influence entrepreneurial intention remains fragmented, particularly in regional contexts where institutional capabilities and support mechanisms differ significantly from those of globally ranked universities.

This introduction to the problem highlights the importance of quality standards in higher education institutions, which have increased the demands and

commitment of the university faculty management towards the creation of innovative learning mechanisms. The integration of diverse knowledge areas with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) emerges as crucial for fostering the growth of solid and sustainable enterprises, capable of generating autonomous capital (Peña-Ramírez et al., 2020).

Consequently, understanding the interaction between educational quality, academic resources, and entrepreneurial outcomes becomes a relevant research priority for universities seeking to strengthen their social and economic impact.

As universities in the Colombian Caribbean region annually contribute competent professionals to society, they face the need to adapt to new concepts and knowledge to expand their vision and capacity for ingenuity in the modern economy (Hattab, 2014). This process involves exploring points of view, challenges, satisfactions and, above all, the dimensions of the capabilities and intentions of these professionals to create and develop a circular economy through ventures measurable in their ability to expand and innovate according to market needs. The observation of ventures becomes a challenge, considering that each business idea operates based on specific and direct parameters, which demand the individualization of measurements to generate unified quality patterns according to areas of concern (Ben Youssef et al., 2021).

From this perspective, entrepreneurial intention emerges as a key construct for understanding how individual capabilities interact with institutional environments, making it a suitable variable for empirical analysis within the university context.

It was considered that the optimal approach to elucidating entrepreneurial intentions based on the material resources provided to universities was through structural equation modeling,

where the relevant factors and their co-variables elucidate the reality of entrepreneurial intentions in



the context of the study population. They were inspired by the work of Gieure, Benavides-Espinosa and Roig-Dobón (2020) from whom the validated scales of entrepreneurial behavior and entrepreneurial intentions were adopted, as well as Ahmed et al. (2020) who provided the scales for measuring university resources.

Accordingly, this study seeks to integrate individual and institutional dimensions into a single analytical model that enables a more comprehensive understanding of entrepreneurial intention among university students.

Understanding these factors and their causal relationships is key to both scientific knowledge and research, which are essential for the curriculum development, thus enabling students to cultivate a foundation of interest which attracts sponsors who, with their capital, grant sustainability to new companies seeking to venture into offering their products and/or services (Esfandiar et al., 2019).

Ultimately, the study aims to provide empirical evidence that supports decision-making processes in higher education institutions, particularly those operating in emerging regional ecosystems such as the Colombian Caribbean.

and the subsequent statistical validation of the model. The use of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) prior to hypothesis testing ensured the reliability and convergent validity of the constructs, thus strengthening the internal consistency of the proposed model and enabling replication in similar academic contexts.

The sample was selected from students participating in entrepreneurship events held at 3 universities during April and May 2023. Regarding the fieldwork, out of 450 projects located, only 147 were intentional, nascent and new entrepreneurs, according to the classification established by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2023). Regarding the demographic characteristics of the participants, 39% were men and 61% were women. 63.9% of the participants were students from careers related to arts and design, and the remaining from engineering careers, with 30% from industrial engineering and related careers.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered in person, which minimized response bias and enhanced data accuracy. Participants were informed about the objectives of the research and voluntarily agreed to take part in the study, ensuring ethical compliance and confidentiality of responses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sampling procedure and data collection.

This study adopted a quantitative, explanatory, and cross-sectional research design aimed at analyzing the causal relationships between academic resources, entrepreneurial behavior, and entrepreneurial intention among university students. The methodological approach was grounded in structural equation modeling (SEM), which allows for the simultaneous estimation of latent constructs and their interrelationships, ensuring robustness in theory testing. Data collection followed a structured procedure that included the identification of eligible participants during entrepreneurship events, the application of validated measurement instruments,

Scale of measurement

The measurement scale used was based on the work of Gieure et al. (2020) and Ahmed et al. (2020). These were selected because they highlighted the factors that are most commonly used in the pedagogical practice of entrepreneurship in the region, considering the resources available to the universities that provided the sample.

The factors of Entrepreneurial Intentions (ECI) and Entrepreneurial Behavior (EC) were evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree. The other factors were also evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5, measuring the level of influence of the resources according to each factor. In the case of Entrepreneurship learning programs, the extent to which the courses influenced entrepreneurial



outcomes was also measured. For the factor related to inspirational tools for entrepreneurship, the extent to which entrepreneurship was influenced by the viewpoints of the personalities evaluated in the

statements was examined. Finally, Resources for venture incubation were measured based on the availability at the university. Table 1 highlights the scales used.

Table 1. Measurement scale used.

Factor	Code	Scale
Entrepreneurial Intentions – ICE	ICE1	I am willing to do anything to be an entrepreneur
	ICE2	I will do my best to start and manage my own business.
	ICE3	My career goal is to be an entrepreneur
	ICE4	I am determined to create a venture in the future (maximum 5 years).
Entrepreneurial Behavior - EC	CE1	I have experience in starting new projects or businesses.
	CE2	I am able to develop a business plan.
	CE3	I know how to start a new business.
	CE4	I know how to do market research.
	CE5	I have invested informally in a business
	CE6	I can save money to invest in a business
	CE7	I am linked to a network (commercial/labor/social) where I can promote my business.
Entrepreneurship learning programs – AEE	AEE1	Increase their understanding of attitudes, values and motivation for entrepreneurship.
	AEE2	Increase your understanding of the actions to be taken to start a business
	AEE3	Improve your practical management skills for starting a business
Inspirational tools for entrepreneurship - IEE	IEE1	The teacher's
	IEE2	That of a speaker or lecturer on entrepreneurship
	IEE3	That of an entrepreneur you have met at a university lecture/conference
Resources for venture incubation - RIEE	RIEE1	A group of classmates with an entrepreneurial mindset
	RIEE2	Networking events (activities to meet entrepreneurs)
	RIEE3	Business plan competitions and entrepreneurship events
	RIEE4	Seed capital for entrepreneurship provided by the university

Source: own elaboration with information from Gieure et al (2020) and Ahmed et al (2020).



Data Analysis and Interpretation

The analytical process was conducted step by step using RStudio, including reliability tests, validity assessments, and estimation of the structural paths. This transparent and replicable methodological procedure allows future studies to extend the model by incorporating additional moderating variables, such as socioeconomic conditions, gender, or digital competencies, particularly in emerging regional entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Structural equation modeling was used to test and explain the relationships between the factors, starting with confirmatory factor analysis to ensure the validity and reliability of the model with tests of: average variance extracted (AVE) and discriminant validity, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability. The calculations were performed in RStudio.

assessed the intention within a university context, integrating entrepreneurial behavior as a moderating factor of intentions in conjunction with other factors of their model. This work has contributed to subsequent research, as illustrated by studies on entrepreneurial intention moderated by: anxiety caused by COVID-19 (Loan et al., 2021), motivational forces (Yamini, Soloveva & Peng, 2022), and entrepreneurial education (Duong, 2022) together with other areas of interest.

Regarding the moderating factors related to academic resources, those proposed by Ahmed (2020) were selected, encompassing learning or entrepreneurial education programs, inspirational tools, and university resources for venture incubation. Other authors, however, have cited Ahmed (2020) from their own perspective, such as Elnadi & Gheith (2021), Secundo et al. (2021) or Karyaningsih (2020) among others. Figure 1 presents the proposed model.

RESULTS

Proposed Model

We propose to elucidate entrepreneurial intentions using the framework of Gieure et al. (2020), who

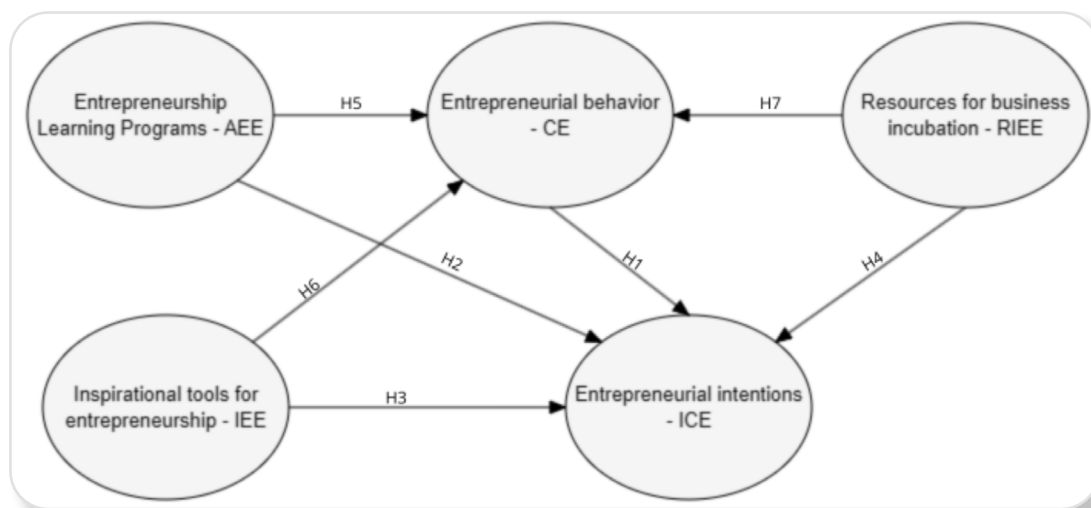


Figure 1. model of entrepreneurial intentions as a function of academic resources and entrepreneurial behavior.

Fuente: own elaboration.



The model suggests that entrepreneurial intention among university students is not influenced uniformly by all academic resources. Instead, the results point to differentiated effects, highlighting the relevance of certain pedagogical and motivational components over more structural forms of support. This initial overview provides a framework for understanding the specific relationships examined in the subsequent analyses.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis – CFA.

Table 2 presents the results of the goodness-of-fit test for the model, with a chi-square indicating how well the factors fit. The SRMR absolute fit test yields a result below 0.08, the RMSEA parsimony test presents an acceptable fit, falling within the range of 0.05 to 0.08. Regarding comparative indicators, the CFI yielded an acceptable result, ranging from 0.90 to 0.95, as did the TLI. Table 2 summarizes the results.

Table 2. Goodness-of-fit indices for the model.

	X²	Df	P	SRMR	TLI	IFC	RMSEA
Theoretical model	345.817	179	0.000	0.067	0.886	0.903	0.08

Source: own elaboration.

In terms of reliability and validity, the 5 factors are reliable based on their Cronbach's alpha scores being above 0.70, thus meeting the standard criteria of Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). Regarding composite reliability, the factors are reliable by showing values

above 0.6, thus meeting the criterion of Bagozzi & Yi (1988). As for the standardized loadings, F2 and F5 are not significant in some particular cases, not exceeding the value of 0.60 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

Table 3. Measurement model. Reliability and convergent validity.

Factor	Indicator	Standardized Loads	t-value	CA	CR	AVE
F1 Entrepreneurial Intention	ICE1	0.906	13.781			
	ICE2	0.867	12.863	0.987	0.889	0.670
	ICE3	0.823	11.879			
	ICE4	0.657	8.663			
F2 Entrepreneurial Behavior	CE1	0.593	7.377			
	CE2	0.754	10.068			
	CE3	0.796	10.875			
	CE4	0.653	8.324	0.957	0.807	0.384
	CE5	0.545	6.672			
	CE6	0.48	5.753			
	CE7	0.422	4.977			



Factor	Indicator	Standardized Loads	t-value	CA	CR	AVE
F3 Entrepreneurship Learning Programs	AEE1	0.896	13.84			
	AEE2	0.95	15.303	0.990	0.939	0.837
	AEE3	0.898	13.872			
F4 Inspirational tools for entrepreneurship	IEE1	0.734	9.516			
	IEE2	0.765	10.046	0.985	0.786	0.551
	IEE3	0.727	9.398			
F5 Resources for venture incubation	RIEE1	0.679	8.788			
	RIEE2	0.727	9.618	0.977	0.795	0.498
	RIEE3	0.843	11.81			
	RIEE4	0.542	6.647			

Chi2 (179)=345.817 (p=0.000); CFI=0.903; TLI=0.886; RMSEA(90%CI)=0.080 (0.067;0.092)

**=p<0.01; CA= Cronbach's alpha; CR=Composite Reliability; AVE=Average Variance Extracted

Source: own elaboration.

Table 3 also shows the results of the extracted variance test - AVE, which can only be corroborated in Table 4, where the square of the covariances between F2 and F3, F3 and F5, and F4 and F5, (results below the diagonal numbers highlighted in bold), do not exceed the AVE of the corresponding factors, which indicates that there is no discriminant validity between them (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The CFA confirms the reliability and convergent validity of the constructs, supporting their suitability for hypothesis testing. While most standardized loadings exceed the recommended thresholds, some indicators associated with entrepreneurial

behavior and venture incubation resources exhibit comparatively lower values. These results suggest that, although these constructs are statistically valid, their manifestation among students may be less consolidated, reflecting contextual characteristics of the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Table 4 also shows the results of the confidence interval test that confirms the validity, wherein the results for the crossing of the factors do not include 1, according to the rule established by Anderson & Gerbing (1988), therefore, ascertaining the discriminant validity of the model.

Table 4. Measurement model. Discriminant validity.

Factor	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
F1 Entrepreneurial Intention	0.670	0.707	0.569	0.593	0.61
F2 Entrepreneurial Behavior	0.326	0.384	0.7060	0.6640	0.6380
F3 Entrepreneurship Learning Programs	0.273	0.4420	0.837	0.805	0.834
F4 Inspirational tools for entrepreneurship	0.182	0.252	0.475	0.551	0.877



Factor	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
F5 Resources for venture incubation	0.298	0.227	0.539	0.579	0.498

Source: own elaboration.

Regarding the structural relationships, table 5 reveals that learning programs and inspirational tools show a more consistent association with entrepreneurial intention than incubation-related resources. This pattern indicates that, within the analyzed universities,

educational and motivational mechanisms play a more central role in shaping entrepreneurial intention than access to tangible resources, which may depend on broader institutional and economic conditions.

Table 5. Model hypotheses.

Hypothesis	Beta Standardized	t-value
H1 CE → ICE	0.0464 **	3.903
H2 AEE → ICE	-0.052	-0.375
H3 IEE → ICE	0.056	0.343
H4 RIEE → ICE	0.229	1.334
H5 EEE → CE	0.432	2.967
H6 IEE → CE	0.198	1.151
H6 RIEE → CE	0.009 **	0.048

Chi2 (179): 345.817 (p=0.000); CFI=0.903; TLI=0.886; RMSE(90%<CI)= 0.080 (0.067, 0.092)

**p<0.01 ; *p<0.05

Source: own elaboration.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained identify relevant patterns that influence the entrepreneurial intention of students in the Colombian Caribbean. It should be noted that the factors of entrepreneurial behavior and incubation resources do not have a statistically significant relationship in all cases. This is due to the limited consolidation of networks and seed capital within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, a situation that opens the door for universities to reinforce their role as facilitators of entrepreneurship.

It is important to mention that learning programs and inspirational tools provide a clear influence, which highlights the value of structured training and inspiration drawn from entrepreneurs, in accordance with some studies (Souitaris, Zerbini, & Al-Laham, 2007), which indicate that personal motivation and

the training environment are key elements to trigger entrepreneurial action.

One of the relevant limitations is focused on the concentration of the sample taken from specific careers, especially art, design, and engineering, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other academic disciplines. Future studies are also recommended to incorporate moderating variables such as socioeconomic context, gender, and digital technologies, as these factors could enrich the understanding of the entrepreneurial environment in regional contexts.

To further contextualize these findings, recent empirical evidence supports the relevance of academic environments in shaping entrepreneurial intention, particularly through structured learning experiences and inspirational mechanisms. Studies



conducted in emerging and developing economies have shown that entrepreneurship education programs significantly enhance entrepreneurial intention when they are aligned with experiential learning and motivational support structures (De Moraes et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2023). This reinforces the results obtained in the present study, where learning programs and inspirational tools exhibit a clearer influence compared to incubation resources, which tend to be more dependent on the maturity of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

From an interpretative perspective, the limited statistical significance observed in entrepreneurial behavior and incubation resources may be explained by structural constraints typical of regional university contexts, such as reduced access to seed capital and weak institutionalized networks. Similar patterns have been identified in recent regional studies, which emphasize that early-stage entrepreneurial intention is often driven more by cognitive and motivational factors than by tangible support mechanisms (Mei et al., 2022). This finding highlights the importance of interpreting the results not as deficiencies of the model, but as reflections of contextual realities.

In practical terms, the results suggest that universities should prioritize strengthening pedagogical strategies aimed at inspiring, mentoring, and fostering skill development, while progressively consolidating incubation infrastructures. The value added of this research lies in its contribution to understanding how academic resources operate differentially within regional entrepreneurial ecosystems, offering empirical evidence to guide decision-making in higher education institutions seeking to enhance their role as catalysts of sustainable entrepreneurship.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed model presents a favorable relationship between the factors that comprise it, yet it cannot be considered, for some particular cases, highly significant in explaining the behavior of the entrepreneurial intention, a limitation that is particularly evident in the factors of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Resources

for the incubation of Entrepreneurship existing in the universities.

In contrast to the aforementioned factors, both learning programs for entrepreneurship and inspirational tools for entrepreneurship show a consistent association with entrepreneurial intention, indicating that, in the case of the representative sample of entrepreneurs, the training received and the strategies carried out by the universities to inspire entrepreneurs have a strong influence. The relevance of this work is clear and essential for the universities of the Colombian Caribbean. It allows for measuring the impact of entrepreneurship training, considering the interests of entrepreneurs to enhance their quality of life through their business projects, and as a basis for the creation of new working capital and generation of dignified jobs. This contributes to laying the foundations for universities to promote advanced dynamic learning models in students through entrepreneurship processes, focused on the implementation of robust mechanisms that modify current entrepreneurial trends.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest.

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