

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS OF COLLEGES STUDENTS IN THE AREA OF CAN THO CITY

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Abstract: *This article aims to analyze factors influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of colleges students in Can Tho City. The analysis is based on survey data collected from 350 final-year students in various colleges within the city. Analytical methods used in this study include: Method of testing the reliability of the scale using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, exploratory factor analysis method and multiple linear regression. The results reveal that factors affecting students' entrepreneurial intentions include Attitude, knowledge provided by the school, and External factors. Among these, Attitude emerges as the most influential factor shaping the entrepreneurial intentions of colleges students in Can Tho City. These findings provide a scientific foundation for educational institutions to develop strategies encouraging students to engage in entrepreneurship immediately after graduation.*

Keywords: *Can Tho City, colleges, entrepreneurship, intention, students.*

I. Introduction

In the current era of market-oriented economic development, entrepreneurship is considered one of the new forms of economic growth with significant potential to contribute to the overall development of a country. Entrepreneurship acts as a driving force for sustainable economic development. In developing countries, an increase in the number of businesses is associated with accelerated economic growth (Audretsch, 2007). Moreover, a

higher rate of entrepreneurship has been linked to a reduction in unemployment rates, particularly among recent graduates (Santarelli et al., 2009; Fayolle and Liñán, 2014). In Vietnam, entrepreneurship has become a prevailing trend among the youth, and the entrepreneurial intentions of students have garnered increased attention. The entrepreneurial ecosystem has gradually taken shape and gained the interest of the government, non-governmental organizations, startup communities, businesses, and educational institutions,

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including colleges and universities. Alongside these developments, numerous policies and support programs for startup enterprises and student entrepreneurs have been implemented. Given that students represent a significant pool of potential entrepreneurs, fostering entrepreneurial ideas among them is crucial. To facilitate entrepreneurial guidance for students, especially those in their final year, colleges in Can Tho City regularly organize networking events between students and businesses, workshops, and startup idea competitions to encourage student participation. However, the proactive engagement of students in entrepreneurial matters remains limited. While many experimental studies in the country have focused on university students, there is a lack of extensive analysis concerning students in colleges. Hence, the research titled “Factors Influencing the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Final-Year Students in Colleges in Can Tho City” aims to explore the factors affecting the entrepreneurial intentions of colleges students in the area.

II. Theoretical background and research methods

2.1. Theoretical Foundation and Related Studies

2.1.1. Concepts of Entrepreneurial Intentions

Currently, there are various concepts related to entrepreneurial intentions (EI). For instance, Bird (1988) defines entrepreneurial intention as a mental state emphasizing personal interest and experience to undertake the creation of a new business. According to Souitaris et al. (2007), entrepreneurial intention is the individual’s inclination to start a business. Tubbs and Ekeberg (1991) describe entrepreneurial intention

as a representative of planned actions to execute entrepreneurial behavior. Alternatively, Shane and Venkataraman (2000) posit that entrepreneurial intention is the process of identifying, evaluating, and exploiting business opportunities.

According to these conceptualizations of entrepreneurial intention, any individual can engage in entrepreneurship. Among them, students are considered ideal candidates due to their specialized knowledge and soft skills acquired through education. Each student has the potential to seize entrepreneurial opportunities immediately after graduation, having been equipped with both academic knowledge and practical skills by the educational institution.

2.1.2. Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by Ajzen in 1991, is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA, Ajzen and Fishbein, 1975). This theory posits that behavior can be predicted or explained by intentions (motivations) to perform that behavior. Intentions are assumed to include factors, motivations influencing behavior, defined as the effort individuals are willing to exert to perform that behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB asserts that human intentions leading to behavior are predicted by three main factors: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. If an individual has a positive attitude towards a behavior (perceives the behavior as favorable) and society also views the behavior as appropriate, and the individual has high control over the behavior (meaning they are confident in having favorable conditions to perform the behavior), then the individual is more motivated to

carry out the behavior. Moreover, if an individual perceives their actual control over the behavior to be high, they are inclined to implement their intentions as soon as an opportunity arises.

2.1.3. Relevant Studies

Robinson (1987) proposed that subjective thinking influences the entrepreneurial intentions of students, with self-confidence and self-satisfaction being decisive factors. Wang et al. (2011) identified specific factors influencing student entrepreneurship, such as business desire, business readiness, work experience, family business background, and business ethics directly impacting the entrepreneurial intentions of students. Moreover, Perera et al. (2011) showed that factors influencing student entrepreneurship include social factors, psychological factors, economic factors, and political and legal factors. Additionally, Chand and Ghorbani (2011), Pruett et al. (2009) indicated that other factors influencing student entrepreneurial intentions include external factors and the environment: family support, entrepreneurial role models, national culture, social capital, and social factors. Francisco et al. (2011) revealed that five main factors influence student

entrepreneurial intentions: business readiness, personal attitude, planning, alliances and team formation, growth - the key to success, and prioritizing useful tasks. In Vietnam, recent studies have been conducted as well. For example, Toan et al. (2022) showed that four factors influence the creative entrepreneurial intentions of students at Hue University: entrepreneurship training programs, attitudes towards entrepreneurship, knowledge and entrepreneurial experience, and subjective norms. Among them, the entrepreneurship training program has the most significant impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions. Additionally, Thu et al. (2023) demonstrated that entrepreneurial education has a positive impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions, contributing significantly to building entrepreneurship theories and helping universities design entrepreneurship education programs for students.

Although there have been many studies on entrepreneurial intentions of students, most focus on university students and general academic disciplines. Currently, research on factors influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of final-year students in colleges has not been extensively conducted.

2.2. Research Methodology

2.2.1. Proposed Research Model

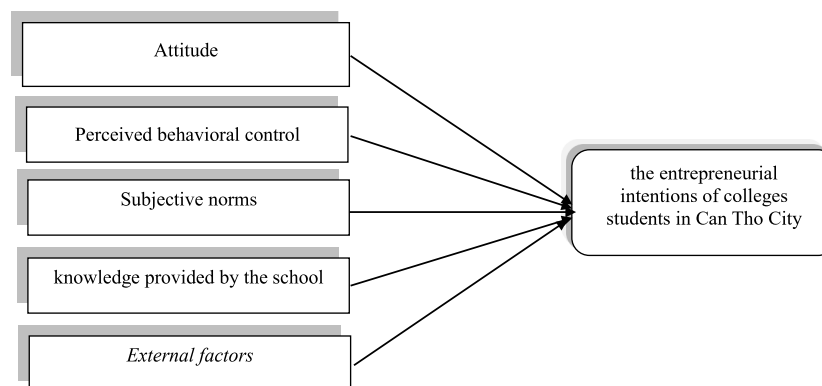


Figure 1: Proposed Theoretical Research Model

Source: Compiled by the author, 2023

Based on the theoretical foundation of behavior by Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991), the proposed research

model also draws insights from the findings of Robinson (1987), Wang et al. (2011), Chand and Ghorbani (2011), Pruett et al. (2009), Francisco et al. (2011).

2.2.2. Measurement Scale

Table 1: Description of Measurement Scale for Students' Entrepreneurial Intentions

Abbreviation	Scale	Source
ATTI	Attitude	
ATTI1	I prefer running my own business rather than working for an organization or company.	Ajzen (1991); Francisco et al., (2011).
ATTI2	I enjoy being an entrepreneur more than having a high-paying job.	
ATTI3	I am aware that starting a personal business comes with risks and challenges, but I want to experience and embrace that.	
ATTI4	If I am not currently able to pursue my entrepreneurial goals, I am willing to work at a company to accumulate experience, skills, and build relationships in preparation for implementing my entrepreneurial intentions in the future.	
PEBECO	Perceived behavioral control	
PEBECO5	I will further enhance my knowledge and accumulate experience to easily become an entrepreneur.	Ajzen (1991);
PEBECO6	After gaining practical experience working in organizations and businesses, I will find it easier to venture into my own business.	
PEBECO7	I will brainstorm ideas and seek educational materials from successful entrepreneurs to eventually become a business owner.	
PEBECO8	I have anticipated the challenges that may arise in entrepreneurship, but that will not deter me from becoming an entrepreneur.	
PEBECO9	If I can become an entrepreneur, I assess my chances of success to be high.	
SUBNO	Subjective norms	
SUBNO10	My family and relatives support my entrepreneurial idea.	Ajzen (1991);
SUBNO11	Many of my relatives and friends believe that I should become an entrepreneur.	
SUBNO12	Both my family and relatives hope that I will become an entrepreneur.	
KNOSCH	Knowledge provided by the school	
KNOSCH13	The knowledge I acquire at school encourages me to develop entrepreneurial ideas in the future.	The qualitative research is based on the findings of Souitaris et al. (2007).
KNOSCH14	I believe that I will apply the knowledge I have learned with sharpness and flexibility to my entrepreneurial endeavors.	
KNOSCH15	In addition to specialized knowledge, soft skills, computer literacy, and proficiency in foreign languages will further facilitate my entrepreneurial journey.	
EXTFA	External factors	
EXTFA16	I can easily mobilize capital from my family and relatives for my business startup.	Pruett et al., (2009); Chand and Ghorbani (2011).
EXTFA17	Effective communication and good relationships are advantages that support my entrepreneurial decisions.	
EXTFA18	I have passion and the skills to seek necessary information for my entrepreneurial idea..	
EXTFA19	I have thought about input and output strategies for the product I intend to launch.	

Abbreviation	Scale	Source
EI	Entrepreneurial intentions	
EI1	I will brainstorm entrepreneurial ideas after graduation.	Qualitative research
EI2	I will develop detailed plans for the startup after graduation.	
EI3	I plan to execute the entrepreneurial idea either immediately after graduation or after gaining work experience in an organization or business.	
EI4	I intend to collaborate on business ventures with friends and relatives after graduation.	

Source: Compiled by the author, 2023

Thus, the research model on the factors influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of newly graduated students comprises 5 scales with 19 observed variables. Among them, the observed variables are measured using a 5-point Likert scale.

2.2.3. Analytical method

- Data: Surveying the opinions of final-year students at various colleges in Can Tho City, specifically as follows: Can Tho College of Economics and Technology with 100 observations, Can Tho College with 100 observations, Can Tho Vocational College with 100 observations, and Can Tho College of Culture and Arts with 50 observations, through a pre-designed questionnaire. The survey was conducted by sending emails to students using the Google Forms application. The results yielded 350 responses. Currently, all colleges in Can Tho city integrate entrepreneurship knowledge into their

curriculum. Therefore, the survey sample in this article ensures appropriateness and reliability in the study.

- Analytical Method: The research employs the reliability testing method using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and multiple linear regression.

III. Research results

3.1. Factor Rotation Results

After conducting the reliability test of the scale using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, out of the initially proposed 19 observed variables, 17 variables met the standards. Two variables, namely PEBECO7 and SUBNO10, were excluded due to their factor loading coefficients being less than 0.6 (Hair et al., 2006). The factor rotation results for the 17 qualified observed variables, following the Cronbach's alpha test, are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Factor Rotation Results

Observed variables	Factor			
	F1	F2	F3	F4
PEBECO5	0.827			
PEBECO6	0.826			
PEBECO8	0.712			
PEBECO9	0.689			
EXTFA19		0.843		
EXTFA18		0.812		
EXTFA17		0.789		
EXTFA16		0.653		
ATTI2			0.892	
ATTI1			0.845	
ATTI3			0.787	
ATTI4			0.762	

Observed variables	Factor			
	F1	F2	F3	F4
PEBECO5	0.827			
PEBECO6	0.826			
KNOSCH14				0.894
KNOSCH15				0.865
Eigenvalue			1.174	
Cumulative %			87.386	
KMO			0.859	
Sig. of Bartlett's Test			0.000	

Source: Data processing of a survey conducted with 350 students from colleges in Can Tho in 2023.

The results of the factor rotation in Table 2 indicate that four new factors have been formed with a total of fourteen observed variables. Among these, three variables: SUBTH11, SUBNO12, and KNOSCH13 were excluded due to having factor loadings less than 0.5. The factor rotation results satisfy the condition that all factor loadings are greater than 0.5. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure is 0.859, exceeding the threshold of 0.5. Significance level is 0.000, which is less than 0.005 from the Bartlett's test, and the variance explained is 87.386%, surpassing the 50% criterion. Additionally, Eigenvalue criterion with a value of 1.174 indicates that we can stop at the fourth factor (F1 - F4) in the factor rotation results.

As a result, out of the initial five proposed scales, after Cronbach's alpha testing and exploratory factor analysis (EFA), one scale and several observed

variables did not meet the standards and were thus eliminated, resulting in the extraction of four new factors. These factors are named as follows: F1 (Perceived behavioral control); F2 (External factors); F3 (Attitude); F4 (Knowledge provided by the school).

In addition, factor rotation is also applied to four observed variables belonging to the Entrepreneurial Intent factor (dependent variable Y). The analysis results show that all four observed variables converge into a single factor, and at the same time, the criteria of rotating this factor all meet the requirements.

3.2. Results of Multiple Linear Regression

After extracting factors (F1 - F4) and Entrepreneurial Intent factor (Y), Independent variables (F1 - F4) were entered into the regression model using the Enter method. The estimated model results are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Regression Model Estimation Results

Variables	B	Beta	Std. Error	Sig.	VIF
F1: Perceived behavioral control	0.003	0.036	0.022	0.745	1.322
F2: External factors	0.116	0.133	0.024	0.006***	1.446
F3: Attitude	0.648	0.560	0.031	0.000***	1.223
F4: Knowledge provided by the school	0.258	0.356	0.014	0.000***	1.155
Constant	0.096		0.221	0.737	
F			59.934		
Sig.			0.000		
R ²			0.557		

Note: ***: It is statistically significant at the 1% level.

Source: Data processing of a survey conducted with 350 students from colleges in Can Tho in 2023.

To ensure the appropriateness of the model used, the author conducted checks for violations of the linear regression model during the regression analysis. For instance, the presence of multicollinearity was assessed through the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The results of the test in Table 2 indicate that the VIF values for the independent variables range from 1.155 to 1.446, all of which are below 2 (the necessary condition is $VIF < 10$). Thus, there is no multicollinearity issue in the model. Furthermore, the test results reveal that model's F-statistic is 59.934 with a significance level (sig.) of 0.000, which is less than the significance level $\alpha = 1\%$. This implies that the regression model used is statistically significant at the 1% level. R-squared coefficient is 0.557, indicating that the independent variables explain 55.7% of the entrepreneurial intent of the students.

Results of the model estimation for factors influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions in Table 3 reveal that, out of the 4 variables included in the research model, 3 variables significantly impact Entrepreneurial Intentions (Y) of students in Colleges in Can Tho City. These variables are F2 (External factors), F3 (Attitude), and F4 (Knowledge provided by the school). Notably, all these variables have a statistically significant impact at the 1% level (as the significance level sig. $< \alpha = 0.01$). Additionally, these variables all exert a positive influence on students' Entrepreneurial Intentions. These findings are consistent with the hypothesized relationships and align with the results of studies conducted by Ajzen (1991), Pruett et al. (2009), Chand and Ghorbani (2011), and Francisco et al. (2011).

The equation for factors influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions is reformulated as follows:

$$EI = 0.086 + 0.116F2 + 0.648F3 + 0.258F4$$

IV. Conclusion

This research results indicate that three variables significantly influence the entrepreneurial intentions of final-year students in colleges in Can Tho City. These variables include F2 (External factors), F3 (Attitude), and F4 (Knowledge provided by the school). All variables positively affect the entrepreneurial intentions of students and have statistical significance at the 1% level. Among the three variables influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of final-year students in colleges in Can Tho City, "Attitude" is identified as the strongest factor impacting the entrepreneurial intentions of students. The analysis of the factors influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of final-year students in colleges provides a basis for practical solutions to improve entrepreneurship and employment opportunities for students after graduation. This is a matter of particular concern to both society and the families of students. Entrepreneurial intentions reflect the creativity, consciousness, and ideas of students while in school, laying the groundwork for their entrepreneurial aspirations in the future. This contributes to the overall development of society, primarily in terms of creating employment opportunities for individuals and the community. Furthermore, to enhance the entrepreneurial intentions of final-year students after graduation, colleges need to encourage and motivate students and their families to participate in workshops on employment and entrepreneurship. Describing innovative ideas of students to their families can serve as a stepping stone for their entrepreneurial journey. Additionally, colleges should provide support in terms of input and output for students' entrepreneurial products, fostering passion for entrepreneurship and

encouraging entrepreneurial ideas among students.

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CÁC NHÂN TỐ ẢNH HƯỞNG ĐẾN Ý ĐỊNH KHỞI NGHIỆP CỦA SINH VIÊN CÁC TRƯỜNG CAO ĐẲNG TRÊN ĐỊA BÀN THÀNH PHỐ CẦN THƠ

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Tóm tắt: Bài viết nhằm phân tích các yếu tố ảnh hưởng đến ý định khởi nghiệp của sinh viên các trường Cao đẳng trên địa bàn thành phố Cần Thơ. Dữ liệu phân tích được thực hiện từ cuộc khảo sát ý kiến của 350 sinh viên năm cuối tại các trường Cao đẳng trên địa bàn thành phố Cần Thơ. Phương pháp kiểm định độ tin cậy của thang đo bằng hệ số Cronbach's alpha, phân tích nhân tố khám phá và hồi quy tuyến tính bội được sử dụng để phân tích. Kết quả phân tích cho thấy, các nhân tố ảnh hưởng đến ý định khởi nghiệp của sinh viên bao gồm: Thái độ, Kiến thức nhà trường và Yếu tố ngoại cảnh. Trong đó, Thái độ là nhân tố tác động mạnh nhất đến ý định khởi nghiệp của sinh viên các trường Cao đẳng tại Cần Thơ. Kết quả phân tích này sẽ là cơ sở khoa học giúp lãnh đạo nhà trường xây dựng các giải pháp nhằm khuyến khích sinh viên tham gia khởi nghiệp ngay sau khi tốt nghiệp ra trường.

Từ khóa: ý định, khởi nghiệp, sinh viên, trường Cao đẳng, thành phố Cần Thơ.

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