

Full Length Research Paper

The influences on business students to become entrepreneurs

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This paper aims to find out whether there is a desire of students from eight different business administration's colleges of São Paulo to start a new business. The research approach was qualitative, based on a questionnaire with open and closed questions, applied to 349 students. Through the analysis of the empirical data, the trend of young people's great interest in entrepreneurship was observed. They are highly motivated by the opportunity they see of a new business. With respect to gender differences, it was shown that young males are more interested than young females in starting their own business, unlike other recent research. Among those who want to start a new business, most state that the family influences this choice and that the business administration college has helped to increase their interest. They believe they know little about the risks of starting a new business and need more experience. The subject of this research emerged due to the increasing participation of young people in entrepreneurial activities in Brazil. This study contributes to a greater understanding of the future entrepreneurs of the country, and points out some weaknesses and barriers in the entrepreneurial activity.

Key words: Entrepreneurship in Brazil, young entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial education.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has grown particularly sharply in Brazil. According to the global entrepreneurship monitor (GEM, 2009) – a global report on entrepreneurship, coordinated by the London Business School (England) and Babson College (USA) – the number of enterprises with up to three months of activity increased 97% from 2008 to 2009 in the country.

According to GEM (2011), 28.2% of Brazilians intend to start a new business - this is an important measure of potential entrepreneurship in a society and 86.3% consider that it is a great career choice. This last rate is among the highest of the countries analyzed in the report, only surpassed by Colombia.

Analyzing data from the GEM reports in different years (2007, 2008, 2009), it is possible to observe a change in the national scenario with regard to gender differences in

entrepreneurship among young people and the motivation to start a new business. The GEM report (2007) indicates that in that year, 52% of Brazilian entrepreneurs were female, reversing a historical trend in the country. In 2001, women accounted for only 29% of this number. In the GEM (2009), besides Brazil, with 53%, only two other countries reported female rates higher than male rates: Tonga, with 61%; and Guatemala, with 54%.

Regarding the motivation for entrepreneurship, it is also possible to notice a change in the national scenario. Both the survey conducted by the GEM (2009) and the one conducted by Sebrae (2008) present data showing that the opportunity-driven entrepreneurship rate – where the entrepreneur starts a business activity to improve his/her living conditions – exceeded the necessity-driven entrepreneurship rate – where people start a new business in order to survive- which is also unusual for Brazil.

According to Calvosa and Almeida (2010), the opportunity-driven enterprises in Brazil were mostly created by people from classes A and B; however, due to

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the easier credit facility and development agencies, a significant portion of the population started new businesses in a planned way and as an alternative to build a career.

It is worth pointing out that the motivation factor to start a new business varies between men and women. According to the GEM report (2007), in that year, 62% were opportunity-driven male entrepreneurs, whereas women accounted for only 37%. In 2009, for the first time in the report, the proportion of opportunity-driven female entrepreneurs exceeded that of men in the same condition, which may indicate that women are starting businesses with increased planning.

With respect to the most appropriate age group for entrepreneurship, it is possible to observe that most enterprises are in the hands of young people aged 18 to 24 years old, accounting for 20.8% of the total, according to the same report mentioned previously. In this regard, it is also possible to observe growth, since the results for the previous year (GEM, 2008) indicated a rate of only 15% for entrepreneurs in this age group, suggesting that an increasing number of young people are willing to conduct their career in their own business.

The general trend is that young people have a greater representation in the nascent and new entrepreneurs, while in established companies, entrepreneurs at older ages, especially between 35 and 44 years old, are the ones who have the highest representation. According to GEM (2011), most of the new entrepreneurs in Brazil are in the range of 25 to 34 years.

According to Fillion (1999), despite the great difficulties in the development of entrepreneurship in Brazil, the movement to teach this discipline was initiated a few years ago as a step towards the creation of an entrepreneurial culture capable of supporting the economic development process. According to Pardini and Paim (2001), teaching the art of entrepreneurship in higher education institutions is recent, with the first course for entrepreneurial training having started in 1947 in the US at Harvard Business School.

Given this context, this study sought to identify the interest of young business administration students from eight colleges in Sao Paulo in entrepreneurship (in starting a new business). Specifically, four aspects were considered: (1) whether there are differences in the interest in entrepreneurship between the genders, (2) among those who want to start a new business, whether they are driven by necessity or opportunity, (3) if the current business administration program has contributed to increase their interest and (4) if the family influences the decision.

The research approach is qualitative, with a quantitative analysis of the content. The instrument developed was a questionnaire and the respondents were 349 students from eight different colleges of the State of São Paulo.

Considering the growth of entrepreneurship in Brazil, it is believed that the understanding of the aspects

proposed here will help to give a better idea of the country's future entrepreneurs, collaborating with researchers and colleges that wish to deepen their understanding of the subject, as well as institutions for the support and incentive of young entrepreneurs.

In addition to this introductory chapter, this study is divided into four parts. Subsequently, the study introduces the literature review, followed by the methodological procedures used. Thereafter, it presents the results found and their analysis, concluding with the considerations of the findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Secondary data were collected on entrepreneurship in Brazil, young entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship education, and these data formed the basis of the field research.

Considerations on entrepreneurship in Brazil

According to Dornelas (2001), the term entrepreneur comes from the French word *entrepreneur*, which refers to a person who takes risks and starts something new. Hisrich et al. (2009) claim that the French word translated literally means "go between", that is, mediator. For these authors, the process consists of four phases: (1) identification and evaluation of the opportunity, (2) development of the business plan, (3) determination of the required resources, and (4) management of the resulting enterprise.

Drucker (2008) argues that an entrepreneur is the one who starts his own, new and small business. However, the author noted that not every new small business is entrepreneurial, because to be entrepreneurial, an enterprise must have special characteristics, regardless of the size. It should actually be innovative, offering something new and different, and be able to change or transmute values.

According to Schumpeter (1950), the function of the entrepreneur is to reform or revolutionize the patterns of production, by exploiting an untried technology to produce a new product or an old product in a new way, in order to provide a new source of supply of materials or a new way to sell the products by organizing a new industry. For Shapero (1975), entrepreneurship is a type of behavior that covers three aspects: to have initiative, organize and reorganize social and economic mechanisms in order to transform resources and situations for practical use and accept risk or failure. Dornelas (2003), by analyzing the results of several studies on entrepreneurship in Brazil, mentions that necessity was the greatest motivation of new entrepreneurs, that is, the companies did not arise from the identification of new business opportunities and did not pursue innovation, but

were created to provide the basic needs of the entrepreneur's income, so that it was possible to maintain his family's and his own living conditions.

Thus, the enterprises were mostly informal, without the use of planning instruments, focused on the present moment, without a view of the future, without the identification of opportunities and market niches, and disengaged from the economic growth and development of the country (Dornelas, 2003). However, recent data to a reversal in this scenario.

With respect to entrepreneurship among women, there was an increase in the participation of this group in the total new enterprises in Brazil, representing 53% of adult entrepreneurs, according to the GEM (2009) report. According to this report, women are motivated to start business mainly by opportunity.

Hughes et al. (2012) also comment on the prominence of women's entrepreneurship in academic studies, noting that such studies have pointed to new questions, not traditional ones, on the activity among women.

Despite the findings of women's presence in all segments and business classes, there are still barriers of inequality of opportunities in the workplace, for example, income differences between the genders. Women also suffer from prejudice and discrimination, which can serve as a motivation for them to seek growth in the business environment, so they start gaining space and prominence, and somehow, outnumber men (Gebrain and Nassif, 2010).

Specifically on the Brazilian reality, Dolabela (2004) believes that entrepreneurial activities can be a form of social inclusion, which is very important for a developing society that still has many social disparities.

It is also important to emphasize the importance that micro and small enterprises have in the Brazilian economy, representing almost 99% of the total companies in the country, according to data from Sebrae (2005). The economic and social importance of entrepreneurship to Brazil and how the rates of this activity among women and young people have increased are the focus of this study.

Young entrepreneurs

Despite the increasing participation of young people as entrepreneurs, few authors have devoted themselves to research on the particularities of the young entrepreneur, and there are not many articles published on the subject, as mentioned by Borges et al. (2008). This finding can also be confirmed by checking databases such as DEDALUS, PROQUEST and EBSCO, where only few studies that point to particular characteristics of this group of people were found.

Borges et al. (2008) conducted a study with young people starting businesses in Canada and found some events specific to that group. In most cases, young

entrepreneurs: (1) set up their businesses in a team, (2) started their business with initial capital lower than those over 35 years old, (3) went through a process of creation which lasted on average more than two years and (4) performed various administrative functions, with which they had little or no previous experience or education. The authors found significant differences between the age group 18 to 24 and the age group 25 to 34, and suggested that further investigations be done to point to the particular characteristics of each group.

For Machado and Gimenez (2000), the young entrepreneur is different in relation to adults and seniors, because of the reasons that lead them to want to start a business. For these authors, young people tend to have a desire for recognition and the construction of identity at work. In adults, the greatest desire is to build something and do things for others. On the other hand, seniors start businesses to remain integrated and be useful to others.

According to Soares and Machado (2005), young people are learning early that they must build their workspace, and now have easier access to information, such as in the technology area, in which young people have great knowledge. Therefore, even according to these authors, the tendency is that the number of young entrepreneurs increases, making it important to know more about this group, to evaluate policies to encourage youth entrepreneurship and to provide the necessary support so that the new enterprises have success and longevity.

Some companies also encourage entrepreneurship among young people, such as Shell, with the Youth Initiative Program (Shell Iniciativa Jovem, 2011), which encourages training and development of entrepreneurship among young people ages 20 to 34.

Research conducted by the Commercial Association of São Paulo indicates that 8 out of 10 college students from São Paulo have a preference for starting their businesses as soon as they graduate (Empreender Jovem, 2010). This result is consistent with the data presented by the GEM (2011), demonstrating that young Brazilians currently have a great interest in entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial education

The teaching of entrepreneurship is relatively recent. In 1947, Harvard Business School offered the first course in entrepreneurship. In 1953, Peter Drucker began offering courses at New York University, and Babson College offered the first undergraduate major in entrepreneurship in 1968. Since then, the number of courses and the interest in the subject has grown in schools around the world (Finkle and Deeds, 2001).

Ferreira and Matos (2003) comment that, traditionally, colleges of business administration are focused on training students to adapt to major organizational models and teach little about the early stages of the life cycles of

organizations, so courses are not fully adapted to the socioeconomic realities of the country, where large, stable and modern companies are not the predominant model. According to Melatti and Vieira (2010), traditional education ends up focusing on the training of employees and forgets to teach the ability to innovate and adapt to trends and new business opportunities.

Dolabela (1999) states that the entrepreneur is “the fruit of a culture” and that it is possible to learn to be an entrepreneur, as long as there is a favorable environment for self-learning. For this author, the classroom environment must be conducive to spreading a culture of entrepreneurship, both among those who have had contact with an entrepreneurial culture and among those who never had it. Educational institutions, especially higher education institutions, have an even greater importance in the training of future entrepreneurs, when they have as their mission the training of professionals who will produce and interact with the environment of constant changes (Andrade and Torkomian, 2001).

Dolabela (2004) adds that there is a peculiarity when comparing teaching of entrepreneurship in Brazil and other countries. In most developed countries, the entrepreneurship teaching is almost exclusively of the business schools, while in Brazil there are also other areas engaged in teaching entrepreneurship, such as engineering, computing, philosophy, and others.

It is interesting to note that when analyzing the results of their research, Finkle and Deeds (2001) conclude that despite the demand for entrepreneurship courses, in most cases the subject is still treated as an elective discipline in business schools and depends on the desire of the students to seek such knowledge.

Many entrepreneurs end up acquiring an entrepreneurial culture through the close contact with people who have had experiences in starting their own businesses. According to Filion (1999), “models of influence” are very important in explaining the entrepreneurial behavior, and most entrepreneurs are formed through the influence of a role model in their family environment or nearby.

According to Lima-Filho et al. (2009), family life generates the entrepreneurial individual, through the proximity to the business world from a very young age, early initiation of work - in many cases – and the acceptance of family values with entrepreneurial characteristics, so that, regardless of the acceptance of the situation around them, the adaptation of the young is almost inevitable.

For Dolabela et al. (2008), just like the family that moves to the type of culture that they have in their behavior patterns, it is expected that the family will influence how they will make a living, making it rational to understand that the family culture can drive people to pursue entrepreneurship as an alternative to professional work. These authors conducted a survey with 1,240 entrepreneurs in Latin America and the results showed that there is family influence in the wake of the entrepreneurial intention and that having parents who were entrepreneurs influences the decision of whether or not to

be an entrepreneur.

METHODOLOGY

In order to answer the research problem and achieve the proposed objectives cited in the introduction, an exploratory qualitative research was conducted. This decision is justified by the need to know the expectations of students who are interested in starting their own businesses after they graduate.

Secondary data allowed the exploration of the theme proposed for the study and the formulation of the instrument that was used to collect primary data in an empirical study.

Interviewees

The respondents were senior students of Business Administration from eight colleges in São Paulo. The institutions analyzed are called in this study: Institution A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H. The number of students who graduated in Business Administration in 2010 per college and the total number are shown in Table 1.

Colleges studied are classified by the Ministry of Education (MEC, 2012) with grade 3 or above. To assign the grade on a scale from 1 to 5 to educational institutions, the Brazilian Ministry of Education evaluates institutions according to its general courses index (IGC). This instrument is built based on the weighted average grade of undergraduate and post-graduate courses. Colleges with grades of 1 and 2 are considered unsatisfactory and above 3 satisfactory (MEC, 2012). The IGC is published annually by INEP/MEC, immediately after the announcement of the national examination performance of students (ENADE).

The field research was conducted in March 2011 with students in the final year of the undergraduate business administration course. The interviewees were selected according to the researchers' convenience, but with the concern to obtain information from respondents that could provide a good evaluation of the universe, as suggested by Flick (2009).

The graduate students from the eight colleges studied received 400 questionnaires, and 366 were returned answered. Out of these, 17 were discarded because of four reasons: (1) the questionnaire was incomplete, (2) the respondent was not studying business administration, (3) the respondent was not in the final year and (4) the respondent was an exchange student, which was considered to belong to a context different from the others. Thus, 349 valid questionnaires were considered for analysis.

With respect to the characterization of the sample, 46% were female and 54% male, and all respondents were attending the final year of the business administration program in the colleges listed in Table 1, and most already had some professional experience - only 6% had never worked or experienced supervised on-the-job training. With regard to age, it was observed that 90% were aged 20 and 30 years old, consistent with the research proposal.

Data collection

For the collection of data, a questionnaire was used and the questions were developed based on the theoretical framework presented in the literature review. The first part of the questionnaire relates to issues qualifying the respondent, in order to eliminate a possible individual who was not part of the research. In the second part of the questionnaire, questions were developed related to the problem and the proposed objectives, as shown in Table 2.

A pretest was conducted with six respondents who had the same profile as the sample in order to verify: (1) the completion time, (2) comprehension of the questions and (3) the lack or excess of any

Table 1. Number of students who graduated in business administration (2010) per college surveyed.

Institution	Number of students who graduated in business administration
A	238
B	203
C	43
D	447
E	169
F	550
G	144
H	207
Total	2001

Table 2. Instrument design.

Dimension	What was investigated	What was asked
Eligibility of respondents	(1) What college the respondent attends? (2) Whether he/she is a graduate student? (3) Whether he/she is a young person?	(1) Name of the College (2) Year of graduation (3) Age
Interest of the students in entrepreneurship	(1) Interest in entrepreneurship	(1) Whether there is interest or not? (2) Why the respondent is interested in entrepreneurship? (3) Number of previous jobs
Entrepreneurship by opportunity or by necessity	(1) Motivation for entrepreneurship	(1) Opportunity or necessity
Family	(1) Influence of the family	(1) Level of influence of the family
Difference between men and women	(1) Gender of the respondent	(1) Male or Female
Business Administration course	(1) Contribution of the business administration course (2) Risks in starting a business	(1) Level of contribution (2) Level of knowledge

question. All suggestions were incorporated in the final questionnaire.

The data obtained were edited in an electronic spreadsheet for a quantitative analysis of the content, which is possible for qualitative studies, as described by Flick (2009). Cross-tables were used in order to simultaneously analyze the dimensions, relating them to each other.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Answering the question proposed for the research problem, which aims to find out if the young business administration students from eight different business

administration colleges of São Paulo are interested in entrepreneurship, the data obtained indicated that most young people interviewed are interested in entrepreneurship, corresponding to 63% of the total, as shown in Figure 1. Analyzing this data in light of the theoretical framework, it appears that this number is consistent with the results of several studies on the subject, such as the GEM (2011).

The main reason given to justify the desire for entrepreneurship was autonomy - cited by 40% of the respondents - followed by personal achievement, financial ascension and the desire to put into practice the knowledge acquired in the business administration

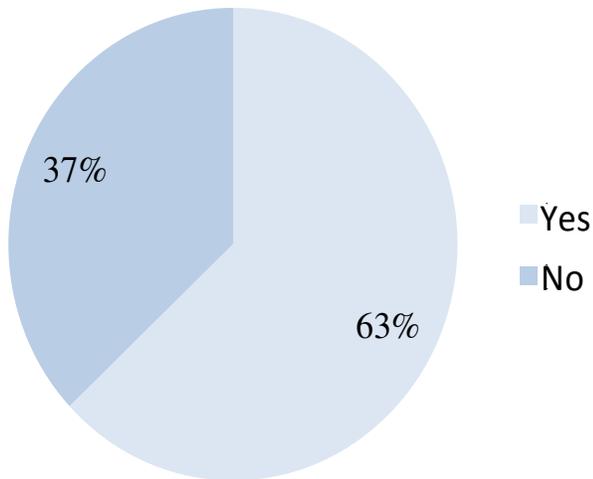


Figure 1. Interest of the young graduate student in entrepreneurship.

Table 3. Interest in entrepreneurship between men and women.

Desire to start their own business (%)	Female	Male	Total
No	44	31	37
Yes	56	69	63
Total	100	100	100

Table 4. Cross table between motivation to start a business and the respondent gender.

Necessity x opportunity (%)	Female	Male	Total
Necessity	20	10	14
Opportunity	80	90	86
No answer	0	2	1
Total	100	100	100

college, mentioned respectively by 15, 11 and 10% of graduating students. Among those who have no interest in entrepreneurship, the most cited reasons were a desire to pursue a corporate career and the lack of an entrepreneurial profile, given respectively by 20 and 19% of the respondents, followed by lack of practice and risks involved - with 8% of respondents for each item. Lack of resources was mentioned by 5% of respondents who are not interested in entrepreneurship.

Regarding the first aspect researched in greater depth in this study, it was shown that there was a difference with respect to the desire to start a business if analyzed from the stand point of gender differences. Men showed

greater interest in having their own business than women, contrary to recent research on the subject. Analyzing the data presented in Table 3, it appears that 69% of young males have an interest in entrepreneurship, while the interest among women is 56%.

Regarding the motivation to start their own business, considering only the respondents who have an interest in entrepreneurship, 86% said they would start their own business and only 14% were necessity-driven. By organizing a table with the intersection of these data with the respondent gender, it was possible to observe the difference between males and females. Among men, the proportion of young people who would start their own business driven by the opportunity was greater than among women, as shown in Table 4.

Another analysis refers to the family influence on the desire to start a business. Data show that the family influences the desire of young people to start a business. Among those who have a desire to have their own business, 59% say that the family encourages them to do so, and 32% are from families who have their own businesses.

On the other hand, 23% of those who are willing to start a business pointed out that the family does not support them, 18% say that the family believes they should have a stable job and 5% are from families that have had businesses that have failed. The results are shown in Table 5, which corresponds only to the respondents who have an interest in entrepreneurship.

These data confirm the results of previous investigations conducted by other authors (Dolabela et al., 2008; Lima-filho et al., 2009) who found that the family influence in raising the interest to start a business and having parents who have their own business influence the desire to be an entrepreneur or not.

As we crossed the variable family influence with the variable on the awareness of the entrepreneurial risks, it is possible to observe that young people who belong to families that have or have had their own business are the ones who claim to know the risks, as shown in Table 6.

In order to verify if the business administration colleges help to increase the interest of young people, the respondents were asked about the contribution of the business administration college to their interest in starting a business. Despite the criticism from various authors about the inadequacy of higher education for training entrepreneurs (Dolabela, 1999; Ferreira and Matos, 2003; Melatti and Vieira, 2010), it was found that 81% of the respondents believe that the college contributes in some way to increase their interest (Figure 2) and state that the institution has provided knowledge, principles and techniques that help the entrepreneurial activity. However, 39% believe that the college has not contributed and indicate as the main reasons the lack of knowledge, the lack of classes on the subject and the focus of the course on large corporations. When asked about the knowledge required to run their own business, such as

Table 5. Family influence on the choice of young people to start a business.

Family influence (%)	Female	Male	Total
Family supports – have their own business	38	29	32
Family supports - encourages young people to have their own business	33	22	27
Family does not support - has had unsuccessful business	3	7	5
Family does not support - prefer to have a stable job	15	20	18
Others	11	20	16
No answer	0	2	1
Total	100	100	100

Table 6. Family influence x awareness of the entrepreneurial risks.

Family influence	Aware of the entrepreneurial risks (%)				Total
	Significant	No	Little	No answer	
Family supports – have their own business	35	7	54	4	100
Family supports - encourages young people to have their own business	25	0	75	0	100
Family does not support - has had unsuccessful business	75	0	25	0	100
Family does not support - prefer to have a stable job	30	15	48	6	100
Others	25	13	63	0	100
No answer	1	0	1	98	100
Total	20	5	38	37	100

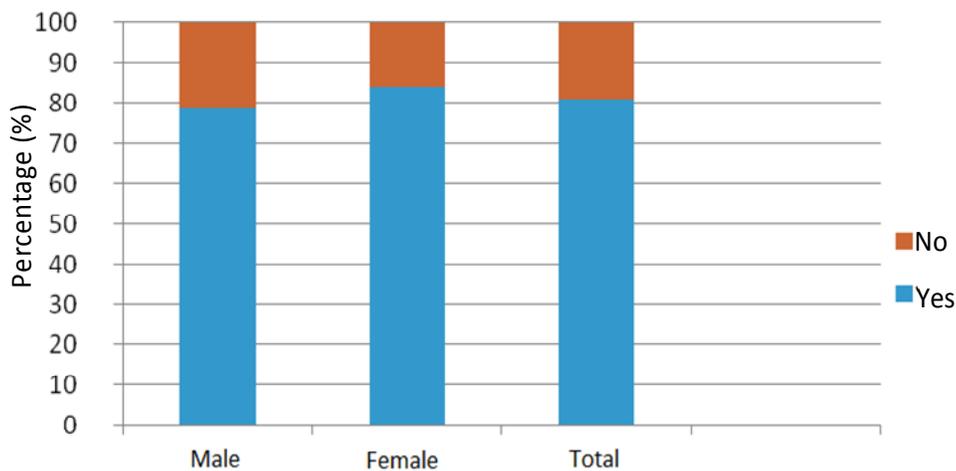


Figure 2. Contribution of the college in raising the interest in entrepreneurship.

marketing, finance, human resources, accounting, 59% believe they lack sufficient knowledge and 41% believe they possess this knowledge.

With respect to the awareness of the entrepreneurial risks, 66% believe they are not aware of them or have little knowledge of these risks and 34% say they are aware of the risks. Although young people consider the college as supportive of their desire to start a business, it appears that they are still not completely safe in relation to the knowledge needed for the entrepreneurial activity. There were no significant differences in the comparison

of the respondents' gender, as can be seen in Tables 7 and 8.

It should be added that, with respect to the age group, the respondents were divided into three groups: 20 to 25, 26 to 30 and over 31 years old. By making a cross-analysis of the respondents' age and the interest in entrepreneurship, no significant difference was detected among the three groups, as shown in Table 9.

This finding contrasts with the research of Borges et al. (2008), who found that there are significant differences among groups of young people from different age groups.

Table 7. Percentage of respondents who believe they have sufficient knowledge.

Business administration knowledge (%)	Female	Male	Total
Yes	42	40	41
No	19	19	19
Moderate	39	41	40
Total	100	100	100

Table 8. Percentage of respondents who believe they know the entrepreneurial risks.

Know the risks (%)	Female	Male	Total
Significant	34	34	34
No	9	4	6
Little	57	62	60
Total	100	100	100

It is worth pointing out that 90% of the sample is in the first two groups, as the objective of the study was to conduct the research among young people.

CONCLUSION AND FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The subject of this research emerged due to the increasing participation of young people in entrepreneurial activities in Brazil. Both in the literature and the empirical data analyzed, the trend of a greater interest in entrepreneurship on the part of young people, highly motivated by the opportunity they glimpse with a new enterprise, was observed.

With respect to the objectives proposed, the current Another question proposed refers to the family influence, and it was found that the family influences most young people who wish to start a business and that part of these families have their own business. It is interesting to note that among the respondents who claim to be aware of the risks in starting a new business, most belong to families that have failed to be successful in their businesses.

Regarding the study limitations, we should mention that this study applied a sample selected by convenience, and does not allow generalization to all young business administration students in São Paulo. The survey was not applied to students in all business administration colleges of São Paulo, and the analysis is restricted to the colleges studied.

We suggest further qualitative studies with young women, in order to investigate the reasons for the growing participation of women in the rates of entrepreneurial activities, since these numbers was not observed in this present research.

This study contributes to a greater understanding of the

Table 9. Cross data of respondents: age group and interest in entrepreneurship.

Age group	Interest in entrepreneurship (%)		
	Yes	No	Total
20/25 years old	63	37	100
26/30 years old	62	38	100
Over 31 years old	62	38	100
Total	63	37	100

future entrepreneurs of the country, points out some weaknesses and barriers in the entrepreneurial activity, and may aid researchers and educators who wish to be closer to this reality, helping young people with specific knowledge educational institutions and entities that support entrepreneurship among young people.

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