

Expanded abstract

Towards a comprehensive model of the university entrepreneurial profile: conceptual framework for the evaluation of social and sustainable entrepreneurial intention

Objectives

The general objective of this article is to propose a conceptual framework for profiling university students as potential social and sustainable entrepreneurs, and to empirically evaluate this through the exploratory validation of the instrument and the identification of differentiated profiles by integrating cognitive, attitudinal, motivational, moral, and contextual dimensions into a conceptual framework for assessing entrepreneurial intention. Specific objectives include: identifying the relevant theoretical dimensions for studying social and sustainable entrepreneurial intention in the university context; operationalizing these dimensions using a psychometric instrument composed of cognitive, attitudinal, motivational, moral, and contextual variables; identifying differentiated profiles of university students according to their social and sustainable entrepreneurial orientations; and finally, analyzing the distinctive characteristics of these profiles.

Methodology

The research follows a quantitative, exploratory, cross-sectional, and non-experimental design. A psychometric questionnaire using a 10-point Likert scale was administered in May 2025 to 422 students at Florida Universitària, producing a final dataset of 375 valid records after data cleaning. The instrument measured entrepreneurial objectives, orientation and intention, together with constructs related to attitudes, beliefs, perceived behavioral control, motivation, moral norms, empathy, values, previous behavior, knowledge, and the university entrepreneurial ecosystem. The analysis combined descriptive statistics, exploratory validation of the measurement instrument, and profile segmentation. Gaussian Mixture Models were used to identify latent groups, while Principal Component Analysis supported visualization and interpretation of the profiles.

Results

The findings show that social and sustainable entrepreneurial intention among university students is not configured as a single homogeneous pattern. Descriptive results indicate that most constructs were located in medium or medium-high ranges. Subjective norm showed the high-

est values, reflecting strong perceived social support for entrepreneurship, while perceived behavioral control, entrepreneurial intention, and especially past behavior showed the lowest averages. This suggests that many students express favorable values or perceptions but have limited prior experience in business creation, social projects, or environmental initiatives.

The measurement instrument showed acceptable exploratory psychometric performance. Internal reliability and convergent validity were generally adequate, although some constructs, such as control beliefs, past behavior, and social values, presented more moderate values. Discriminant validity was also acceptable overall, but the study identified conceptual proximity between several constructs, especially among cognitive, motivational, moral, social, and environmental dimensions. These overlaps require cautious interpretation and future refinement of the instrument.

The global clustering identified two broad groups: students with defined entrepreneurial objectives and students without entrepreneurial objectives or with low entrepreneurial propensity. The first group showed stronger scores in entrepreneurial objectives, entrepreneurial intention, attitude, perceived control, knowledge, and beliefs. The second group showed more dispersed responses and a stronger orientation toward dependent employment. However, subjective norm, empathy, moral norms, environmental values, and social values remained relatively high in both groups, indicating that prosocial and environmental dispositions are present even among students with low entrepreneurial intention.

Within the group of students with entrepreneurial objectives, the specific segmentation identified three profiles in the social orientation and three profiles in the sustainable orientation: very high, high, and medium. These profiles were differentiated mainly by levels of perceived behavioral control, motivation, knowledge, previous experience, and orientation of objectives. A central finding is the asymmetric overlap between social and sustainable orientations. Students with sustainable entrepreneurial orientation tend to integrate social objectives, while students with social entrepreneurial orientation do not incorporate environmental objectives with the same intensity.

Limitations

The main limitations are the cross-sectional and exploratory design, which allows the characterization of latent profiles but does not provide a definitive test of structural relationships among constructs; the use of a single institution and non-probabilistic convenience sampling; the high proportion of Education students in the sample; the possible difficulty of distinguishing adjacent categories in a 10-point Likert scale; and the presence of high HTMT values between some constructs, suggesting conceptual overlap that should be refined in future applications.

Practical conclusions

The findings indicate that university entrepreneurship education should be designed according to differentiated student profiles rather than assuming a homogeneous student popula-

tion. Students with high social and environmental values but low entrepreneurial intention could benefit from introductory programs focused on strengthening knowledge, perceived behavioral control, and understanding of social or sustainable business models. Students with medium levels of intention may require applied experiences, mentoring, and contact with real problems, while more consolidated profiles could benefit from incubation mechanisms, legal and organizational advice, and access to financing or collaboration networks.

The study also indicates that empathy, moral norms, and social or environmental values do not automatically translate into entrepreneurial intention. These dispositions may constitute a favorable base, but they need to be connected with competencies, specific knowledge, and action-oriented practical experiences.

Original value

The original value of the study lies in its integrated and configurational approach to university entrepreneurial intention. Rather than assuming a single profile of the social or sustainable entrepreneur, the study combines theoretical integration, exploratory instrument validation, and probabilistic segmentation to identify differentiated configurations among students. The integration of the Theory of Planned Behavior and Goal-Oriented Reasoning Theory allows the model to incorporate cognitive antecedents, motivation, and professional objectives, while the addition of moral, value-based, experiential, and contextual variables captures dimensions particularly relevant to social and sustainable entrepreneurship. Methodologically, the use of GMM and PCA demonstrates the usefulness of exploratory analytical strategies for identifying latent profiles in heterogeneous university populations and for designing differentiated educational interventions.