

# Drivers for entrepreneurial intention. A comparative analysis using statistical tools and techniques

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**Abstract:** *In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in awareness of the importance of promoting entrepreneurship to the younger generation. The paper aims to analyse the effect of intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and creativity on students' entrepreneurial intention. A quantitative approach was used in the form of a survey questionnaire, which was administered to a sample of 197 students in the Faculty of Business and Administration, University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania. The findings of the study showed that these cognitive and non-cognitive skills have a positive effect on students' entrepreneurial intention.*

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship, drivers of entrepreneurial intention, intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, creativity, students

**JEL:** C02, C10, C83, I23, L26

## 1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship, ever since the First Industrial Revolution, has become a topic of intense interest for stakeholders such as companies, governments and researchers (Grădinaru et al., 2017; Marinescu et al., 2017), and those aiming at reaching economic dominance look at entrepreneurship as a supporting pillar (Grădinaru et al., 2020). Entrepreneurship is a significant source of job creation, innovation and economic growth, as well as higher product and services quality, increased competition, and improved economic flexibility (Hisrich et al., 2007). At the heart of the entrepreneurial process is the entrepreneur, whose role is of high importance in both economy and society.

As fostering the entrepreneurial spirit becomes a key factor for general development and the subject of great interest for scholars and policy-makers, studying the entrepreneurial intention within “universities can be seen as potential sources of future entrepreneurs” (Turker and Seluk, 2009). Entrepreneurial intention can be easily decoded as the individual’s attitude regarding entrepreneurship (Margaça, Sánchez-García and Sánchez, 2020). As intention is the process prior to the actual behaviour, it is imperative that we try to understand what drives entrepreneurial intention in young people. Over the past decade, multiple factors have been considered to explain entrepreneurial intention. Understanding the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention in young people is crucial as intention is the best predictor of entrepreneurial action (Krueger et al., 2000).

Therefore, to determine the personal abilities that stimulate the entrepreneurial intention, we follow both their cognitive side and the emotional sphere.

The paper aims to determine students’ interest in entrepreneurship as a career choice, as well as, measuring scores of entrepreneurial intention and student skills to analyse the effect of cognitive and non-cognitive abilities on entrepreneurial intention.

Based on these considerations, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Most of the students surveyed thought about becoming entrepreneurs.

H2: Most of the students perform better in terms of cognitive skills.

H3: Cognitive skills are most often seen as strengths.

H4: Most of the students are faithful and associate spirituality with a way of thinking.

H5: Cognitive intelligence has a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention.

H6: Emotional intelligence has a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention.

H7: Spiritual intelligence has a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention.

H8: Creativity has a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention.

H9: Entrepreneurial intention is linked to student specialization.

H10: Socio-demographic factors influence entrepreneurial intention.

The present paper is structured in five sections. It starts establishing the context of the paper, highlighting the purpose of the conducted study. The literature review is providing the foundation for a theoretical framework, summarising relevant contributions of previous studies addressing entrepreneurial intention. We then describe our research methodology, as well as the collected data, and discuss the main results. The paper ends by pointing out the main conclusions.

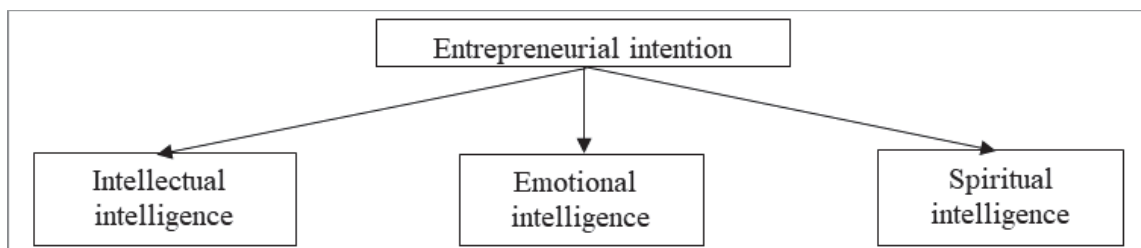
2. Literature review

Entrepreneurship represents a true global phenomenon (Catană et al., 2020) and a key pillar in reaching vast social and economic success, critical for any entrepreneur who wants to “accelerate economic development through generating new ideas and converting them into profitable ventures” (Turker and Seluk, 2009, pp.142). Due to the fact that engaging in entrepreneurial endeavours is a matter of deliberate choice (Obschonka, Silbereisen and Schmitt, 2010, Apud, Krueger, 2007), and that new venture creation boosts overall prosperity (Díaz-García and Jiménez-Moreno, 2010), it is essential to study the specific drivers for entrepreneurial intention. This concept refers to a specific state of mind that directs individuals’ focus to achieve a goal (Zhang, Wang and Owen, 2005, Apud, Bird, 1998), to create and implement new business concepts (Nasurdin et al., 2009) in an increasing creative business environment (Toma, 2019; Toma and Catană, 2021).

There are various approaches for entrepreneurial intention among which we can find the psychological approach that refers to the psychological characteristics/traits that are specific and unique to entrepreneurs and that serves as “predictors of the entrepreneurial orientation” (Ferreira et al., 2012, pp.426), or the behavioural approach that can provide strong intentions for self-employment if the person displays behavioural control and self-efficacy (Kickul et al., 2008).

Several studies have been conducted to investigate entrepreneurial intention since research in this field has been a fruitful area of study for many years. According to Fayolle and Liñán (2014), entrepreneurial intent is a well-established research topic in the field of entrepreneurship. Previous research (Zampetakis, et al., 2011) contributes to our understanding of young people’s entrepreneurial intentions by explaining the link between young people’s creativity and their desire to start a business. Other significant studies have been conducted by Gudiyattam (2018), Radiman, Sukiman and Agus (2021), regarding the effect between entrepreneurial intention and emotional and spiritual intelligence. Recent research (Manik, Sari and Sitepu, 2021) shows that the variables of intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence influence students’ entrepreneurial intention (Fig.1).

Figure 1: Entrepreneurial intention correlated to intellectual, emotional and spiritual intelligence



Source: Authors’ contribution

Intellectual intelligence refers to human mental capacity and understanding developed through thinking, showing one’s ability of “insight and intelligence to adapt effectively and

dynamically” (Sitepu, Nursiah and Azar, 2020, pp.118). Intellectual intelligence relates to the ability to solve problems, the capacity to convey ideas and execute decisions, elements that can be seen as characteristics of a successful entrepreneur (Sitepu, Nursiah and Azar, 2020).

Emotional intelligence is a mental process (Mortan et al., 2014) referring to the ability to monitor own emotions and those of others, to distinguish them, and to use this information to coordinate thinking and actions (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Entrepreneurial intention is linked to emotional intelligence because feeling more capable to handle various challenges and frustrations derived from being an entrepreneur implies that the individuals trust their capacity to regulate their emotions (Rodrigues et al., 2019) and, thus, showing self-awareness, self-control, self-consciousness and good management of relations (Dehkordi et al., 2012).

According to Zohar and Marshall (2000), spiritual intelligence can be defined as the ability to deal with issues of meaning and value, the capability to place life in a broader and richer context. Spiritual intelligence enables the individual to apply positive values, allowing problem-solving techniques by using spiritual resources and reaching a greater level of awareness (Sitepu, Nursiah and Azar, 2020). Moreover, it enables “a strong sense of purpose and a high level of motivation” (Fard et al, 2018, pp.169).

Therefore, intellectual intelligence is undoubtedly an accurate predictor of business performance and career success. Emotional intelligence is a prerequisite for success in the workplace, and it is becoming increasingly important in the field of entrepreneurship. Similar to the growing interest in cognitive and emotional intelligence, there is a growing interest in the integration and application of spiritual intelligence in the field of entrepreneurship.

Creativity is the ability to generate, create or discover new ideas, solutions or possibilities. Although creativity is often associated with the arts, it is a vital form of intelligence that causes individuals in different fields to discover something new. Linking creativity to entrepreneurship means defining creativity as “balanced unfolding and converging of experience and entrepreneurship as the management of radical change” (Nystrom, 1993, p.237). This, in turn, implies the existence and the strong role played by a creative entrepreneur, generating innovation and acting as more than an agent of change as he seeks for and exploits change that is seen as an opportunity (Yarzebinski, 1992).

Studying entrepreneurial intention within universities is becoming increasingly important as educational institutions, through their resources, processes and various stakeholders promote student initiative in various forms (personal projects, spin-offs, etc.) and, thus, they stimulate the basis of an entrepreneurial process: seeking opportunities (Grădinaru, Toma and Marinescu, 2018).

### 3. Research methodology

To reach the research objective of the paper, the authors based their study on the descriptive quantitative research design, also using sources of secondary data such as articles and books. The data for the study were collected from a sample of 197 students from the Faculty of Business and Administration, University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania, divided into the following

specializations teaching in Romanian: Business Administration (AA), Public Administration (AP), Economic Cybernetics (CE), Marketing (MK), and one specialization teaching in English: Business Administration (BA).

The questions/statements in this research use a Likert scale (scale 7), which refers to a scale used to measure a person's attitudes, perceptions and opinions about different social issues (Anderson, 2020). The questionnaire was organized into six sections. The first section measures the entrepreneurial intention, the following four sections measure the abilities including intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and the creativity of the students, while the last section measures the demographic variables.

The definition and operational variables according to this study are stated below.

Intellectual intelligence is the ability to make decisions and solve problems logically and rationally and can be measured using indicators like analytical, verbal and numeric skills.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to effectively perceive, understand and manage emotions and can be quantified considering its five dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills.

Spiritual intelligence is the ability to use spiritual resources to solve certain problems. Indicators of spiritual intelligence include problem-solving through spiritual resources, a higher level of self-awareness, detachment from negative emotions and replacing them with positive emotions.

Creativity is the ability to take a new approach to decision-making and problem-solving. Creativity can be assessed by indicators such as flexibility and adaptability to change, the courage to take risks in making decisions, thinking "out of the box".

The survey data were analysed using various statistical analysis techniques and the statistical analysis tool RStudio. With this tool, descriptive statistics like mean, median, standard deviation were calculated, as well as statistical techniques such as ANOVA that also include tests used at checking its assumptions (Shapiro-Wilk test, Bartlett's test, Levene's test). The analysis of variance (ANOVA) is applied when more than two groups of subjects are compared (Miller, 1997).

#### 4. Results and discussions

According to the responses, 87% of respondents have so far considered becoming entrepreneurs, while 13% of them have not thought about this. The ability to make decisions and solve problems logically and rationally receives the most votes, accounting for 38% of them. In terms of gender, 91% of female respondents considered becoming entrepreneurs, while a lower percentage of male respondents, 82%, considered doing so. Based on the residence, 88% of rural respondents thought about becoming entrepreneurs, while 86% of urban respondents considered it.

The descriptive statistics for the main variables of interest to the current study, including entrepreneurial intention, intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, creativity scores, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The empirical results of descriptive statistics

| Variable                  | Mean  | Median | Max.  | Min.  | Standard deviation | Coefficient of variation |
|---------------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Entrepreneurial intention | 10.85 | 11.00  | 14.00 | 2.00  | 2.759705           | 25.42853%                |
| Intellectual intelligence | 30.70 | 28.00  | 35.00 | 14.00 | 4.761308           | 15.50889%                |
| Emotional intelligence    | 27.92 | 28.00  | 35.00 | 13.00 | 4.416954           | 15.81785%                |
| Spiritual intelligence    | 16.81 | 17.00  | 21.00 | 3.00  | 3.216706           | 19.13319%                |
| Creativity                | 28.21 | 29.00  | 35.00 | 13.00 | 4.238109           | 15.02443%                |

Source: Authors' contribution using RStudio software

The five coefficients of variation record values <30%, which indicate that the five means of these variables are representative, the variance being low and the data sets homogeneous.

Table 2: Entrepreneurial intention and abilities scores based on students' specialization

| Specializations              | Entrepreneurial intention | Intellectual intelligence | Emotional intelligence | Spiritual intelligence | Creativity |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Business Administration (AA) | 11.61                     | 30.72                     | 27.19                  | 17.43                  | 28.07      |
| Public Administration (AP)   | 9.433                     | 29.87                     | 29.48                  | 16.17                  | 28.83      |
| Economic Cybernetics (CE)    | 9.794                     | 31.71                     | 26.94                  | 15.79                  | 27.26      |
| Marketing (MK)               | 10.23                     | 29.63                     | 27.73                  | 17.13                  | 28.94      |
| Business Administration (BA) | 12.23                     | 31.39                     | 29.37                  | 16.81                  | 28.23      |

Source: Authors' contribution using RStudio software

Table 2 shows the average entrepreneurial intention score, as well as the average skill score.

According to these observations, we can notice that the highest entrepreneurial intention score (12.23) is recorded in BA specialization. CE specialization excels in intellectual intelligence (31.71), while AP specialization is proficient in emotional skills (29.48). Regarding spiritual intelligence, the highest score (17.43) corresponds to the AA specialization, and the best performance in creativity (28.94) is noticed in MK specialization.

Since the dependent variable is quantitative, in the form of scores and the other variables are categorical, we chose the ANOVA technique as a statistical model, to highlight the links between entrepreneurial intention and the four skills, but also to illustrate the connection between entrepreneurial intention and specialization.

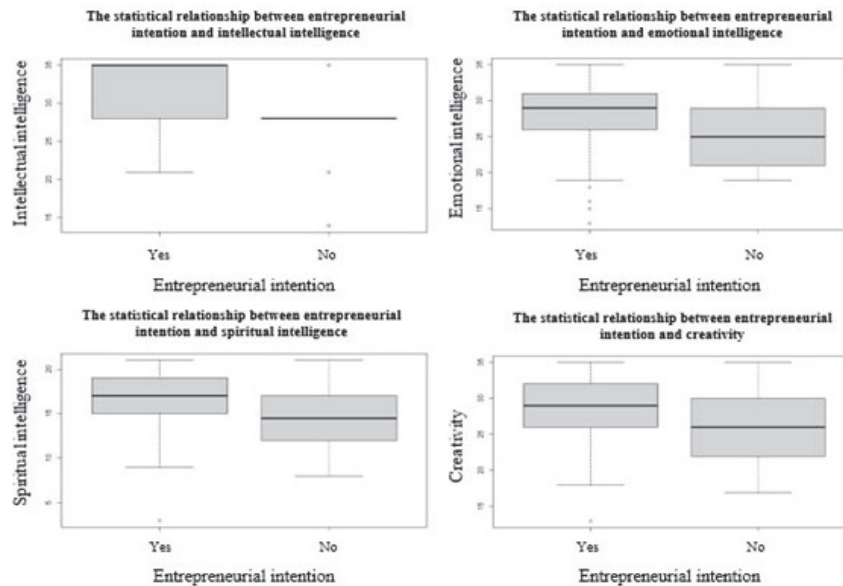
Table 3: The empirical results of ANOVA: Intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, creativity and entrepreneurial intention

| Variable   | F     | P-value  |
|------------|-------|----------|
| IQ         | 20.75 | 9.2e-06  |
| EQ         | 11.39 | 0.000889 |
| SQ         | 20.59 | 9.93e-06 |
| Creativity | 8.136 | 0.00481  |

Source: Authors' contribution using RStudio software

According to the several One-Way ANOVA analysis conducted and illustrated in Table 3, we observed that there is a statistically significant relationship between intellectual intelligence and entrepreneurial intention (p-value = 9.2e-06 < 0.05). The same conclusion can be outlined regarding emotional intelligence (p-value = 0.000889 < 0.05), spiritual intelligence (p-value = 9.93e-06 < 0.05) and creativity (p-value = 0.00481 < 0.05). Thus, we demonstrated the positive effect between entrepreneurial intention and the four skills.

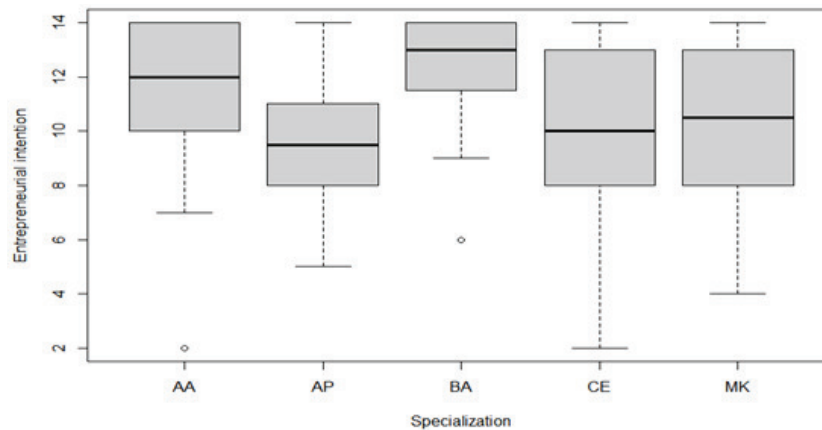
Figure 2: The statistical relationships between entrepreneurial intention and the abilities



Source: Authors' contribution using RStudio software

Based on the boxplots displayed in Figure 2, it is notable that the abilities scores are higher when there is an entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, when there is an interest in becoming an entrepreneur, most of the values of the abilities scores are found at the top of the scale, with predominant high values.

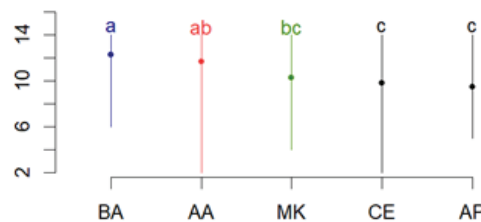
Figure 3: The statistical relationship between entrepreneurial intention and specialization



Source: Authors' contribution using RStudio software

The One-Way ANOVA analysis we have conducted to determine if the entrepreneurial intention differs depending on the specialization is exemplified in Figure 3. The illustrated box-plots denote that for all the five specializations, high values of the entrepreneurial intention score predominate. Moreover, we can say that students in the BA specialization are the most likely to become entrepreneurs, followed by AA, then MK, CE, and finally AP specialization. The Tukey HSD test shows that there are differences between the following specializations: AP vs AA, CE vs AA, BA vs AP, CE vs BA, MK vs BA ( $p$ -value < 0.05). Also, the Least Significant Difference test comes in addition by finding similarities between BA/AA, AA/MK and MK/CE/AP (Fig. 4), regarding the entrepreneurial intention.

Figure 4: Groups and range according to specialization



Source: Authors' contribution using RStudio software

The results indicate there is a similar interest in the opportunity to become entrepreneurs for students in AA and BA specializations as they tend to have more inclinations in the business field. Students in MK, CE and AP specializations present similarities regarding entrepreneurial intention because their focus is more likely to be directed towards other points of interest rather than entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, students in AA and MK specializations share a similar interest in becoming entrepreneurs since MK serves as a link between these specializations.



## 5. Conclusions

According to the findings of this study, most of the students surveyed have considered becoming entrepreneurs, they prove to be more proficient in cognitive skills, and the poorest in emotional abilities, while the capability to make decisions and solve problems logically and rationally, which is related to the cognitive sphere, is the most commonly regarded as a strength.

Regarding faith and the perception of spirituality, 40% of the respondents are faithful, and 34% associate spirituality with a way of thinking. In terms of demographics, female and rural respondents are more interested in becoming entrepreneurs.

Cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and creativity are significant predictors of entrepreneurial intention. Moreover, the intention to become an entrepreneur is positively influenced by the specialization of students. Therefore, the previously formulated hypotheses are validated, and thus we demonstrated the positive effect between cognitive and non-cognitive skills and entrepreneurial intention among students with economic profiles, as well as the link between entrepreneurial intention and student specialization.

Furthermore, according to the p values of the four skills, we can order them based on the intensity of their relationship with the entrepreneurial intention. Thus, the most strongly correlated with entrepreneurial intention is cognitive intelligence, followed by spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and eventually creativity.

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