

THE CHALLENGES OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR YOUNG UNIVERSITY GRADUATES IN BURKINA FASO, CAMEROON, AND CHAD

ABSTRACT

The unemployment of young graduates is a major concern for African states. To address the unemployment resulting from repeated economic and political crises, the inability of the job market to absorb successive waves of graduates, and the mismatch between training and market demands, entrepreneurship emerges as a viable solution for young graduates. Our study aims to examine the perception of entrepreneurship among graduates of higher education institutions. Based on a survey conducted in thirteen universities in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Chad, we distributed six hundred questionnaires to Master's and Bachelor's degree students of all genders. The data collection was conducted by the firm The results of this study show that, in general, perceptions and intentions of entrepreneurship, as well as the evaluation of the predominance of advantages over disadvantages, are positive. The results show that the establishment of training and the field of specialization positively influence the respondents' decision to start a business.

Keywords: unemployment, young people, intention and perception, motivation and belief, entrepreneurship, universities, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad.

CONTEXT AND ISSUES

Over the past two decades, repeated economic crises have led to job insecurity, resulting in high unemployment rates in Africa. Young graduates are particularly vulnerable to unemployment as a result of economic and political crises. Added to this are population growth, the government's inability to implement a reliable employment policy, the inability of the labor market to absorb successive cohorts of young graduates, and the inadequacy of training to meet the demands of this market. Entrepreneurship is emerging as the alternative proposed by several organizations and governments (World Bank, UNCTAD, AfDB, OECD, and UNDP, 2014). . Indeed, economic entrepreneurship has become crucial, as it is a factor in the growth and economic development of a nation, or even a sub-region. It helps to strengthen a region's capacity to adapt by renewing its stakeholders. Entrepreneurship creates jobs, stimulates economic growth and innovation, and improves social conditions. This is why Schumpeter (1989) argues that it is the engine of economic and social development. New businesses adapt to the new situation because, when they enter a market for the first time, they offer products and services that did not previously exist locally, thereby broadening consumer choice (Jarniou, 1999) by offering them tailored product ranges.

According to statistics from African data production institutes, youth underemployment represents a loss of economic growth. In this regard, youth employment issues are a universal concern, but particularly pressing in Africa. The ILO (2013) argues that the global

youth unemployment rate has remained stable in recent years, falling from 12.7% in 2009 to 12.3% in 2011, then rising from 12.4% in 2012 to 12.6% in 2013. However, INSEE (2018) notes that the global unemployment rate reached 12.8%, according to statistics that vary from one subregion to another.

Furthermore, according to UNFPA (2011), 35% of the African continent's population is unemployed. According to this organization, the main challenges facing young African graduates are unemployment, underemployment, difficulty in linking training and employment, poverty, and limited access to capital.

Faced with this situation, and in the broader context of the new socio-economic landscape combined with unexpected crises that are prompting African countries to strengthen their resilience, a consensus is emerging: African governments must more actively promote socio-economic development by putting entrepreneurial mechanisms in place. The latter have the task not only of creating favorable conditions for workforce skills development and infrastructure, but also of improving the investment climate by identifying and supporting start-up SMEs and entrepreneurial projects. This hypothesis is confirmed by the existence of new emerging economic models that challenge established principles and open up new avenues (Tounès, 2006). However, it seems clear on the ground that the number of new businesses created by young graduates is low.

The purpose of this study is to improve and disseminate knowledge about entrepreneurship among young people by testing their desire and belief in the subject. It also provides public authorities with appropriate responses to support graduates in their thinking and decision-making about entrepreneurship.

The aim of our article is to contribute to a better understanding of entrepreneurship and to establish a profile of economic entrepreneurs in order to identify the conditions for the emergence and development of entrepreneurial spirit, which is a source of ideas and projects. It also aims to present the environmental opportunities that favor creation and the factors that stimulate entrepreneurial spirit (Bamba et al., 2021). It is therefore essential to explore and examine entrepreneurial climates, entrepreneurial perception, and the contribution of higher education, support, and programs aimed at young African entrepreneurs with degrees. This theoretical framework gives rise to the following questions:

What obstacles prevent them from doing so? To what extent can entrepreneurship be a solution to unemployment? While support for entrepreneurial initiatives is crucial, the question of the contribution of higher education institutions to youth entrepreneurship is a delicate one.

In the first part, we present the theoretical and conceptual framework of entrepreneurship. The second part is devoted to methodology and models of entrepreneurship. The third part

presents and analyzes the results. The fourth part is devoted to interpreting the results and discussion, followed by conclusions and implications.

I. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Numerous writings on entrepreneurship have given rise to a wide range of publications (Filion, 1997). Outside the field of economics and social sciences, topics related to entrepreneurship extend to various other areas. In their various works, some authors examine the diverse behaviors of entrepreneurs (Alexandre, 2016; Manchesnay, 1934). According to the latter, these include behaviors, activity systems, entrepreneurial processes, corporate entrepreneurship, ethnic entrepreneurship, etc. Independent disciplinary approaches are no longer sufficient to explain this increasingly difficult field of study (Fayolle, 2002; Bruyard, 2001). When it comes to entrepreneurship, approaches and methods have often varied from one country to another and from one continent to another (Filion, 1997). In this context, our study examines the theories underlying entrepreneurship in order to explain the different models in use.

Entrepreneurial theories and behaviors of entrepreneurs

Several theories underpin the field of entrepreneurship and attempt to define entrepreneurial behavior. We are witnessing the emergence of several training models, including those of Shapero and Sokol (1982) and Ajzen (1991), which are supported by numerous researchers (Krueger, 1993; Krueger and Carsrud, 1993).

Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991)

The theory of planned behavior gives the individual's intention a central role in the genesis of behavior (Tounès, 2003; Fayolle et al., 2006). It proposes a reference model that can be used in all situations where behavior is intentional, as it is based solely on external variables that are immediate determinants of behavior (Emin, 2003). Intention is in fact the result of three conceptual determinants: attitude towards behavior, perceived social norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

➤ The perceived social norm

It refers to perceived social pressures to engage in or refrain from a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In other words, perceived social norms correspond to an individual's perception of social pressure regarding the opinions of their loved ones, family, and friends about what they would like to do (Tounès, 2003; Fayolle et al., 2006). Attitudes towards behavior and perceived social norms refer to the concept of desirability proposed by Shapero and Sokol (Fayolle, 2005).

➤ Attitude toward behavior

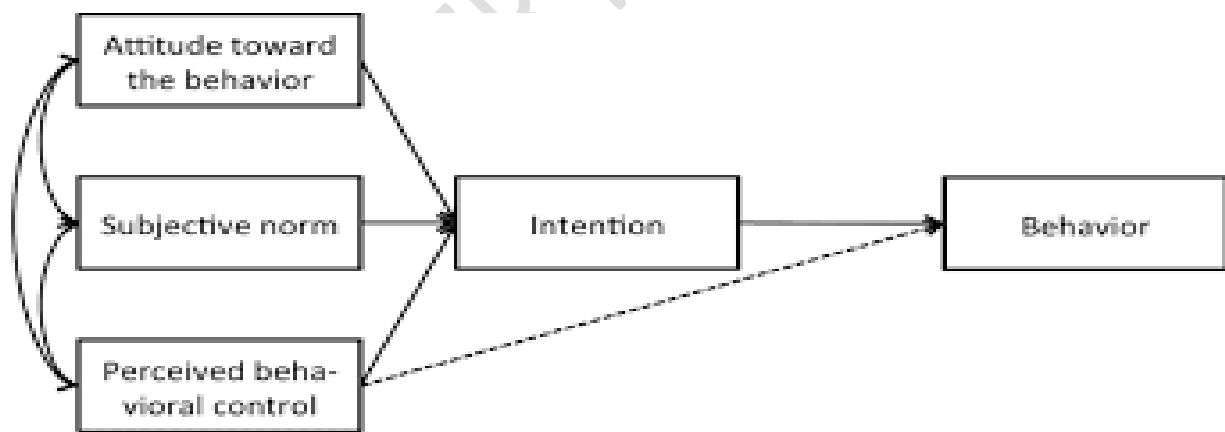
It refers to a person's favorable or unfavorable assessment of it (Ajzen, 1991). This variable represents the attractiveness of the behavior (Emin et al., 2005). For example, attitude toward risk leads a person to view risk-taking in a positive or negative light. Similarly, attitude toward the success and failure of entrepreneurship influences an individual's decision to start a business.

➤ Perceived behavioral control

In general, behavior is defined as an individual's characteristic attitude. According to Ajzen (1991), perceived behavioral control corresponds to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing a behavior. It refers to a person's perception of their own ability to perform the behavior in question (Emin et al., 2005). The concept of perceived behavioral control is very similar to that of personal efficacy in Bandura (1977) and feasibility in Shapero and Sokol (1982). Attitudes toward behavior, perceived social norms, and perceived behavioral control are expressed in terms of beliefs (Tounes, 2003). These correspond to the true or false information that a person has about the world around them.

Figure 1: Diagram explaining the theory of planned behavior

This diagram shows that attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control constitute intention. Intention lies between these variables and behavior. Intention and perceived behavioral control therefore drive behavior.



Source: Theoretical model of planned behavior adapted from Ajzen (1991)

1.1.1 Theoretical model of the entrepreneurial event (Shapero and Sokol, 1982)

The theoretical model resulting from their work encourages individuals to turn to entrepreneurship rather than other professions. Based on the concepts and dimensions of entrepreneurship, they define entrepreneurial intention as the result of a positive or negative perception of the desirability and feasibility of entrepreneurship in a social, political, and cultural environment.

Shapero's (1975) entrepreneurial model aims to explain the entrepreneurial event, i.e., to study the factors that explain the choice of entrepreneurship over other career paths. This entrepreneurial event, resulting from a combination of four variables (Emin, 2004), could be translated into entrepreneurial action, the perception of desirability, the perception of feasibility, and the propensity to act.

❖ Entrepreneurship

The situation that precipitates entrepreneurial action can be negative (divorce, emigration, dismissal), positive (influence of family, existence of a market or potential investors) or intermediate (leaving the army, school or prison) (Tounès, 2006).

❖ Perception of the desirability of the act

Desirability refers to the social and cultural factors that influence an individual's value system. Previous experiences and failures in entrepreneurial ventures, for example, reinforce these perceptions (Aboubakari and Feudjo, 2020).

❖ Perception of the feasibility of the act

One final remark concerns the fact that Shapero's model does not explicitly refer to the intention to start a business. In line with Shapero, Krueger (1993) developed a model of entrepreneurial event formation that incorporates the concept of intention (Emin, 2004, p. 3). All of these variables must work together and interact to lead to the entrepreneurial event.

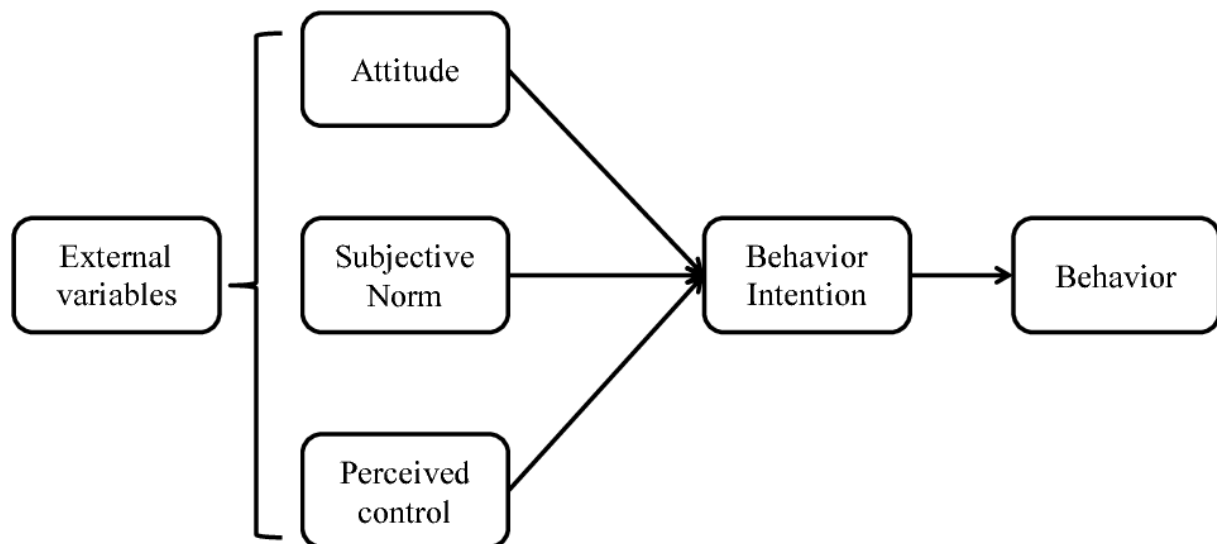
Furthermore, Boissin et al. (2008) define perceived desirability as the degree of attraction a person feels toward starting a business. It refers to the perceived appeal of starting a business, taking into account the influence of beliefs, principles, fears, cultural and social factors, as well as the presence of entrepreneurial role models in one's social circle (Audet, 2004). Based on the notion of perceived sustainability, perceived feasibility symbolizes the degree to which a person believes they can successfully start a business (Boissin et al., 2005). The latter results in particular from the presence of support to acquire the resources necessary to start a business (Tournes, 2003; Omrane, 2015). Desirability and feasibility interact to give a clear attitude and vision of entrepreneurship (Benata, 2016; Aboubakari and Feudjo, 2020).

The theory of reasoned action is a model developed in social psychology to study the field of entrepreneurship (Fishbein, M., and Ajzen, 1975). These authors point out that the basis for the decision to engage in entrepreneurial action is the hope of achieving a certain result following the execution of the behavior. The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) posits that human behavior must first be decided and planned in order to be concrete. For an entrepreneur to decide on their actions, they must take into account three types of

interacting factors: attitudes toward behavior (desirability of entrepreneurship), social norms (influence and opinion of loved ones), and determination or self-efficacy, i.e., beliefs about their ability to succeed (Boufeldja, 2014).

Figure 2: Theoretical model of formation

This figure shows us that intention is formed by perceived experience and desirability, as well as perceived feasibility. The latter tends toward the initiation of the act.

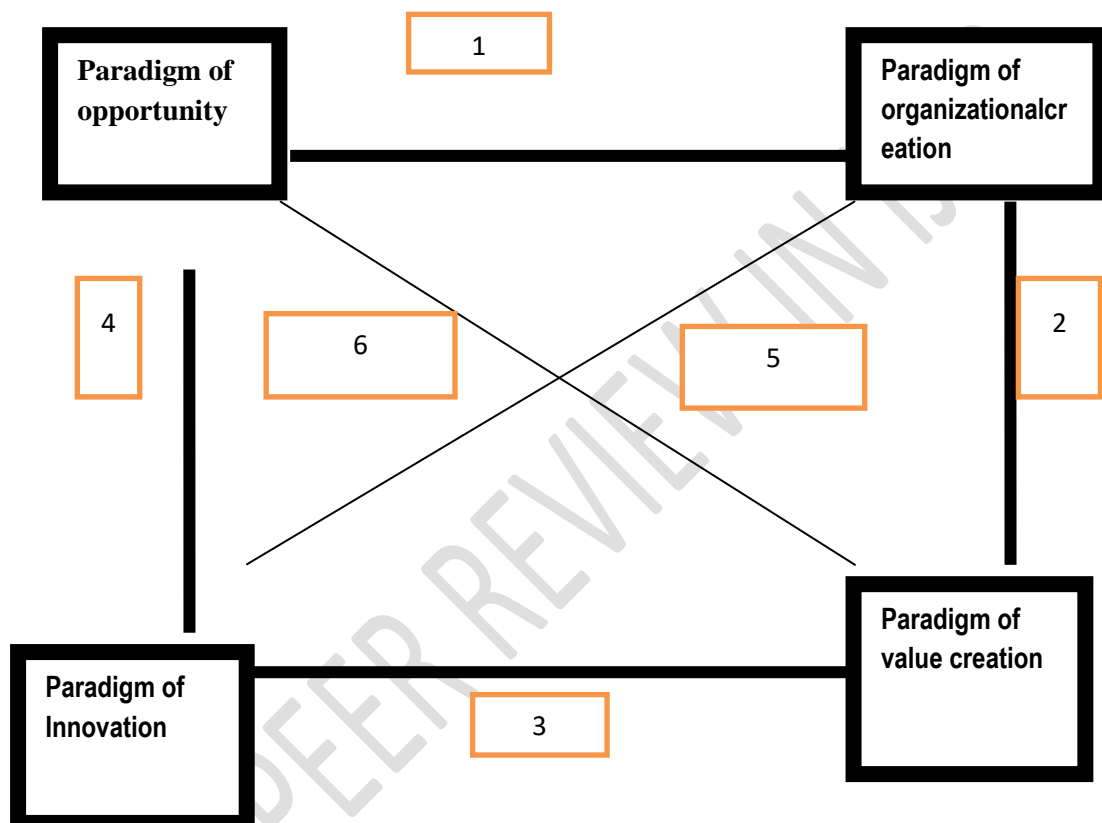


Source: Entrepreneurial event model adapted from Shapero and Sokol (1982)

1.1.2 The complementarity of different paradigms

In their definition of entrepreneurship, Paturel and Arasti (2006) refer to four complementary paradigms. According to them, entrepreneurship is “an idea for exploiting an opportunity within the framework of an organization that is driven, created from scratch or initially taken over, then developed by an individual or a team undergoing a significant change in their lives, according to a process that leads to the creation of new value or the elimination of waste of existing value.” According to Hernandez (2001), “the entrepreneur is the one who initiates a complex process.” Hisrich and Peter (1989) propose a table that summarizes two concepts: innovation, favored by Schumpeter and Drucker, and the creation of organization, favored by Gartner (1993). Verstraete (2000) presents entrepreneurship as a heterogeneous phenomenon involving multidimensional and complex tasks that cannot be reduced to a simple definition or a single paradigm.

In line with these different perceptions, Gartner has argued for three decades that “the complementarity of the different schools of thought is quite evident in several respects.” To explore this concept further, Verstraete and Fayolle (2005) propose a model combining four key dimensions of entrepreneurship: value creation, organization creation, innovation, and opportunity detection. The first two paradigms focus on the outcome of the process, while the latter two focus on the resources involved in the process.



This diagram shows us that the paradigms of entrepreneurship are the cross-relationship between the paradigm of opportunity, the paradigm of innovation, the paradigm of organizational creation, and the paradigm of value creation.

Link 1: To exploit a business opportunity, it is necessary to organize in some way. Various resources crystallize into an organization (process and/or result).

Link 2: The organization cannot exist in the long term (and the entrepreneur cannot maintain his status with respect to this organization) without providing its stakeholders with the value they expect and from which it draws the resources necessary for its operation.

Link 3: When the value added is significant, it is often the result of an innovation, whether organizational, technical, or commercial.

Link 4: An innovation corresponds to the introduction of an opportunity to the market. Innovation can be considered a process of socializing a new technique or commercial method. It also involves providing a new product or service, or the emergence of a new organization in a given market or sector.

Link 5: Like an opportunity, exploiting an innovation requires organization, and the existence of the latter fosters the creative interactions necessary for innovation.

Link 6: An opportunity is only exploited if it is perceived as capable of generating value, at least for the person who identified it.

1.2 Entrepreneurial motivation and intention

A classic approach to entrepreneurship attempts to highlight the differences between entrepreneurs and ordinary citizens. For Schumpeter (1934), entrepreneurs are innovators who develop new technologies. Indeed, several practitioners, such as Casson (1982), believe that entrepreneurs' personal characteristics are tools for understanding the motivation behind their behavior.

1.2.1 Types and sources of entrepreneurial ideas

Entrepreneurship is considered a dynamic and complex process, as it results from psychological, sociocultural, political, and economic factors (MujingaKapemba et al., 2023). It manifests itself through attitudes, perceptions, norms, intentions, and behaviors in a given context (Tounes, 2007, p. 74). According to the author, business creation is the most visible manifestation of entrepreneurship. It can be broken down into four phases: propensity, intention, decision, and action. Business creation is a complex phenomenon that can be approached from many angles. Hernandez (2001) emphasizes that the intention or desire to be an entrepreneur is the first element necessary for the creation of an organization, and manifests itself in the search for information useful for action.

Entrepreneurial intent is indeed at the heart of the process (Bird, 1988), which is of definite interest. Alexandre (2016) highlights the existence of other categories of entrepreneurs, including senior entrepreneurs, students, and immigrants, but also, more recently, social entrepreneurs, "mampreneurs," and "web entrepreneurs." Lagarde (2006) concludes that most of the entrepreneurial typologies developed are adaptations or extensions of Smith's (1967) concept, such as the innovator-explorer and the follower-reactor (Miles and Snow, 1978), the entrepreneur and the owner (Gartner, 1989), and the risk manager and the family artisan (Lafuente and Salas, 1989).

Based on these typologies advocated by Lagarde (2006), we find that despite the abundance of literature on the subject, no single classification truly dominates. Several factors may explain this situation: the multidisciplinary and heterogeneous nature of the field of entrepreneurship, the objectives and conditions of research, and the context of the study. That said, overall, common specificities emerge in this transdisciplinary literature. Researchers observe entrepreneurs as human beings endowed with various qualities, such as a taste for risk, management skills, and business acumen (Boudabbous, S., 2011).

The profile of entrepreneurs has been the subject of extensive research (Gasse, 2004), as the success of a business is attributed to its founder and entrepreneurship is an important factor in economic development (Benata, 2016). In addition, Van Stel, Storey, and Thurik (2007) observed that the characteristics of the entrepreneur had an impact on the development of his or her business. The personality of the entrepreneur plays a central role in the success of his or her project (Bruyat, 1993).

Describing the profile of entrepreneurs who have successfully started a business in greater detail would enable interested individuals to determine whether they have the required profile and would allow funding agencies to select candidates with a high probability of success. This entrepreneurial profile would also provide a better understanding of the modes of action, attitudes, and activity choices of organizational actors, as well as their modes of reaction to their environment (Filion, 2000). As a result, numerous complementary and contradictory typologies have emerged in the literature on entrepreneurship.

Research on entrepreneurship has established causal links between the variables “entrepreneurial motivations” and “impacts on business creation” (Davidson, 1995; Morrison, 2001). However, it is possible to question whether entrepreneurs' motivations may differ from one individual to another. Indeed, these motivations could be altered by certain conditions such as culture, environment, type of businesses present, remoteness, family situation, and education (Sangué-Fotso and DidaNgouane, 2023).

1.2.2 Research on entrepreneurial motivations

Research on entrepreneurial motivation draws on theories of motivation shared by psychologists and managers (Estay et al., 2011). However, motivation is based on reflections on the origins of business creation (Gartner, 1988). Fillon (1997) proposes a definition of entrepreneurship that highlights the link between individual motivation and this characteristic. According to the author, this definition encompasses the scope of entrepreneurship, the practices of entrepreneurs, their activities, their characteristics, the socio-economic effects of their behavior, and the support provided to them to facilitate the expression of their entrepreneurial activity.

Sarah (2023) defines entrepreneurial motivation as the desire to fulfill certain specific needs. Motivation is therefore based on needs, followed by values, goals, desires, intentions, and rewards. Added to this is a conception of entrepreneurship advocated by Ahmad and Hoffman (2008), according to which it is the result of human actions aimed at undertaking and generating value through the creation or development of an economic activity.

The creation or expansion of activities involves identifying and exploiting new products, processes, and markets. Based on these definitions, it is clear that entrepreneurship is the result of several factors, among which motivation plays a key role. Like intention, culture, and perception of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial motivation is supported by theories, particularly psychological and managerial ones.

➤ McClelland's research on entrepreneurship (1961)

This author's work is considered to be among the most highly regarded in entrepreneurship, as his research focuses on entrepreneurial motivation, which includes the need for achievement as a key motivating factor (McClelland, 1991). However, Shapero (1975) has criticized this theory and proposed an alternative theory that is better suited to changing times.

➤ Shapero's displacement logic (1975)

Shapero's model (1975) explains entrepreneurial activity by examining the factors that influence an entrepreneur's choices. According to Shapero, in addition to psychological characteristics, entrepreneurs must also take into account contextual factors of a socioeconomic nature. The author argues that these factors are at the root of entrepreneurial behavior in individuals and result in negative, positive, or intermediate shifts.

In this regard, Kirkwood (2009) and Mucchielli (2001) refined Shapero's research by distinguishing between necessity entrepreneurship and opportunity entrepreneurship, and by taking into account the nature and specificities of entrepreneurship in the study of motivations.

➤ Logic of intergenerational motivations

Neider's research (1987) focuses on intergenerational entrepreneurial motivations and their effects on age groups, and has been corroborated by the work of Andria and Gabarret

(2016). This research highlights changes in circumstances depending on the age of entrepreneurs, whether they are first or second generation.

Indeed, Gbaguidi (2017) believes that an entrepreneur is first generation when they make decisions rigorously, without being influenced by their entrepreneurial peers. Regarding second-generation entrepreneurs, the author argues that they are at the beginning stage and that their decision to start a business is influenced by the entrepreneurial experience of a relative, which gives them a minimum level of business creation skills (Wagner, 2005; Giacomini et al., 2007).

1.2.3 Standards relating to contractors

Subjective norms are expectations regarding the behavior to adopt during a socialization process (Vallerand, 1994). They refer to the influence of the behavior of those close to us on our own behavior (Gergen et al., 1992). Ajzen (1991) argues that if individuals seek to act in accordance with their reference group, this can positively influence behavioral intention.

Conversely, if the individual is not conformist, subjective norms can have a negative effect on behavioral intention. In the context of these students nearing the end of their studies, these norms translate into a need for achievement, a search for autonomy, a desire to conform to family expectations, a propensity for risk-taking, and a desire to emulate entrepreneurial role models (Tounes, 2006).

➤ The need for fulfillment

Although it is rarely linked to intention, McClelland (1961) directly associated the need for achievement with entrepreneurship. This concept is rooted in values, beliefs, and culture. Tchagan and Tchankam (2018) demonstrate that the need for achievement is a discriminating variable for business creation. Thus, the need for achievement enables students, at the end of their training, to decide on the career path that will allow them to fulfill themselves (Tounes, 2006).

➤ The quest for autonomy

Motivation is a variable that distinguishes students who express an intention to become entrepreneurs (Tounes, 2006), i.e., a desire for autonomy. This can be explained by the fact that individuals need to be their own boss and work according to their own will. The quest for autonomy is also a determining factor in several studies on the motivations that lead to entrepreneurial action.

1.3 University education in the traditional system to the paradigm of the entrepreneurial university

An analysis of these universities in light of the entrepreneurial university paradigm highlights several problems that undermine them and proposes solutions.

1.3.1 Structural and governance issues

The entrepreneurial university is a strong central decision-making body capable of responding quickly to changes and expansion in the labor market. However, most academic institutions south of the Sahara operate in a context of bureaucratic governance, extreme poverty, and underfunding. This situation limits the room for maneuver of the various actors involved in human and technical resource management.

Indeed, it is difficult to find external partners willing to cooperate with universities, as they lack the necessary knowledge or are unwilling to do so. In this regard, Gjerding (2006) argues that it is up to traditional universities to train external users and offer them opportunities they cannot refuse. Furthermore, if alumni play no role and pressure groups are ineffective, the university may miss out on certain entrepreneurial opportunities (Gjerding, 2006).

The question that needs to be answered is that of academic conservatism in traditional universities. This system results in a tendency among certain university departments to systematically reject any initiative that seeks to assign the university a non-academic mission (Dia, 2011). This goes beyond its traditional missions, which are the transmission, preservation, and creation of knowledge (Dia, 2011).

1.3.2 Contribution and opportunity of the entrepreneurial university

The traditional mission of the university is increasingly being questioned, particularly in terms of its practices, but sometimes also in terms of its objectives (Gasse, 2011). While most universities have gradually begun to adapt their role to society's new expectations, teaching and technology in entrepreneurial universities are now a key factor in economic success. Based on the thesis of the transition from the traditional university system to the entrepreneurial university, Dia (2011), Goy (2012), and Konaté (2022) argue that these universities are gateways to a knowledge-based economy and society in which entrepreneurship is at the center of the transition.

The entrepreneurial university model has greatly influenced recent developments in the university system (Lyu et al., 2024; Schaeffer, 2019). As such, we see that public authorities and researchers are committed to replicating this model in their countries. However, the results are not the same, as success depends on the cultural, economic, political, and social specificities of each country. Rather than seeking to imitate, contingency or factual elements must be taken into account in order to build entrepreneurial universities specific to each country or region. Different approaches to the role of universities in the socio-economic world allow for different types of entrepreneurial strategies, depending on whether universities draw their resources from international-level research and the potential of their students to carry out entrepreneurial projects and contribute to the economic development of their regions (Schaeffer, 2019). After providing an overview of entrepreneurship in Africa, we present the methodology used for the study, describing the sample, the data collection method, and the processing tools.

II. METHODOLOGY

Our research aims to be both innovative and complementary to existing work on entrepreneurial perception, motivation, culture, and intention, particularly graduate students' beliefs about entrepreneurship (Bamba et al., 2021). Unlike previous research conducted by several authors (Seidou, 2022; Aboubakari and Feudjo, 2020), we use a measurement tool specifically designed to characterize entrepreneurial perception, intention, climate, and motivations.

Drawing on various theories, including entrepreneurial motivation theory (Gbaguidi, 2017; Gabarret, 2016), planned behavior theory (Ajzen, 1991), and entrepreneurial event theory (Shapero and Sokol, 1982),

Our methodology encompasses everything from data collection to statistical analysis. Data collection is carried out using a questionnaire designed and adapted to the context of the countries studied (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Chad). This questionnaire was distributed to graduates from thirteen universities in sub-Saharan Africa, including two in Cameroon, ten in Chad, and one in Burkina Faso.

2.1. Sampling and scope of the surveys

In this study, we examine perceptions based on the desirability of starting a business (Shapero, A. and L. Sokol., 1982). In order to better explain these perceptions, as well as entrepreneurial beliefs and motivations, we have compiled a sample of graduates from different specializations at public and private universities following various courses or programs.

The sample consists of 13 universities and training institutes in three countries. The questionnaire was administered to 400 students from universities and institutes in Chad, 100 students from universities in Cameroon, and 100 students from the University of Burkina Faso. The data collected was processed using SPSS software. The tools used were simple and cross tabulations.

2.2. Period for administering questionnaires and their return

The final version of the questionnaire was administered to 600 respondents between mid-July and the end of August 2024 by us (three teachers and a consulting firm). The study sample was selected using non-probability sampling, i.e., by selecting respondents in public spaces, on campuses, and in university residences at public and private universities.

We added a random dimension to our sampling technique by distributing the questionnaires across five sites and collecting data over several days. We used Excel and Stata software to test the relationship between each of the variables through cross-tabulation analyses.

III. Presentation and interpretation of results

Section (3) of our research focuses on the presentation and analysis of the results.

3.1. Respondent profiles

The 600 respondents are on average 30 years old and of mixed gender. In the sample, the percentage of male respondents (51%) is almost equal to that of female respondents (49%). The 600 respondents are on average 30 years old and of mixed gender. In the sample, the percentage of male respondents (51%) is almost equal to that of female respondents (49%). The areas of specialization are economics (20.8%), management (50.2%), and other specializations (29%). Sources of income at the time of the survey were family (71%) and other (29%). Respondents came from various universities and schools in the three African countries, including universities in Chad (65%), Cameroon (24.5%) and Burkina Faso (10.5%).

3.2. Intention to start a business by institution and gender

We asked respondents if they were considering starting a business.

The scale had five levels: very poor, poor, neutral, good, and very good.

Table 1: Intention to start a business by educational institution and gender

	% UniversityStudents	% Privateschoolstudents	women	men
Chad	65%	35%	30,85%	69,15%
Cameroon	100%		60,50%	39,50%
Burkina-Faso	100%		59,30%	40,70%

Source: Surveys conducted by ourselves and processed using Excel

Table 1: shows that, across all public and private universities in our sample, students approve of the idea of starting a business. The difference lies between Cameroon (60.5%) and Burkina Faso (59.3%) for women, and between 39.5% and 40.5% for men. For Chad, the table shows a low percentage of women (30.85%) compared to 60.15% of men with regard to starting a business.

3.3. Influence of the educational institution on the perception of the advantages and disadvantages of starting a business

We also asked them to comment on the advantages and disadvantages of starting a business. While overall perceptions of entrepreneurship and the assessment of the prevalence of advantages over disadvantages are positive, significant differences exist based on two variables: educational institution and field of specialization.

Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages of entrepreneurship according to institution and training

TRAINING FIELDS AND INSTITUTIONS						
Chad			Burkina Faso		Cameroon	
FIELD and ETS	Advantages	disadvantages	Advantages	disadvantages	Advantages	disadvantages
FIELD and ETS	72%	28%	80%	20%	90%	10%
FIELD and ETS	60%	40%	60%	40%	55,50%	44,5%
FIELD and ETS	50%	50%	70%	30%	60%	40%
FIELD and ETS	38%	62%	68%	32%	55,45%	44,55%

Source: our surveys processed by Excel

Table 3: shows that graduates surveyed in Chad believe that the government's legal, regulatory, and security measures relating to entrepreneurship are unreliable, as the disadvantages outweigh the advantages. Except for competition in entrepreneurship, the assessment is 50% advantages and 50% disadvantages.

With regard to Burkina Faso, the students surveyed stated that laws, regulations, competition, and security are advantageous to a degree of 70%, compared to 30% who stated they are disadvantageous.

Cameroon also has an advantageous situation in terms of laws, regulations, tax systems, competition, and security, with a benefit rate of over 60%. On the other hand, the disadvantages of entrepreneurship in this country represent less than 40%.

3.5. Influence of gender in the implementation of a project or business venture

After conducting a gender survey, the study reveals a significant difference between men and women when it comes to starting a business.

A higher percentage of young Chadian men (70.2%) than women (39.8%) strongly agree with the idea of starting a business, compared to 80% of young people in Burkina Faso and Cameroon. However, only 18.3% of men and just over a third of women (20%) moderately agree with this idea.

Table 4: Influence of business creation by gender

	Chad	Cameroon	Burkina Faso
Starting a business	% Responses from the respondents	% Responses from	% Responses from the respondents

		the respondents	
men	70,20%	50%	80%
women	39,80%	50%	70%

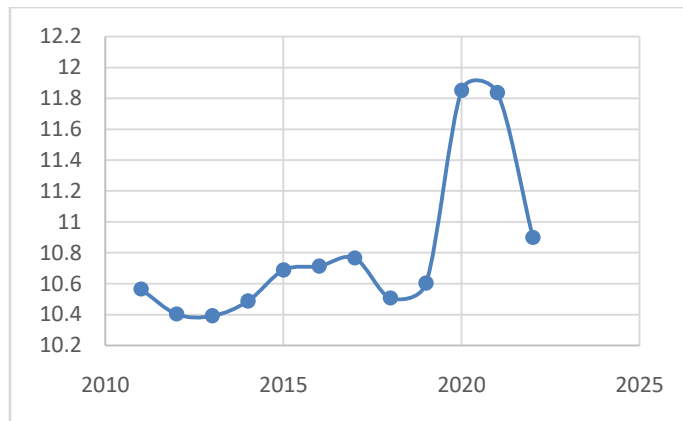
Source: Surveys conducted by ourselves and processed using Excel

3.6. Growth in entrepreneurial activities among young people from 13 universities in three countries for the period 2010-2022

Looking at this graph, we can see a change in the entrepreneurial activities of young university graduates in these three countries. The graph shows that the growth rate fell from 10.6% in 2010 to 10.4% in 2018, then rose to 11.8% in 2020, before falling back to 10.8% in 2022.

This situation, shown in the graph, requires interpretation in order to understand the causes of this growth and decline in activity. Figure 4 shows the evolution of entrepreneurial activity among recent graduates from 13 universities.

Figure 4: Evolution of entrepreneurial activities among recent graduates from 13 universities



Source: surveys conducted by us and processed by Stata

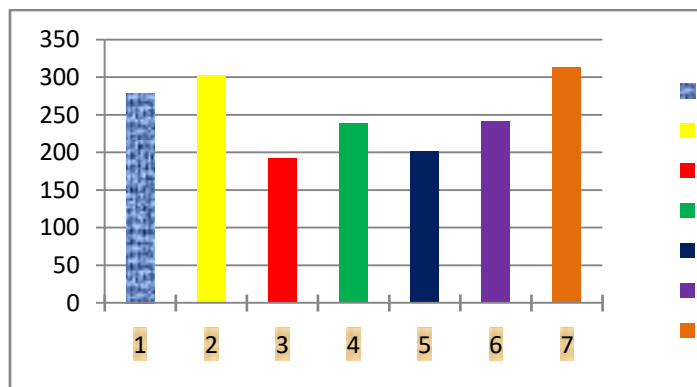
3.7. Students' perceptions of entrepreneurship education

This graph (5) shows that graduate students' conception of entrepreneurship is at point 7 (optimistic definition), followed by points 1 and 2, which explain "entrepreneurship concepts" and "entrepreneurship advantages," respectively.

This means that more than 300 respondents agree that entrepreneurship brings added value to young graduates, more than 300 people express satisfaction with entrepreneurship, and more than 250 people approve of the benefits of entrepreneurship. This means that respondents see a significant advantage over disadvantage.

Figure 5 highlights the response rates of respondents.

Figure 5: Optimistic design, added value, and understanding of entrepreneurship according to the response rate of respondents from 13 universities in three countries

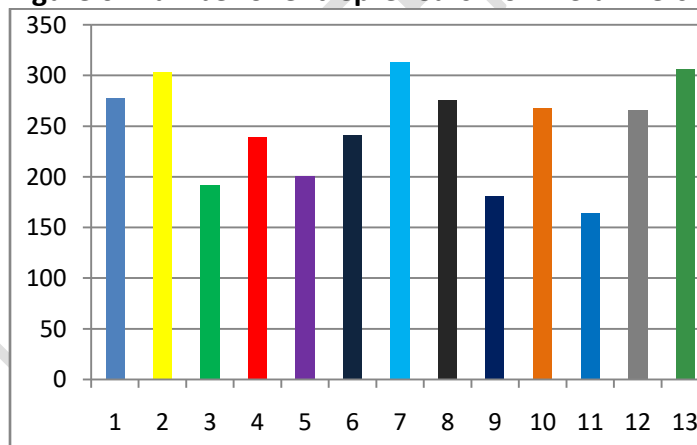


Source: survey conducted by ourselves and processed using Excel

3.8. Promotion of entrepreneurs from 13 universities in three African countries

The surveys conducted highlighted the proportion of graduates from 13 universities in three African countries who have embarked on entrepreneurship. During the 13 years of training, from 2010 to 2022, the University of N'Gaoundéré in Cameroon and Adam Barka University in Abéché, Chad, provided the largest number of entrepreneurs to their nations, with 310 entrepreneurs have produced the largest number of entrepreneurs for their countries, namely 310 entrepreneurs. They are followed by the University of Moundou (2), the University of N'Djamena (8), and HEC-Chad University (1), which have each trained approximately 280 operational entrepreneurs. During the same period, i.e., 13 years of training, the graph shows that Joseph-Kizerbo University in Burkina Faso (12), the University of Maroua (10), the University of Sarh (6), and the Écolenormalesupérieure de N'Djaména (4) also trained professional entrepreneurs, with more than 250 students each. Figure 6 below highlights the increase in the number of students engaged in entrepreneurial activities in the 13 universities in the three countries.

Figure 6: Number of entrepreneurs from 13 universities in three countries



Source: Survey conducted by us and processed using Excel

IV. INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In light of the various results mentioned in the graphs and tables above, it is necessary to conduct an interpretation and discussion consistent with the concepts used and subsequent work on entrepreneurship.

4.1. The influence of motivation, intention, culture, and gender on the entrepreneurial perception of young graduates.

Unlike other African countries, where a decline in activity was observed during the 2020-2021 period, Figure 4 shows that entrepreneurial activity at the 13 universities in Chad, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso grew, reaching a growth rate of 12% among operational entrepreneurs. This shows that the Covid-19 epidemic did not affect the entrepreneurial activities of these young graduates in these three countries. This growth can also be explained by the resumption of oil operations in Chad and the change of political regime in Burkina Faso.

With regard to culture, our results reveal that 38% and 62% of graduates from public and private universities, respectively, approve of its benefits, compared to the studies conducted by Fotso and DidaNgouane (2023) in Cameroon.

When it comes to the influence of gender on entrepreneurship, we see that the level of approval is higher among men in Chad, who are more likely to approve of the idea of starting a business or entrepreneurial project. The percentage of men and women who approve of entrepreneurship is 70.2% and 29.8% among young Chadians. Unlike Cameroon and Burkina Faso, Table 4 shows almost identical percentages of men and women, both above 80%. It should be noted that the issue of gender in entrepreneurship is a complex field of study that evolves over time (Bamba et al., 2021). Many cultural and religious variables can influence the results (Pacito et al., 2014).

Regarding the influence of educational institutions on entrepreneurial beliefs, the study also reveals that 72.0% of respondents from universities say they are in favor of starting a business. Finally, educational institutions influence the assessment of the predominance of advantages over disadvantages inherent in starting a business by 70%.

In fact, more than 60% of respondents approve of entrepreneurship as an advantage, compared to less than 40% who see it as a disadvantage. It should be noted that respondents' field of study and specialization influence their perception of entrepreneurship. However, only 30% of respondents do not associate entrepreneurship with belief.

The results of the survey on entrepreneurial mechanisms suggest that these vary from one country to another and according to the perceptions of graduates from these thirteen universities. Table 3 shows that, in terms of legal, regulatory, and security measures, respondents in Chad say that all government measures relating to entrepreneurship are unreliable, as the disadvantages outweigh the advantages by more than 50%. With regard to competition in entrepreneurship, the assessment is 50% advantages and 50% disadvantages. As for Burkina Faso, the surveyed students claim that laws, regulations, competition, and security are advantageous by a margin of 70%, compared to 30% who say they are disadvantageous.

Cameroon also has a favorable situation regarding laws, regulations, the tax system, competition, and security, with an advantage rate of over 60%. Conversely, the disadvantages of entrepreneurship in this country represent less than 40%.

4.2. Discussions about the evolution of entrepreneurial activities of a number of entrepreneurs from 13 universities in three countries.

Figure 6 shows that the promotion of entrepreneurs from 13 universities varies by field of specialization and educational institution. It can be seen that universities 2, 8, and 13 have produced the greatest number of entrepreneurs according to their area of specialization. The University of Moundou (2) specializes in economic and social sciences, as do the universities of Abéché (8) and N'Djamena (13). This situation confirms that the field of specialization and the educational institution create differences in terms of entrepreneurial intention and desirability. These young graduates are driven by perceived desirability and feasibility to create entrepreneurial activities or businesses.

Figure 4 shows the evolution of entrepreneurial activities among young graduates from 13 universities for the period 2010-2022. These results show that the growth rate of these activities increased to 11-11.5% during the period from 2020 to 2021. This indicates that the growth rate increased by 4.5% in ten years.

Although the world survived the Covid-19 epidemic, it did not affect entrepreneurial activities or the creation of businesses by young graduates in these three countries. In Chad, this growth rate can be explained by the evolution of oil and mining activities.

In Burkina Faso, government transition policies have taken precedence over entrepreneurial activities among young college graduates. In Cameroon, this increase is due to the government's political situation in the Adamaoua region (N'Gaoundéré).

Our results therefore confirm in part those obtained by Aboubakari and Feudjo (2020), who predicted a significant advance in terms of the desirability of entrepreneurship among young graduates in Cameroon.

Conclusion and Implications

Entrepreneurship has long been used as a development lever around the world, particularly in Nordic and Asian countries, while the African continent seems to be unexplored.

In France, the field of entrepreneurship has evolved, even if it is not yet entirely marginal. Isn't it surprising that research on entrepreneurship is so underdeveloped in developing countries like Chad, Burkina Faso, and Cameroon?

Our research focused on entrepreneurship among young graduates from 13 universities in three African countries. The variables considered are entrepreneurial intention and perception, motivation, and the state's policy toward entrepreneurship, which significantly influence the creation of entrepreneurial activities by young graduates.

In this context, the work involves energizing entrepreneurial research by encouraging young graduates from African universities. These contributions focus on entrepreneurial aspects, as well as on models of intention and formation. This research provides information on the profiles of students considering creating a business and on the state's support programs before creating one. This research addresses one of the gaps in young graduate entrepreneurship in the context of these three countries.

We also considered the positioning of intentional approaches, beliefs, gender, and perception at the intersection of different approaches to entrepreneurship. Furthermore, this research sheds light on the dynamics and complexity of the entrepreneurial process. Indeed, excluding cultural and gender factors, our research was based on socio-economic, cultural, institutional, and legal factors (Tounès, 2003).

The studies of Shapero (1975), Sokol and Shapero (1982), and Ajzen (1975), on which these studies were based, had not yet been sufficiently tested empirically in these three countries.

The theory of planned behavior had not been fully validated among the respondents.

The intention of these graduate students depends partially on entrepreneurial desirability and motivation, as well as their area of specialization. Thus, although intention depends on desirability and motivation, it depends less on perceived feasibility.

Finally, we explored the relative contribution of the various variables influencing entrepreneurial behavior. Our research showed that, in the particular context of graduate students, the degree of desirability contributed more to predicting entrepreneurial intention than perceptions of feasibility. This result is all the more interesting because it contradicts those obtained by Krueger (2009) when testing the Shapero model in the United States on a population of graduate students.

In addition, our contribution is based on an in-depth study of desirability and feasibility. At the level of the intention model, the research model is based on different disciplines, such as entrepreneurship (Shapero and Sokol's entrepreneurial event model, 1982) and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Our model combines three theories: the theory of planned behavior, the entrepreneurial event theory, and the theory of motivation. It respects the specificity of each variable included in the questionnaire.

We find that these theories are complementary and form the basis of entrepreneurial intentions and perceptions through perceived desirability and feasibility. This approach contradicts the results of several authors, such as Emin (2003), Tounès (2003), Boissin et al. (2009), and Fayolle (2004). These authors argue that these theories are similar. Our research aligns with the results obtained by Aboubakari and Feudjo (2020).

In terms of practical implications, the main conclusions of this research propose instruments that facilitate the practices of the various actors involved in the process of creating a business.

Our research aims to provide knowledge that supports the thesis of the shift from traditional systems to entrepreneurial universities, whose pedagogical investments should be a priority for African states, particularly Chad, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso. Practical interests also include developing the entrepreneurial potential of young graduates, specifically through entrepreneurship as a professional career. Our research suggests that states should support these young people with incentives and entrepreneurial support programs.

The creation or transition from the traditional system to the entrepreneurial university must be the priority of our three states to promote the development of an entrepreneurial culture within the academic community, through teaching and trainers who rely on entrepreneurial concepts, the creation process, and motivation to entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial universities must create training programs and networks of contacts with managers to improve the perception of entrepreneurship among young graduates

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