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## Entrepreneurial Spirit of Students: Innate or Acquired

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## **Entrepreneurial Spirit of Students: Innate or Acquired**

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper questions the spirit of entrepreneurship among students in Morocco. It presents the results of a survey among students of FSJES and those of vocational training (BTS and ISTA) BTS equivalent to (Higher Technical Diploma), ISTA (Higher Institute of Applied Technology). The results show that few students are willing to start their own business, and that most students are not familiar with the professional field and have not had entrepreneurship courses and trainings at the university, so there is a lot of efforts to be made by governments and universities to promote entrepreneurship among students.*

**Keywords :** *Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurial Spirit, Professional Training*

Track: *Entrepreneurship*

Word count: *4.041*

## **1. Introduction**

Today, business creation and, more broadly, entrepreneurship is unanimously recognized as a vital phenomenon for our societies by their contribution to the regeneration and development of economic activity. Entrepreneurship is like an engine of the economy for many nations whose growth is largely explained by the rate and pace of innovation and the creation of businesses or activities.

Entrepreneurship also brings benefits to individuals who can find, in entrepreneurial situations, sources of satisfaction, personal fulfillment and entry opportunities or career development.

Morocco has a great need for entrepreneurs to create and develop businesses and jobs.

Our country needs its education system to play a more important role in awakening students to entrepreneurship and preparing future entrepreneurs. Our study examines the difference in the development of entrepreneurship among FSJES(university) students and those of vocational training (FP).

This article presents in a first axis a literature review of the relationship between education and entrepreneurship, then the methodological framework and the main results and analyzes of our survey.

## **2. Teaching-Entrepreneurship: Literature Review**

Morocco suffers from a significant lack of training in encouraging youth innovation and entrepreneurship. To change this, the State wants to develop trainings and courses in entrepreneurship, innovation, encourage the initiative of young people, make them contribute to innovation and the emergence of tomorrow's activities.

Young entrepreneurs have a key role in the economy in terms of prosperity and growth, the desire to undertake young people from higher education and facilitate their transition to the creation of business assumes to offer any student during his studies the opportunity to be trained in entrepreneurship and innovation, to be accompanied and if necessary, to help him financially. The objective is to achieve the creation or the takeover of companies by young people from the university

In this way, it seems necessary to study this fundamental question that many authors are interested in: the links between education and entrepreneurship.

This is the case of Béchar J.-P. (1998), Fayolle A. (2000), Saporta B. and Verstraete T. (2000) and Sénicourt P. and Verstraete T. (2000).

To find out if entrepreneurship can be taught, these authors note that two questions should first be asked: what is entrepreneurship? But also, what should be taught?

Entrepreneurship can be defined as an activity involving the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities, with the aim of introducing new goods and services, new organizational structures, new markets, processes, and materials, by means which, possibly, did not exist before.

Louis Jacques FILION (1988) defines the entrepreneur as: "*an imaginative person, characterized by an ability to set and achieve goals. This person maintains a high level of sensitivity to identify business opportunities. As long as he or she continues to learn about business opportunities and he or she continues to make moderately risky decisions that aim to innovate, he or she continues to play an entrepreneurial role.*"

Béchar J.-P., (1998) and Fayolle A., (2000) argue that entrepreneurship, like most disciplines in management science, can be subject to academic and practical instruction.

No one would say today that to undertake is innate and natural. The basic premise of this research is that entrepreneurship can be the subject to training, programs or lessons. Entrepreneurship is not only a practice and a field of research, but also a field of teaching that can have an impact on the attitudes, norms and perceptions of students about their career choices (Tounés A., 2001) .

Entrepreneurship is a process where certain skills and attitudes are required. Most of these qualities can be acquired through teaching, training or programs. For Katz J.-A. (1990, p.17), entrepreneurship education is one of the most obvious forms of preparing individuals to access entrepreneurship. If the act of entrepreneuring depends on the context, training and teaching people also depend on the context.

### **3. Entrepreneurial spirit: innate or acquired**

Entrepreneuring is neither a position nor a social status, but a concept that is often opposed to management. Entrepreneuring can be considered on an individual or collective level.

In short, entrepreneuring does not only apply to business activities, but also to any human activity.

#### **3.1. The entrepreneur**

##### *3.1.1. Entrepreneur's concept*

According to the French Grand Dictionnaire the entrepreneur is defined as a "person or group of persons who creates, develops and implements a company for which he assumes the risks, and who implements financial, human and material means to ensure its success. and to make a profit".

The entrepreneur has an irreplaceable role in the economy and society. He is its ferment, since, he creates businesses and jobs, introduces breakthrough innovations as

incremental innovations, and finally, participates in the renewal and restructuring of the economic fabric.

The entrepreneur is often closely associated with the terms risk taking, innovation, and proactivity (anticipations of events), and hunting business opportunities. He is an agent of change.

Creative entrepreneurs have large reserves of energy, tenacity and imagination, and these qualities, combined with their ability to take calculated risks, allow them to turn into a concrete project what is often initially only a very simple and vague idea. They know how to share their enthusiasm with an organization. The voluntarism and determination that drive them allow them to gain support around their business project.

According to Manfred (1997): entrepreneurs are action-oriented individuals and concrete results; they like to decide and refuse routine and repetitive work.

### 3.1.2 *Myth and reality of the entrepreneur*

Many ideas and representations about the entrepreneur are written. We will try to resume, those that come back most frequently:

- Entrepreneurship comes from the innate or the acquired?  
The innate entrepreneur is for us, largely a myth. Even if some individuals are born with more energy or more "flair and instinct" than others, these abilities would probably remain little used. If they were not supplemented by other characteristics, such as knowledge, skills, know-how and accumulated experiences for years.
- Can anyone start a business?  
To create a new business or activity, it is necessary to distinguish between an idea and an opportunity. You have to work on your project, submit it to experts and external eyes, and surround yourself with motivated or interested partners. Preparatory work is essential in order to identify, in the best possible way, the launching of your activities and reduce uncertainty.
- Entrepreneurship allows one to become your own boss and be completely independent?

Many people dream of becoming an entrepreneur because they have a very strong need for independence and because they no longer support the hierarchy and inertia of large companies. They idealize the "small is beautiful" of small structures. Even though the need for independence is a strong motivation, often put forward to explain the act of doing business.

In reality entrepreneurs are not more independent in their operation than executives or other business leaders. They are dependent on their financial, industrial or commercial partners, their employees, their customers, their suppliers and their families. The relationships that have been established with all of these partners.

## 3.2. Entrepreneurship

### 3.2.1. *Concept of entrepreneurship*

Entrepreneurship is a term originally derived from the term entrepreneur from English: Entrepreneur and that started to be used in French with "Entreprendre".

According to the Quebec Office of the French Language, entrepreneurship is defined as the "Function of a person who uses and manages human and material resources to create, develop and implement businesses<sup>1</sup>».

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.granddictionnaire.com/>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.olf.gouv.qc.ca/ressources/bibliotheque/officialisation/terminologie/fiches/1298933.html>

As an economic and social phenomenon, the contributions of entrepreneurship to the economy and society are considerable and they concern:

- the creation of companies and the renewal of the park in the various fields of activity,
- job creation as an answer to problems,
- innovation and innovative opportunities,
- the development of entrepreneurial spirit in companies and organizations (taking initiative, risk taking, take advantage of opportunities, responsiveness or flexibility ...) and helping structural changes in the political, technological, social or organizational environment (example of the tertiary sector, the Internet, ICT (Information and Communications Technology) ...)

#### 3.2.2. Forms of entrepreneurship:

An entrepreneurial action is expressed in the context of an entrepreneurial project that can take several forms:

- undertake for his own account (create or resume his business),
- to undertake on behalf of a company
- undertake on behalf of the society (humanitarian and associative actions)

### 3.3. The triggers of an individual's commitment to an entrepreneurial process

Several questions arise at this level: What motivates the commitment of an individual in an entrepreneurial process? Why some winners are enterprising while others are not?

Several factors influence the decision to undertake in individuals, including:

- Personal elements (psychological characteristics):
  - Age, sex, education, experiences and professional status ...
  - Entrepreneurial paths, values. Stability of employment, skills, knowledge ...
- Socio-economic conditions:
  - Family and social environment; the impact of the home environment on the perception of risk, the existence of an entrepreneurial family history, the existence of other inventors-entrepreneurs having succeeded the existence of a model
  - Financial resources and knowledge acquired from family, professional and social networks.
- The influence of the university environment on business creation
- Specific environment Regulatory framework:

Public authorities can stimulate or stop entrepreneurship by supporting (or not) public and semi-public structures and by their administrative, fiscal, legislative and regulatory actions.

Young researchers, whose academic career is not yet guaranteed, would thus have more incentives than the statutory researchers to create (risk of unemployment, no statutory and regulatory constraints, fewer cultural constraints, a lower career prospects, less for researchers on short-term contracts).

### 4. The entrepreneurial spirit: it is transmitted:

Several studies have tried to highlight the impact of training on the entrepreneurial spirit. The results of these studies have shown that it is simple to create or develop what is not already done, which is not done enough, which is already done within agreed or outdated frameworks, what is done already but inefficiently, if the world of education and the one of companies were associated

As for vocational training in Morocco, several modules of entrepreneurship were introduced in the training program. The aim was to develop the entrepreneurial spirit among future winners.

This study is a continuation of previous work that has been conducted on the modeling of the entrepreneurial intent among students to identify the potential impact of training on the development of the entrepreneurial spirit. In this context, we cannot focus on the entrepreneurial act of students, which remains a marginal professional approach for the student.

Therefore, it has been preferred to stick to the entrepreneurial intention considering the studied population which can only be at a stage of professional intention.

In this way, the specificity of the studied population makes it possible to leave the debate on intention and act entrepreneurial.

The intention may not be a prerequisite for entrepreneurial action, but in the context of a study of the student population, it will be assumed.

Theoretically, this research is therefore based on intentional models such as Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (1987, 1991, 2002) in social psychology and Shapero's model of the entrepreneurial event (Shapero and Sokol, 1982.) in entrepreneurship. This model as presented by Krueger (1993) can be considered as a model of intention applied to the entrepreneurial context.

According to these models, intention precedes action. Apart from routine acts where the action may precede the intention, intentional behavior can be predicted by the intention to have a given behavior. The intention to create a business will be stronger as this action will be perceived as desirable and feasible. One of the strong criticisms of this model is the undervaluation, even the ignorance, of the place of opportunities in the entrepreneurial act, beyond intentions. Once again, our study does not focus on the decision process of entrepreneurial action but on the intentions of the student population.

The intention will be stronger as the creation of a company, or more generally the entrepreneurial act (broader conception in the questionnaire of this study), is perceived as a desirable and feasible action. Desirability, in Shapero's sense, reflects the degree of attractiveness an individual perceives to the creation of a business. Ajzen refers, meanwhile, to the attitude more or less favorable to a person facing this choice. Entrepreneurial feasibility refers to the degree to which the individual thinks he can successfully start a business. The concept of entrepreneurial feasibility refers to Shapero's work. Ajzen, in his theory of planned behavior, speaks of perceived control. These two notions are therefore very close. Desirability (attractiveness) and feasibility (capacity) can be explained by the beliefs the person has about the world around him. If we adapt Ajzen's proposals to the field of entrepreneurship, it appears that a student's attitude towards the creation of a business would be based on his professional values (ie the professional characteristics he values) and his vision of entrepreneurship (ie the needs he considers satisfied by the entrepreneurial act).

As for the feasibility, it would depend on the student's confidence in his ability to carry out the tasks that would be critical to the success of his entrepreneurial process.

## 5. Empirical Research Study

As for the choice of the database it is based on the **origin** of the students who took part in the study and the used variables.

The choice was focused on students from the BTS equivalent to (Higher Technical Diploma), ISTA (Higher Institute of Applied Technology) and the Faculty of Economic, Social and Legal Sciences of Greater Casablanca Area.

### 5.1 The sample

The sample comes from a self-administered questionnaire, distributed during a course session to students by a teacher. It has been written in French.

The sample consists of 600 students divided in 300 FSJES ptd), 300 students of (FP) vocational training.

As the questionnaires were self-administered, no control over student identification could be performed.

### 5.2 The questionnaire

The questionnaire aims to test the entrepreneurial spirit of students through the following points:

- Professional experiences (internship or work)
- Voluntary associations
- Models of Entrepreneurs that inspire the students
- Entrepreneurial curriculum
- Entrepreneurial attitudes and spirit
- Motivations for concretization and spirit of achievement
- Availability of resources

We started with questions about gender, grade level, majors and age. And then with a direct question about the training to be developed to encourage the creation of businesses by students.

The collected data were entered and analyzed on the "Sphinx Plus" software, we proceeded by a flat sorting and then we proceeded to a bi-varied analysis. For the graphs we used MS Excel.

### 5.3 Results and Analysis

The results of the survey are presented in two parts: starting with a univariate analysis of all questions in the questionnaire. And in a second time, Chi-square tests were conducted to study the relationships between the key variables of our survey.

#### 5.3.1 Univariate analysis

<b>Table 1: Sample presentation</b>			
		<b>FP (Professional Training)</b>	<b>FSJES (Faculty)</b>
<b>Average age</b>		<b>19,8</b>	<b>21,35</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>36,4%</b>	<b>31,0%</b>
	<b>Female</b>	<b>63,6%</b>	<b>69,0%</b>
<b>Level</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> year - Freshman</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>24%</b>
	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> year - Sophomore</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>18%</b>
	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> year- Junior</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>25%</b>
	<b>4<sup>th</sup> year - Senior</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Major</b>	<b>Commerce</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	<b>Law</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>7%</b>
	<b>Economy</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>75%</b>
	<b>Public Administration</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	<b>SME Management</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	<b>Management</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>18%</b>
		<b>55%</b>	<b>0%</b>

	<b>Science Other</b>		
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The average age is 21.35 for FSJES (University) students and 19.8 for FP (Professional training). More than 60% of the sample are women.

<b>Table 2: Professional experiences.</b>				
Have you ever worked or done an internship within a company?				
		Yes	NO	Total
FSJES	Sample size	66	234	300
	<b>Pourcentage</b>	<b>22,0%</b>	<b>78,0%</b>	100,0%
FP	Sample size	211	89	300
	<b>Pourcentage</b>	<b>70,3%</b>	<b>29,7%</b>	100,0%
Total	Sample Size	277	323	600
	<b>Pourcentage</b>	<b>46,2%</b>	<b>53,8%</b>	100,0%

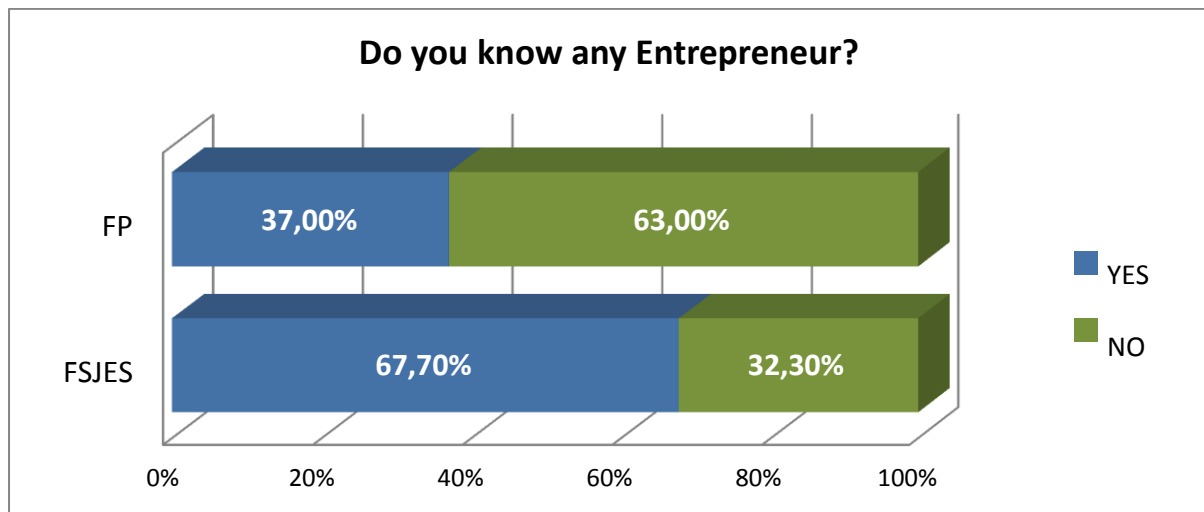
For FSJES, only 22% had work experience, among those interviewed and 76% had done internships. For the FP, 70% had professional experience.

This shows that university students do not have enough experience in the professional field, which shows that the faculty is not open enough and does not encourage having experiences before graduating.

<b>Table 3: Voluntary Work</b>							
Number of association and voluntary structure you are (were) engaged in?							
		0	1	2	3	4	Total
FSJES	Sample size	190	82	19	8	1	300
	<b>Pourcentage</b>	63,3%	27,3%	6,3%	2,7%	0,3%	100,0%
FP	Sample size	273	18	6	3	0	300
	<b>Pourcentage</b>	91,0%	6,0%	2,0%	1,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Total	Sample size	463	100	25	11	1	600
	<b>Pourcentage</b>	77,2%	16,7%	4,2%	1,8%	0,2%	100,0%

We found that more than half of the respondents had experience in associations and voluntary structures. Most of them in the social sector.





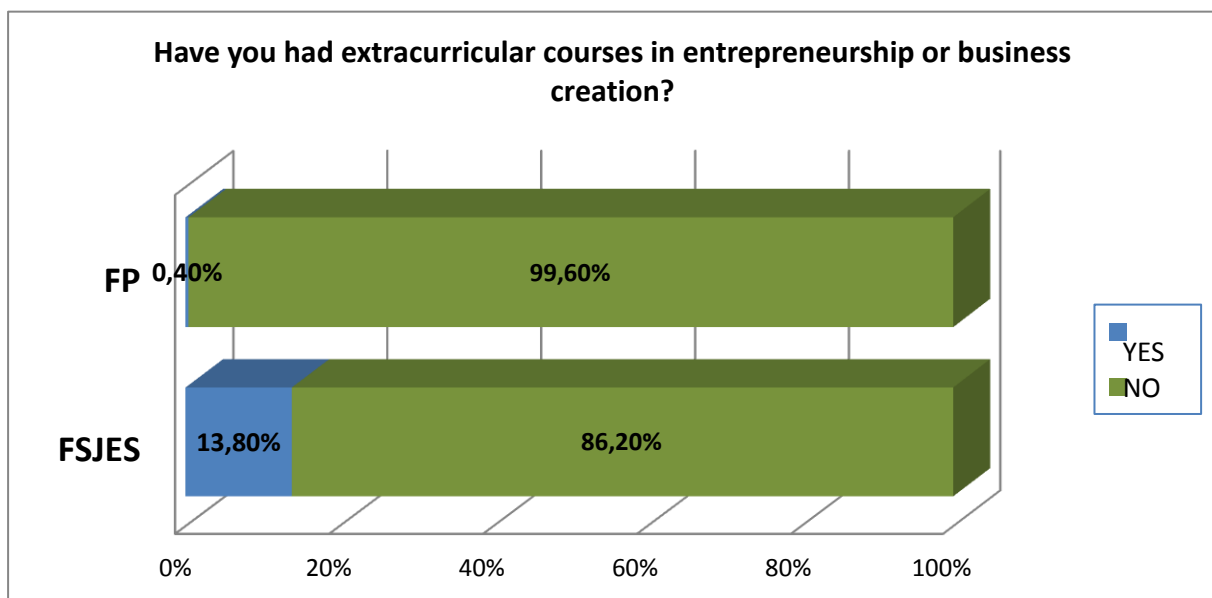
Chi-squared test

	Value	degrees of freedom	bilateral signification
Pearson's Chi-Squared test	56,550a	1	,000

**Figure 1: Entrepreneurs**

The results show that FSJES (University) students know more entrepreneurs than FP (vocational training) students 67% vs 37%.

The Chi-square test shows that this relationship is statistically significant.



Chi-squared test

	Value	degrees of freedom	bilateral signification
Pearson's Chi-Squared test	35,966a	1	,000

**Figure 2: Outside-university trainings in Entrepreneurship**

More than three quarters of respondents said they did not have academic courses in

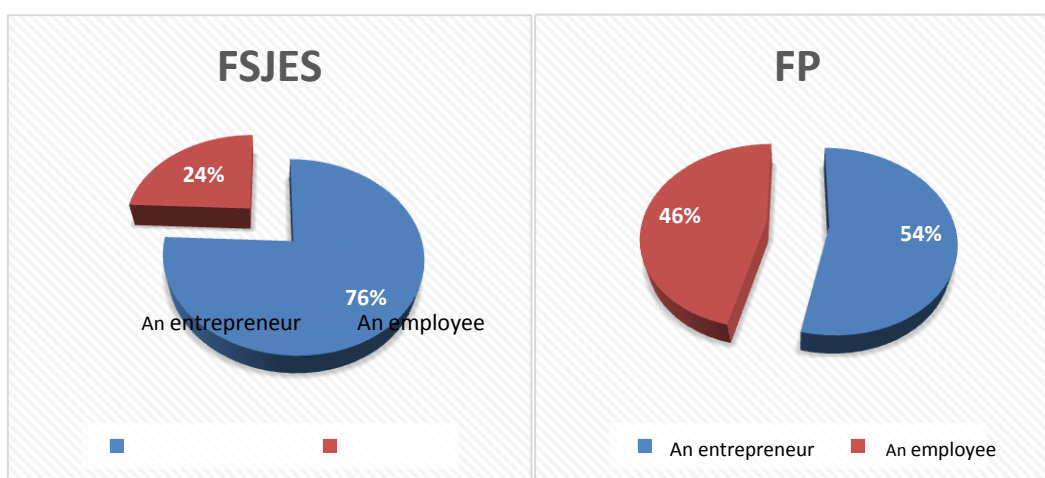
entrepreneurship and business creation, and 9/10 did not have outside-university training in entrepreneurship and business creation. And the majority of interviewees say that starting a business is difficult.

7 out of 10 students want to become an entrepreneur, and only 15% of them have a precise idea or a business project, most of them (76%) had this idea before attending entrepreneurship courses at the university. These interviewees are more motivated by freedom and money than responsibility and self-esteem, and the majority of them feel that they have a low chance of success (64%) of their projects.

80% of the interviewed students agree or strongly agree that there is a difficulty in obtaining loans and bank financing.

According to the analysis of the collected comments from the interviewees, we observe that there is a need to develop trainings in entrepreneurship and business creation.

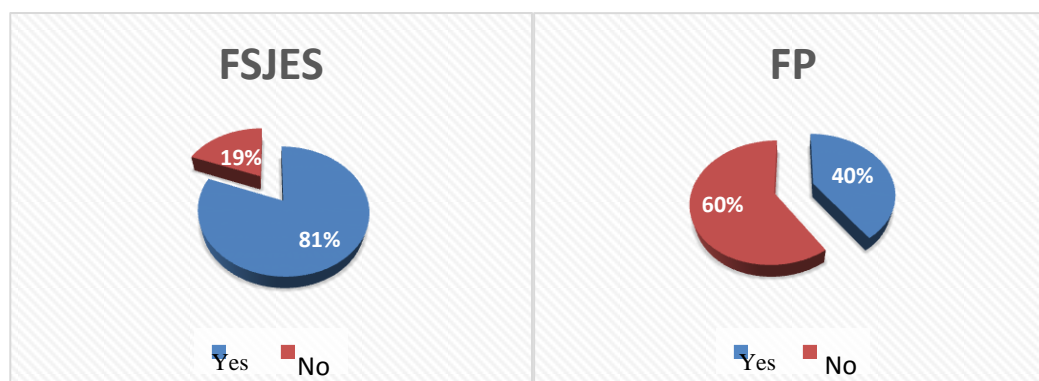
We also note that a lot of students see that we need to develop the relationship between the university and the company.



*Note: FSJES: University Students  
 FP: Vocational Training*

**Figure 3:** Do you prefer to become?

There is a very significant dependency between the question, "Do you prefer to become an entrepreneur or a wage earner? And the studies of the interviewees (FSJES and FP). We find that FSJES students are most likely to prefer entrepreneurship.



**Figure 4:** Do you have an idea of a business project?

We also note that there is a very significant dependency between the question, "Do you have an idea or a business project? And the studies of the interviewees (FSJES and FP).

The graph shows that 81% of FSJES students have project ideas. Based on a cross-analysis of the question "Do you prefer to become an entrepreneur or an employee in a company? With other questions, it can be said that for both samples the preference to become an employee or entrepreneur has very significant dependencies with the following variables:

**The studies type (FSJES and FP):** is highly correlated with the students' preference to become an entrepreneur and become a salaried employee and according to the chi-square test, we can confirm that there is a very significant dependency relationship between these two variables.

**Entrepreneurship training:** is highly correlated with students' preference to become an entrepreneur and become a wage earner. Based on the chi-square test, we can confirm that there is a very significant dependency relationship between these two variables.

➤ **Recommendations**

The results of this survey show that there is a lot of effort to be made by public authorities, higher education institutions.

- Integrating entrepreneurship in primary and secondary education, school courses, content and books should be revised at all levels to explicitly include entrepreneurship as an educational objective;
- Encouraging relations between private companies and universities;
- Encouraging positive examples of companies born out of university research and reward universities, teachers and students who help in developing entrepreneurship;
- Creating of entrepreneurship departments in the university and schools campuses
- Monitoring entrepreneurship within faculties and the strengthening of the collaboration between educational institutions and Host networks for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs;
- Providing an introduction to entrepreneurship and self-employment to all undergraduate students and giving all students the possibility to attend seminars and conferences on this topic;
- Encouraging teachers to help students interested in entrepreneurship and rewarding their efforts in this area, and for this it would be essential that teachers also benefit from initial and continuing training as well as practical experiences;
- Setting entrepreneurship trainings in different subjects, especially for students in scientific and technical studies. Students should acquire specific knowledge of how to build and run a business.
- Education and entrepreneurship trainings should include methods that support experiences, creativity, alertness, critical thinking, interaction... these training programs should: develop a desire to create, teach students what it takes to create and run a business and develop the entrepreneurial skills needed to identify and exploit business opportunities.
- Organizing activities and events aimed at improving students' ability to work in groups and acquire a team spirit, build networks and identify opportunities.
- Encouraging professional associations to involve their members more in entrepreneurship

trainings within schools and universities.

- Inviting young entrepreneurs (e.g., alumni who have started a business) to participate in courses and activities and their design;
- Exchanging ideas and experiences between teachers and students from different countries are sought and encouraged to achieve mutual learning and give international visibility to programs, courses and activities.
- Having a close cooperation between educational institutions and local authorities, this participation should be considered by local authorities as a long-term investment and as an element of their social responsibility.
- Learning through practical experience (creating and managing small businesses by students) is one of the most effective ways to stimulate entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills.

## 5. Conclusion

Teaching entrepreneurship is essential for the economic and social development of Morocco. Our higher education system produces graduates who are more oriented towards wage earning and working in public administrations than the creation of the companies.

To change this state of mind, the university can play a vital role in meeting this challenges and giving students a encouragement for entrepreneurship, company creations and self-employment. It's about stimulating student interest in becoming an entrepreneur and developing entrepreneurial behaviors.

Entrepreneurship courses should be designed to foster entrepreneurial spirit to encourage entrepreneurship. Moreover, the capacity to create can only be acquired through a practical pedagogy by using the problems of the companies as a teaching basis. And also the involvement of professionals and entrepreneurs in the conception of the courses and working alongside with the universities and the teachers to have a unique objective and policy.

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