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## Entrepreneurial Culture and the Education System: The Case of Moroccan Universities

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## **Entrepreneurial Culture and the Education System: The Case of Moroccan Universities**

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### **Abstract**

*Despite the growing number of education programs and training seminars that aim at forging entrepreneurial skills, the question whether entrepreneurship is an innate talent or a skill that can be learned has persisted for years and still shapes debates among educators, students and practitioners as well. It has often been believed that the spirit and capacity of entrepreneurship depend on traits inherent in the character and a psychological predisposition to take risks. However, from the 80s onward, this vision has boldly been questioned and it has been suggested that entrepreneurship can also be learned. Several authors (Drucker, 1985, Shane & Venkataraman, 2001, Eckhardt & Johnson, 2011, Wiklund, Davidsson, Audretsch & Karlsson, 2011) have argued that entrepreneurship is more of an attitude, a technique, a practice, and a discipline that can be taught and strengthened particularly through higher education and globally via the education system. Developing an entrepreneurial culture and mindset has nowadays become a very popular idea all over the world, and has been considered a leverage for economic, social and societal development. However, the question that needs to be raised here relates to how can entrepreneurship be taught and developed and what have countries' education systems, especially in the developing world, been doing to build entrepreneurs and encourage entrepreneurial endeavors? To shed some light on these questions, this paper focuses on the role of the educational system of a country in the development of the entrepreneurial culture and is particularly interested in the case of Morocco. It aims at investigating whether the educational system contributes to developing the learners' entrepreneurial skills and fostering an entrepreneurship mindset. This paper will also try to examine the extent to which adopted pedagogies meet the needs and requirement globally established for developing entrepreneurship within individual learners.*

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial spirit, higher education, pedagogy, Morocco*

Track: *Entrepreneurship*

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### **1. Introduction**

As testified by the growing number of research, studies, and training programs, the enthusiasm for entrepreneurship around the world today is unprecedented. If it was considered for a long time that entrepreneurs are born and not made, today, one is more convinced that the entrepreneurial spirit can be developed. Several authors (Drucker, 1985, Shane & Venkataraman, 2001, Eckhardt & Johnson, 2011, Wiklund, Davidsson, Audretsch & Karlsson, 2011) argue that

entrepreneurship is more of an attitude, a set of skills, a practice, and a discipline that can be acquired through all the levels of an education system and honed at the university level. More and more countries have included training for entrepreneurship in their curricula and education systems.

Noticeably, entrepreneurial culture is more likely to thrive in the context of state disengagement, especially when the wages are so low and do not provide the satisfaction desired by the population. A striking example that illustrates this equation is Switzerland which scored a rate of entrepreneurial activity that was lower than the OECD average for 2017. The relative lack of attraction among the Swiss population for start-ups can in fact be attributed to one of the main advantages of the country: a high level of wages combined with a low unemployment rate. The opportunity cost for the population is thus high. The Swiss are less attracted by the creation of companies because they have many more interesting alternatives. In Switzerland, it is far more lucrative to be employed than to try to start your own business. In Morocco, the situation is quite different, the unemployment rate is high especially for young people aged 15-24 (26.5% in 2017 according to the High Commissioner for Planning) and for graduates among whom the rate of unemployment is 17.9% compared to a national average of 10.2%.

Given the inability of the economy to absorb this unemployment rate and meet all job demands, promoting entrepreneurship as a possible career path for students remains an alternative. There is no doubt that societies develop and evolve only through the importance they place on their educational system as the backbone of all progress. The university is therefore supposed to be the bedrock for the development of entrepreneurship and can be expected to play a key role in promoting the entrepreneurial spirit. The will shown by the public authorities to move from a wage-earning society to an entrepreneurial society, emphasizes this belief and associates higher education to this mission.

Based on these expectations, this paper focuses on the role of the education system in developing an entrepreneurial culture. It tries to investigate whether the teaching provided by Moroccan universities enables students to develop the personal characteristics associated with entrepreneurship and to explore the extent to which the pedagogy adopted is in line with the requirements of the entrepreneurial spirit.

To answer these questions, we opted for a qualitative study with a sample of entrepreneurship teachers from five Moroccan universities.

Our work is structured as follows. We will begin by defining the key concepts of our research, then we will discuss the role of the education system in developing an entrepreneurial culture and we will present and discuss the results of our empirical study at the end.

## **2. The Conceptual Framework**

Addressing the question of the role of the education system in developing an entrepreneurial culture requires prior definition of the concepts behind it. This section aims to demystify the concepts of entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurship education.

### **2.1. Defining Entrepreneurial Culture**

Hayton and Cacciotti (2013, quoted by Razafindrazaka, St-Pierre and Trépanier, 2014) believe that even if the link between culture and entrepreneurship has been debated in the literature many

times, the fact remains that its ins and outs are not yet explicit and require empirical validations. This is explained by the instability and the polysemy of the concept of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the understanding of the concept of entrepreneurial culture requires to clarify beforehand these two constitutive terms: culture and entrepreneurship.

### **2.1.1. What is Culture?**

Defining culture has always been a daunting task as the concept is rich in meaning and multifaceted. Digging through the literature has helped us draw a number of definitions that will be presented herein.

For Hofstede (1980, 19991), the most imminent researchers on the subject, " Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another."(1991, p.5). It is a "thought pattern" derived from the different experiences of the individual, as well as his interaction with the social environment in which he has evolved.

One of the definitions advanced by Hansen and Sperber (1995) states that culture is "a set of public and mental representations that, in a certain human community, are transmitted, always newly interpreted and thus newly constituted as opinions, standards of action, and communicative meaning. "

For Fortin (2002), culture, which is a complex concept, can be defined as "a body of knowledge, values, beliefs and references that people in the same society share and that influence behavior. (...). It is perfectly evolutionary when one gives oneself the means to act on it ... Generally, it is about an incremental change on values rooted and integrated within a population for several generations. Its evolution cannot be done overnight, just as its implementation can take several years, even decades.

One of the most interesting definitions that we will consider for this research is Brownson (2011) who considers culture to be a set of "attributes, values, beliefs and behaviors". that can be learned and acquired by humans from one generation to another, from one individual to another, from one group to another as long as one is a member of a society and has the ability to distinguish one group from another ".

### **2.1.2. Defining entrepreneurship**

Defining entrepreneurship is not an easy thing either (Bruyat, 1991, quoted by Fayolle, 2012). It is still practically impossible to obtain consensus on the definition of this construct and thus to build a general and unique theory (I. Danjou, 2000, E.-M. Hernandez, 2001, A. Fayolle, 2007). Entrepreneurship remains a complex and multidimensional phenomenon (Gartner 1985, Bruyat and Julien 2001). Entrepreneurial situations are certainly diverse and heterogeneous, but cannot be dissociated from the notion of value creation. For Berglund and Holmgren (2007), talking about entrepreneurship as a homogeneous phenomenon still seems problematic, entrepreneurship is multidimensional and multifaceted. You can create a new company, develop projects within an existing organization (intrapreneurship), leave your employer, start a business and continue

working for another company (extrapreneurship), buy an existing business (takeover) or even undertake in social entrepreneurship.

The term entrepreneurship covers different meanings that need to be clarified. Two particular visions emerge from the literature. The first focuses on the detection and exploitation of opportunities (Gartner 1993, Aldrich 1999, Sharma and Chrisman 1999, Shane and Venkataraman 2000, Coster 2009, Pesqueux 2011). The second vision is part of a process of value creation (Filion 1991, Gibb 1992, Bruyat 1993, Hernandez 1999, Léger-Jarniou 2001). It is broader and considers entrepreneurship above all as a state of mind that can be mobilized in all areas of life.

For Coster M. (2009), entrepreneurship is "the phenomenon of emergence and exploitation of new creative opportunities of economic and social value, driven and made possible by the initiative and the dynamics of innovation / change of a man, the entrepreneur is in permanent interaction with his environment ". In the same vein, Pesqueux Y. (2011) considers that entrepreneurship is "an activity involving the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities, with the aim of introducing new goods and services, new organization structures, new markets, processes and materials, by means that may not have existed before."

In contrast to these definitions which focus on the identification and exploitation of opportunities, others consider that entrepreneurship does not necessarily result from an opportunity to be exploited but rather from a desire to create value for money. Thus, according to Y. Gasse and A. D'Amours (1993), entrepreneurship is "the appropriation of human, material and financial resources with the aim of creating, developing, and implementing solutions to respond to individuals needs. Similarly, for the Government of Quebec (2011), "entrepreneurship refers to the ability of an individual or a group of individuals to turn ideas into action [...]. In a broad sense, entrepreneurship is a state of mind that can be usefully applied in all work activities and in life, making it a key skill for all. "

In view of these definitions, it can be said that the entrepreneurial act consists in passing from an abstract idea, transforming it into a realistic and achievable project for the purpose of creating economic and / or social value. It must be perceived as a general attitude of the individual that can be adopted in his daily and professional life. This entrepreneurial attitude is closely linked to the culture and spirit of entrepreneurship.

### **2.1.3. Entrepreneurial culture, definition and attributes**

The review of the literature on entrepreneurial culture shows a lack of consensus on its definition and consequently on its attributes. Moreover, to circumscribe it, it would be necessary, on the one hand, to combine the different streams and strands of the literature relating to the field of entrepreneurship and, on the other hand, to cross different disciplinary boundaries (Acs and Audretsch, 2003). Thus, if some works focus on the cognitive traits of the entrepreneur, i.e., his values, his motivations, his perceptions, his intentions and his cognitive processes (Johannisson 1984, Toulouse, 1990, Pruett et al. Aoyama 2009, Linan and Chen 2009, Engle et al., 2010, Moriano et al., 2012 and Goktan and Gunay 2011), others are more concerned with the environmental conditions that would favor this entrepreneurial culture (Bosma and Schutjens, 2009, Begley and Tan, 2001).

Johannisson (1984) defines the entrepreneurial culture as a culture that values the personal characteristics associated with entrepreneurship. To promote this culture, societies need to emphasize individualism, marginality, the need for self-fulfillment, risk-taking, self-confidence and social skills. Besides, encouraging personal success (forgiving failure) and promoting diversity and change are of paramount importance. In the same vein, Toulouse (1990) considers that the entrepreneurial culture is a culture that values both perseverance and determination, business activity and individual or collective initiative. It is also a culture that balances security and risk and offers a resolution to the tension between stability and change. For this author, the entrepreneurial culture should be considered as a dynamic acting on the acceptance, desirability and feasibility of entrepreneurial behavior.

We can easily see that these two definitions are more business-oriented and therefore, consider entrepreneurship in its rather restrictive vision. The Quebec Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport (2005) has adopted a definition of the entrepreneurial culture that is not directly associated with the company: "The entrepreneurial culture consists of qualities and attitudes expressing the willingness to undertake and engage fully in what we want to do and carry out: self-confidence, motivation, effort, a sense of responsibility, initiative, perseverance, solidarity, team spirit, resourcefulness and determination."

Hence, the entrepreneurial culture is defined as a set of attitudes and traits that enhance initiative taking and engaging in projects that aim at promoting autonomy and free will. It is a particular culture of projects, that aims at producing novelty and change and underscoring creation and construction. Entrepreneurial culture should no longer be considered merely as a means of creating new businesses, but rather as a general attitude and a valuable asset in every citizen daily life, given the scope of the characteristics that define it. In "Entrepreneurial culture, an antidote against poverty", Fortin (2004) proposes that wealth creation involves the development of an entrepreneurial culture that is preferably endogenous, prioritizing the development of values such as autonomy, empowerment, creativity and solidarity. It remains strongly influenced by the beliefs of the individual, his values, his needs as well as the economic and socio-cultural environment in which he evolves.

It can be deduced from the definitions outlined above that entrepreneurial culture is the outcome of socialization and education. Thus, the questions that remain to be answered is how can education contribute to building entrepreneurs and what type of pedagogy best nurtures entrepreneurship culture.

## **2.2. Entrepreneurship education**

Tounès and Assala (2008) consider that an education (training programs and awareness raising programs, specialization and mentoring) is qualified as entrepreneurial if it aims to prepare and develop perceptions, entrepreneurial attitudes and skills.

In the same vein, R. H. Brockhaus (1992) considers that entrepreneurship education is intended to teach skills rather than to produce real entrepreneurs, that is, results. These remain dependent on the learner's intrinsic abilities, "Many times I am asked," Can you teach someone to be an entrepreneur? "That is a very good question. I usually ask in return, "Can someone be taught to be an artist?" The answer to me is "well yes, they can be taught about color and about

composition. And yes, their artistic skills can be improved ". Then I ask, "But can they be made another Van Gogh, or Rembrandt, or Picasso? The answer is "No, that takes unique skills and creativity". By proposing this analogy with the arts, Brockhaus (1992) recognizes that discipline-related techniques can be taught but that it is harder to get the student or the learner to be creative for example.

The teaching of entrepreneurship cannot be exclusively technical, which makes it problematic because it must include an artistic dimension that cannot be inculcated by a traditional approach (Saporta&Verstraete, 1999). Let us note with these two authors that, failing to replace the multiple contingencies, both environmental and idiosyncratic, which make an individual what he has become, the teaching of entrepreneurship can instead place the student in social contexts favoring an assimilation of entrepreneurial skills such as entrepreneur testimonials, simulations, role plays, support for creators or project editing.

Moreover, it is widely recognized that the most appropriate teaching methods for this type of discipline must combine classical teaching methods and methods focused on the accumulation of experiences and learning by doing. Under these conditions, the entrepreneurial culture can be taught only under the condition of using specific teaching methods.

Building on these theoretical elements, it is now necessary to focus on the role of the education system in the development of an entrepreneurial culture.

### **3. The role of the education system in the development of an entrepreneurial culture**

It was not until the nineties that the role of the education system was recognized as an essential factor in spreading entrepreneurial culture, particularly at the university level. According to Fortin (2002), the actors in the education sector must play a key role in enhancing the entrepreneurial culture. It is now clear that the education system must devote a full part to the teaching of entrepreneurship, which is actually beginning to gain more space. This can be illustrated by the number of studies, studies, training programs as well as specialized academic institutions in this field. It should be noted that this type of teaching is particularly effective when it is introduced into the education system very early as this can foster creative thinking and allow children's imagination to mushroom (European Commission, 2004).

What is expected of the education system?

First of all, developing entrepreneurship skills and culture at an early age can help reinforce in the learner an evolutionary and constructive organization of his worldview (socio-economic environment), his identity (person and potential) and his power of action (entrepreneurial project). This corresponds globally, and respectively, to three functions: knowing, choosing and acting. That in turn results in a dynamic that is that of the development of competencies, whether disciplinary, identity-based or adaptive, and which leads to success. Hence, the learners, or at least most of them, will be automatically transformed from job seekers to creators of value and job providers or project developers within living organizations (intrapreneurship). The acquisition of entrepreneurial values will encourage these learners to become entrepreneurs in their lives and to give them the desire to take their future into their own hands. Finally, such an education will improve the adaptation skills of learners in an increasingly globalized environment; an environment characterized by its uncertainty and complexity.

For the Moroccan university to meet the challenges above, it must itself become entrepreneurial. It must ensure that a set of measures is put in place to facilitate the dissemination of the entrepreneurial culture and the success of students' entrepreneurial projects. Under the leadership of the responsible ministry, several initiatives have been launched by universities. More specific examples include the introduction of compulsory training modules in entrepreneurship, the creation of innovation campuses to support the creation of innovative companies, the setting up of incubators to host and accompany the creators of creative business projects as well as the organization of scientific events and competitions for better entrepreneurship projects. All these measures certainly have an important role to play in spreading the entrepreneurial culture in universities and colleges in Morocco, even if it is believed that these efforts remain relatively weak compared to efforts made by their North American, European or Asian counterparts.

In short, it is clear that entrepreneurship education can provide an excellent leverage for the development of an entrepreneurial culture and a privileged way to help move from a wage-earning society to an entrepreneurial society.

Nevertheless, the impact of such endeavors has never been evaluated through empirical research. Hence, we took the lead of exploring how education in Morocco can contribute to the development of entrepreneurial culture. The next sections will focus on the objectives, the methodology and the results of this study.

#### **4. The empirical study**

##### **4.1. Objectives & Research Questions:**

It is worth reiterating that this study set out with the objective of investigating the extent to which higher education in Morocco contributes to developing entrepreneurship culture and how the pedagogy adopted in teaching entrepreneurship fits with the requirements of building future entrepreneurs. In the light of this, we sought to answer two research questions :

Q1: Does the teaching provided by the Moroccan university enable students to develop the personal characteristics associated with entrepreneurship?

Q2 Is the pedagogy adopted in the teaching of entrepreneurship in line with the requirements of the entrepreneurial spirit?

##### **4.2. Methodology of the study:**

To answer our research questions, we opted for an exploratory qualitative study. The study was conducted with 10 teachers from 6 Moroccan universities: the CaddiAyyad University of Marrakech, the Hassan 1er University of Settat, the Hassan 2 University of Casablanca, the Mohamed 5 University of Rabat, the university Ibn Tofail of Kenitra and the Moulay Ismail University of Meknes. The choice of these universities is based on the principle of "targeted sampling" (Suri, 2011) that applies to both individuals and sites. The goal is to gain access to teachers' long experience and take advantage of their ability to observe changes in attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of their students. This in turn has enabled us to elicit their perception of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Morocco.

The interview guide developed addresses various issues related to the objectives of entrepreneurship education, the target population, the content, the pedagogical methods, the



profile and experience of the teacher, the role of extracurricular activities as well as the perception that the latter has of the Moroccan entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Before proceeding to the presentation of the data collection procedure, it is worth noting that the results presented below are only part of a larger study that goes beyond the purpose of the two questions cited above. The objective of this broader scope study is to dig deeper in this issue through eliciting primary data from a wider sample.

#### 4.3. Data collection procedure:

The semi-structured interviews recorded on an audio medium were transcribed in text mode to facilitate their analysis (Blanchet and Gotman, 2007). We conducted a content analysis in the form of a thematic analysis in order to highlight the significant variables for the research. Moreover, given the limited number of interviews conducted, we opted for manual analysis instead of automatic analysis.

#### 4.4. The Main results of the qualitative study:

The results will be presented in sub-themes with regard to the content of the interviews.

##### a- Objectives of entrepreneurship education:

When asked about the goals of entrepreneurship education, the participants cited numerous ones that we grouped into two broad categories. The first is building learners' awareness about entrepreneurship and the second is developing technical skills related to entrepreneurship and the promoting entrepreneurial values. The table below displays the different objectives mentioned by the respondents.

**Table 1: Objectives of entrepreneurship education**

Building Awareness	Building entrepreneurship values and enhancing technical skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ To Raise awareness of entrepreneurship"</li> <li>❖ Raising awareness of the entrepreneurial spirit</li> <li>❖ To activate entrepreneurial predisposition among students</li> <li>❖ Raise motivation about entrepreneurship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Development of technical skills</li> <li>➤ Train students in the entrepreneurial process"</li> <li>➤ Making students enterprising people through learning about autonomy, responsibility, initiative, so as to basically develop the personality of the student"</li> <li>➤ Accompany the students in the elaboration of a business plan</li> <li>➤ In the long run, giving students the opportunity for real business creation</li> <li>➤ Development of entrepreneurial and managerial skills</li> </ul>

##### b- The content of the courses:

Respondents' reports covered issues in theory and practice. They begin their course usually with theoretical themes to move to more practical activities. The theoretical aspect focuses on the presentation and discussion of concepts such as entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship and its different types, entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial process as well as the analysis of the Moroccan entrepreneurial ecosystem. An introduction to the development of the business plan follows. Respondents also reported that they use quizzes about the entrepreneurial profile of their students, but do not elaborate on it for lack of time.

**c- Teaching methods:**

The different interviews show that teaching methods are rather traditional. They concentrate more on theoretical concepts in the form of lectures and the elaboration of a business plan that is presented in class, sometimes in the presence of professionals. Teachers with large classes are usually short of time and space to allow all students to present their business plans. Some teachers reported using other methods, particularly conferences and meetings with serial entrepreneurs, reading cards and case studies.

**d- The profile and experience of the teacher:**

The majority of respondents emphasized the importance of the teacher's educational and entrepreneurial experience. They believed that this experience may be gained through contact with professionals, membership in associations and the provision of consulting activities. They thought that this may make up for lack of involvement in real business experience and can help them inculcate entrepreneurial culture and better succeed in teaching this discipline. The subjects also stated that when teachers share their personal experience they appeal to more students, make the content more appropriate, and gain in credibility. This way the teacher himself becomes a model to follow. Note also that this teaching requires multidisciplinary skills and cannot be successfully supported by a beginner. The educational experience becomes an invaluable asset and easy to expand on all the entrepreneurial dimensions.

Several key traits were mentioned by the respondents such as the availability, passion for entrepreneurship, open-mindedness, active listening and the ability to play the role of the facilitator and the coach. For some respondents, the teacher must be "the constructor of personalities".

**e- The role of extracurricular activities:**

Extra-curricular activities are an excellent means of personal fulfillment and personality development. They constitute a means of socialization within institutions of higher education. Respondents to the qualitative study spoke well of the advantages of this type of activity and discussed the effects on students attitudes and behaviors. The table below shows these activities and their effects on students' entrepreneurial knowledge.

As can easily be seen from table 2, these activities are still very popular with students. For them, they constitute a special moment of discovery and exchange with researchers, professionals and representatives of organizations supporting entrepreneurship. It's a great way to demystify and raise awareness of entrepreneurship as a second career path. It is also a means of developing one's relational network, which in itself constitutes an important pillar of entrepreneurship.

Another advantage of this type of activities is that they allow the students to develop certain skills, particularly in relation to networking and project management (development of self-confidence, public speaking, taking initiative). They can also enhance the ability to work in groups, problem solving, conflict management etc. The changes noted as a result of organizing such activities are very visible. It is clear that the evolution at the level of "intellectual maturity" is very positive.

**Table 2: Extracurricular activities and their effects**

Types of activities	Examples	Frequency	Reported Impact
Enterprises creation contests	-Junior enterprise -Enterprise creation fair -Business plan competition -entrepreneurship scientific colloquium -ENACTUS (Social enterprise creation contest) -INJAZ AL MAGHRIB (Enterprise creation contest) -Banque Populaire Reward for enterprise creation	75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ "considering entrepreneurship as a career"</li> <li>+ "mentoring and developing learners' entrepreneurial skills"</li> <li>+ Building awareness and acquiring social and technical skills</li> <li>+ Helping students create social networks</li> <li>+ Developing self-confidence</li> <li>+ Promoting Initiative taking</li> <li>+ Having access to New information linked with different fields</li> <li>+ Developing students enthusiasm though students remain inactive</li> <li>+ Enhancing team work aptitude</li> <li>+ Modifying learners' behavior</li> </ul>
Activities organized by students	Invitations to entrepreneurs and professionals	17%	
Entrepreneurship Colloquium	-colloquium on Green Entrepreneurship  -Scientific colloquium on entrepreneurship	17%	

**f- The Role of the university context in the promotion of entrepreneurial culture:**

The Interviews conducted show some lack of consensus on this aspect. Perceptions differ from one respondent to another. Two trends stand out overall. The first one considers that the university context is not very conducive to the development of an entrepreneurial culture and may even destroy the efforts made by teachers. The lack of a clear, written and shared strategy is noted even though each university has its own incubator, all of them have recently been established but they lack in maturity, resources and qualified human resources. The insufficiency of the means dedicated to the promotion of the entrepreneurial culture is highlighted. The importance of the commitment of the directors and deans of the various academic institutions is also raised.

The second trend that emerges is rather mixed. The university context is perceived as having some positive aspects but at the same time showing deficiencies in vision and dedicated resources. The support provided by the university is perceived as inadequate compared to the needs in terms of premises, human resources, logistics and equity.

**5. Discussion of results**

The results show a predominance of the technical aspect with a focus on the realization of business plans and little interest in developing learners' soft skills, autonomy and creativity. There is also lack of integration of real-life like situations and teaching through experiential learning. These results are in line with a study by Solomon, Duffy and Tarabishy (2002, cited by Carrier, 2009) who found that the business plan, traditional lectures and readings and case studies still remain the dominant pedagogical tools in university training for entrepreneurship. This omnipresence naturally leads us to question its effectiveness. The results of studies are contradictory and do not allow us to respond unequivocally to this question. While for some, entrepreneurs who prepare a business plan increase the chances of success of their business, others (Plaschka and Welsch, 1989, Reid and Smith, 2000, Carrier, Raymond and Eltaief, 2004, Zinger and Le Brasseur, 2003) have shown that it is difficult to establish a link or cause-and-effect relationship between the realization of a good business plan and the success of the entrepreneur. Audet (2004, quoted by Carrier, 2009) has even shown that putting students through the process of creating a business plan can eventually undermine their enthusiasm motivation for choosing an entrepreneurial career, since this exercise can seem complex and arduous. We believe that the option for the elaboration of business plans remains an interesting and instructive experience insofar as it allows students to put into practice the knowledge acquired during their university career, to develop a vision and reflect and decide on strategies and commercial actions to put in place. It is a tool that allows you to develop certain skills. Moreover, because it is usually done in a group, the impact is also to be sought in the development of relational skills.

Faced with the limitations of more traditional pedagogical methods, some authors favor the use of simulations on the premise that they are relevant and credible, adapted to the country's business context and learning objectives, and that they maintain students' interest and motivation. Honig (2004) considers that traditional pedagogy is often at odds with the needs of entrepreneurial education. It is more based on the integration of concepts applicable to the resolution of a problem for which an answer is already planned. However, entrepreneurs in real life situations are expected to evolve in a complex and dynamic environment which pushes them to confront

various unstructured problems and daunting challenges. In such an environment, the need to be able to make predictions is greatly outweighed by skills of adaptability and anticipation. For Honig, it is through action and a process of trial-and-error that individuals and groups learn to develop this sense of adaptation. According to him, simulations allow participating teams to experiment with new and sometimes unexpected situations, and thus helps them learn to cope with certain failures and to develop the resilience needed to transcend them.

In addition, behavioral simulations, which are experiential activities in which a business situation is created to induce students to experiment with certain behaviors, allow the development of certain entrepreneurial skills and abilities such as leadership, the search for innovative solutions and perseverance. Hence, Simulations remain an excellent way to help learners get familiar with the emotional, instinctive and driving aspects of entrepreneurship. These games represent one of the privileged means for the development of certain skills, in particular the ability to negotiate, to convince, to network and to attract interesting partners (Low, Venkataraman and Srivastan, 1994). They also help develop the ability to ask provocative questions about the future of the company, the ability to generate several possible scenarios, the redefinition of issues to make them more intelligible, the creation of a vision for the future of the company and the ability to seek and promote innovative ideas (Stumpf, Dunbar and Mullen, 1991). These results are the fruit of the experimentation of these simulations on large samples of students.

In this search for other methods to develop entrepreneurial culture, Carrier (2009), based on the work of Benson (1992), emphasizes the importance of reading classical books by novelists, thinkers and philosophers. According to this author, the heroes and characters in these books can be a great source of inspiration for entrepreneurship students. Another interesting way in our opinion is the use of role plays to introduce students to a better management of their negative emotions generally associated with failure.

Beyond the pedagogical aspects, we wish to highlight two points which seem to us of paramount importance. First, teacher training is key to improving pedagogies that aim at building and enhancing entrepreneurship culture in higher education. Updating teachers' know-what and know-how can help them vary their teaching methods cater the objectives of the courses to the 21 century students' needs through optimal use of information and communication technologies. Secondly, reducing the number of students in large classes and lengthening the training period allotted to teaching entrepreneurship can have interesting positive outcomes. Mentoring learners to become entrepreneurs or at least to develop entrepreneurial knowledge and skills requires differential pedagogies and close supervision, both of which seem impossible to achieve in the present conditions of teaching in Moroccan universities.

## **6. Conclusion, limitations and Implications:**

The present study sought out to investigate whether Moroccan universities focus on developing students' entrepreneurial spirit and competencies for entrepreneurship. The results discussed above showed that students' knowledge of entrepreneurship is mainly gained through extracurricular activities held by external entities, professional organizations and students' associations. Faculty involvement in the process of building entrepreneurship is limited to the courses expensed in large classes and that last for very limited periods of time. Most of time,

such courses rely on traditional pedagogies that do not go beyond introducing the theory of entrepreneurship and giving students assignments of devising business plans and presenting them in class. This mechanical exercise usually falls short of developing the skills that are necessary to developing entrepreneurs and enhancing entrepreneurial spirit. The results have also highlighted the professors' disenchantment with the conditions of work, lack of resources and insufficient funding which in turn hampers their ability to adequately teach entrepreneurship and promote entrepreneurial culture. These findings have helped us reach interesting implications about the methods and pedagogies used in Moroccan universities to teach and promote entrepreneurship. However, the results of this study should be taken with caution due to numerous limitations. The major limitation of this study is related to the sample which is very small and does not allow for generalizations. Besides, this study did not seek to triangulate data and focused only on one instrument which is semi-structured interviews. This instrument may provide some biased data as it mainly focuses on the participants reports and perceptions. Yet, this study has helped us shed some light on an issue that holds great concern in our country. Research in the relationship between higher education and building entrepreneurial spirit is still lacking in Morocco. Our findings can help other researchers focus on specific issues when carrying out similar research. Besides, the qualitative data we have reached has contributed to the understanding of this issue and will guide us design other quantitative and qualitative studies that will target different levels in the Moroccan educational system and will attempt to answer new pertinent questions about the relationship between education and the development of entrepreneurship.

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