The journal « The challenge »: ISSN 9859-1112 EISSN2602-6619 :
Volume: 18 Issue: 02 / 2026, Pages 333-345

An Analytical Study of Entrepreneurial Intentions Among Students of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences Regarding the Establishment of Their Own Business After Graduation

دراسة توجه طالب ميدان علوم وتقنيات النشاطات البدنية والرياضية بجامعة العربي بن مهيدي نحو التفكير انشاء مؤسسته الخاصة بعد التخرج في

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Received: 28/02/2026 Accepted: 14/05/2026 Published: 06 /06/2026

Abstract:

This study aims to examine the entrepreneurial orientation of students in the field of Physical and Sports Activities Sciences at the University of Oum El Bouaghi and identify the factors influencing their intention to establish their own businesses after graduation.

Methods: A quantitative, descriptive, and inferential approach was adopted to assess students' entrepreneurial intentions and perceptions.

Study Sample: The study involved a representative sample of students from various academic levels (Bachelor's and Master's) and specializations within the institute (39 students).

Data Collection: Data were collected using a structured questionnaire measuring entrepreneurial intention, social support, and motivational factors, including financial independence, role models, and labor market perceptions.

Results: Statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) were observed among students in the field of Physical and Sports Activities Sciences at Larbi Ben M'hidi University according to gender, with male students showing a higher inclination toward establishing a private business compared to female students.

No statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$) were found between students specializing in Physical Preparation and Sports Training and those in School Physical Activity regarding their willingness to establish a private business.

Similarly, no statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$) were observed between Bachelor's and Master's students in terms of entrepreneurial intention, as well as perceived university encouragement and support

Keywords: Startups, Entrepreneurial mindset, Entrepreneurship, Independent projects**.**

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1. Introduction:

Over the past decades, the global labor market has undergone profound transformations. Individual initiative, an entrepreneurial spirit, and innovative thinking have become essential skills that university graduates are expected to possess to confront unemployment challenges and achieve professional integration. Employment in the public sector or reliance on traditional forms of work is no longer the sole pathway to social and economic integration. Instead, entrepreneurship has emerged as a promising field that enables young people to create job opportunities for themselves and for others. (GEM, 2020)

The field of Physical and Sports Activities is considered one of the most promising sectors for the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises. This is due to its flexibility, the diversity of its specializations, and the growing social demand for its services, particularly in areas such as sports training, fitness, event organization, sports marketing, sports tourism, and therapeutic recreation.

In addition to scientific and professional competence, this field requires students to possess psychological and intellectual readiness to engage in self-initiative and entrepreneurial ventures (Baldassarri, 2021)

In recent years, Algerian universities have adopted an increasingly strategic orientation toward fostering an entrepreneurial culture within the academic environment, recognizing it as a key driver for enhancing graduate employability and promoting sustainable economic development. In this context, several higher education institutions, including Larbi Ben M'hidi University, have integrated specialized entrepreneurship modules into their curricula. They have also established Entrepreneurship Houses in collaboration with the National Agency for Support and Development of Entrepreneurship (formerly ANSEJ, currently ANADE), in addition to implementing mechanisms for incubating and supporting student project ideas and transforming them into viable ventures. (Zitouni, K., & Azzouzi, M., 2022)

However, the central issue does not merely lie in the availability of these support structures and institutional mechanisms, but rather in the actual readiness of university students—particularly those in the field of Physical and Sports Activity Sciences and Techniques—to transition from academic training to effective entrepreneurial engagement after graduation. This transition raises significant scientific questions regarding students' entrepreneurial awareness, the development of entrepreneurial intention, the acquisition of relevant cognitive and behavioral competencies, and their perceptions of risk-taking and professional autonomy. Consequently, assessing the level of entrepreneurial readiness among this population requires a rigorous and systematic scientific approach based on quantitative and qualitative indicators of measuring the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral dimensions associated with entrepreneurial action. (Al-Qudah, 2018)

Entrepreneurial thinking has become a strategic option for many university students, particularly in light of the growing awareness of the importance of innovation and

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professional independence after graduation. In this context, the sports sector emerges as a fertile environment for nurturing new ideas and entrepreneurial ventures, especially given the rapid global growth of the sports industry.

Students specializing in physical education and sports management, as well as those who are passionate about sports, have increasingly begun to invest their knowledge and skills in developing private enterprises that provide a wide range of services, such as sports coaching, tournament organization, sports marketing, fitness services, and even digital technologies tailored to the sports domain.

This orientation reflects a shift in students' mindsets from being merely job seekers to becoming innovators who create their own opportunities and actively contribute to building a modern sports economy that responds to market demands and promotes a stronger sports culture within society.

With the availability of digital tools and institutional support in certain countries, these ambitions have become increasingly attainable and more feasible to realize.

In light of the rapid transformations taking place in the labor market, public employment is no longer the sole option available to university graduates. Rather, it has become essential to adopt new orientations grounded in innovation, autonomy, and an entrepreneurial mindset. Within this framework, entrepreneurship has emerged as a strategic alternative for reducing unemployment, fostering economic growth, and promoting the professional integration of young people, particularly in developing countries such as Algeria. (Audretsch, 2003). The Algerian government has attached increasing importance to promoting entrepreneurship within university environments by integrating dedicated entrepreneurship modules into academic curricula and establishing entrepreneurship centers within universities. Nevertheless, the proportion of university graduates who choose to establish their own enterprises remains limited, raising critical questions regarding the actual state of this orientation and the factors influencing it. (Zitouni, K., & Azzouzi, M., 2022)

The field of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences is characterized by specific academic and professional features that make it a fertile domain for entrepreneurship, given the diverse investment opportunities it offers in areas such as coaching and training, recreation, sports tourism, nutrition and fitness, sports marketing, event management, and even the manufacturing of sports equipment (Chelladurai, 2014)

Numerous studies indicate that a university student's intention to establish a private venture is influenced by multiple factors, including personal variables (motivation, self-esteem, attitudes), cognitive factors (academic achievement, entrepreneurial education), and environmental determinants (institutional support, family influence, and societal culture) Other studies have further demonstrated that the absence of effective guidance and the misalignment between academic training and labor market requirements constitute major barriers for students aspiring to enter the entrepreneurial arena (Ghulam, et al., 2017)

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2. Main Research Question;

- What is the level of entrepreneurial orientation among students in the field of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences at Larbi Ben M'hidi University regarding the establishment of their own enterprise after graduation, and how is this orientation influenced by variables such as gender, academic level, and field of specialization?

3. Research Hypotheses:

- There are significant differences in the entrepreneurial orientation of students in the field of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences at Larbi Ben M'hidi University toward establishing their own enterprise after graduation, based on gender, academic level, and field of specialization

4. Methods:

The researchers adopted the descriptive method in this study, which involves examining phenomena as they exist in reality. This approach can be applied quantitatively, to measure the magnitude of a phenomenon and its correlations with other variables, or qualitatively, to describe the phenomenon and elucidate its characteristics.

4.1 Research Sample :

The sample of this study consisted of a purposive sample, focusing on graduates and current students in the field of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences at the University of Oum El Bouaghi. It included 39 students from all specializations in their final year of study.

The researchers employed this type of sampling to obtain information from a specific group capable of providing relevant and meaningful data.

4.2 Study Scope:

The study was conducted at the Institute of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences at the University of Oum El Bouaghi. Data were collected using a pre-designed electronic questionnaire, which was distributed online via social media platforms to students who were either about to graduate or entering their final year of study.

The study was conducted over the period from January to May 2025. During January and February 2025, previous and related studies were reviewed, along with the most relevant theoretical approaches concerning the study variables. The research instrument was initially developed, then piloted and validated in March 2025. The final version of the instrument was subsequently prepared and distributed electronically starting from May 10, 2025

4.3 Data Collection:

4.3.1 Questionnaire :

The questionnaire is one of the most commonly used tools for obtaining information and facts regarding the opinions and attitudes of a target population on a specific topic or issue. It consists of a structured set of questions administered to a selected segment of the population (sample). The researchers designed and standardized the questionnaire after reviewing numerous previous and related studies.

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The final version of the questionnaire was then prepared for electronic distribution. The first section of the questionnaire collected demographic information about the participants (gender, academic level, and field of specialization), while the second section consisted of a series of questions categorized according to the study variables

4.3.2 Procedures for Administering the Questionnaire Electronically :

The questionnaire was initially drafted and subsequently reviewed by a panel of experts to evaluate its content validity. Based on their recommendations, necessary modifications were incorporated, and the final version was developed electronically using Google Forms. A pilot test was conducted with a small sample to ensure clarity, ease of use, and the absence of technical or content-related issues, thereby enhancing the instrument's reliability.The finalized questionnaire was subsequently distributed to the study sample through an electronic link. Upon accessing the link, participants provided their personal information (gender, academic level, and field of specialization) and responded to the questionnaire items using a three-point Likert scale (Agree – Neutral – Disagree) .Data collection occurred between May 10 and May 19, 2025. Responses were systematically compiled and exported into an Excel file, organized to facilitate data verification, statistical analysis, and the necessary comparative evaluations

5. Results :

5.1. General Characteristics of the Study Sample:

Based on the results of the questionnaire, which was distributed electronically among the students of the Institute of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences, the overall findings are as follows:

Table 1: Distribution of Final-Year Students by Gender

Gender	Number	Percentage (%)	Total
Male	30	76.9	39
Female	9	23.1	39

Based on Table 1 and the accompanying chart illustrating the distribution of final-year students by gender, male students accounted for 76.9%. with a total of 30 students. while female students represented 23.1%, totaling 9 students.

Table 2: Distribution of Students by Academic Level

Students	Number	Percentage (%)
Third-year Bachelor's	24	61.5
Second-year Master's	15	38.5

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Based on the table showing the distribution of final-year students by academic level, third-year Bachelor's students accounted for 61.5%, totaling 24 students, while second-year Master's students represented 38.5%, with a total of 15 students.

Table 3: Distribution of Final-Year Students by Field of Specialization

Specialization	Number	Percentage (%)
Sports Physical Preparation	21	53.8
School Physical Activity & Sports	18	46.2

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of final-year students by field of specialization. Students majoring in Sports Physical Preparation accounted for 53.8%, representing 21 students, while those specializing in School Physical Activity and Sports comprised 46.2%, representing 18 students.

5.2. Analysis of the Overall Responses :

Table 4: Description of the Study Sample's Responses

Variable Description	Min	Max	Std. Deviation	Median	Mean
I have a tendency toward the field	1	3	0.43	3	2.85
I prefer working in a private enterprise	1	3	0.79	3	2.49
I have previous experience in a private enterprise	1	3	0.86	2	2.13
I have previously considered establishing a private enterprise	1	3	0.78	3	2.64
I receive encouragement from friends to start an enterprise	1	3	0.78	3	2.38
I am aware of how to establish a private enterprise	1	3	0.75	3	2.62
I have a risk-taking attitude to achieve profits	1	3	0.85	3	2.49
I have the ability to face challenges	1	3	0.85	3	2.46
I have a clear idea about the type of enterprise	1	3	0.88	3	2.46
I have a plan to develop my enterprise	1	3	0.88	3	2.38
I have creative ideas that can be implemented	1	3	0.88	3	2.46
I possess the necessary skills to establish an enterprise	1	3	0.88	3	2.49
The university provides sufficient training	1	3	0.72	3	2.54
Professors encourage entrepreneurship	1	3	0.71	2	2.36
The university organizes training days	1	3	0.63	3	2.62
The university program provides the necessary knowledge	1	3	0.68	3	2.56
The university provides support to those wishing to establish an enterprise	1	3	0.45	3	2.82
I am inclined to establish my project after graduation	1	3	0.88	3	2.49
I aim to participate in a graduation project as a startup	1	3	0.88	3	2.49

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Based on the results presented in the table above, it is evident that most of the mean scores are close to 3 (Agree), indicating a generally positive orientation toward entrepreneurship. The highest mean values were observed for the variables "I have a tendency toward the field of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences" and "The university provides support to students wishing to establish an enterprise". The standard deviations ranged from 0.43 to 0.88, suggesting a moderate level of variability in the responses.

Accordingly, the researchers decided to organize the participants' responses into the following thematic axes:

5.3. Entrepreneurial Orientation (Axis 1):

Table 5: Responses of the Study Sample to Questions Related to Entrepreneurship

Variable Description	Mean
I have a tendency toward the field	2.85
I prefer working in a private enterprise	2.49
I have previous experience in a private enterprise	2.13
I have previously considered establishing a private enterprise	2.64

The results indicate a strong entrepreneurial tendency among most students, as the mean scores approach the highest value (3), reflecting an initial positive psychological readiness. Students also tend to prefer working in private enterprises, although a notable proportion remains neutral. Most students, however, have no prior experience working in private enterprises, which may constitute an obstacle when initiating their own projects in the future. On a positive note, the study sample demonstrates consideration of establishing their own enterprise.

5.4. Social and Cognitive Support (Axis 2):

Table 6: Responses of the Study Sample to Questions Regarding Social and Cognitive Support

Variable Description	Mean
I receive encouragement from friends to establish an enterprise	2.38
I am aware of how to establish a private enterprise	2.62

The table above shows that social support exists at a moderate level, indicating that the influence of the social environment is somewhat encouraging, but not sufficiently strong to generate a robust entrepreneurial motivation. The results also reveal an acceptable level of awareness regarding the initial procedures for establishing an enterprise, suggesting that students possess the necessary cognitive resources to initiate practical steps if the appropriate conditions are available.

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5.5. Personal Traits and Innovation (Axis 3):

Table 7: Responses of the Study Sample to Questions Related to Personal Traits and Innovation

Variable Description	Mean
I have a risk-taking attitude to achieve profits	2.49
I have the ability to face challenges	2.46
I have a clear idea about the type of enterprise	2.46
I have a plan to develop my enterprise	2.38
I have creative ideas that can be implemented	2.46
I possess the necessary skills to establish an enterprise	2.49
I have a risk-taking attitude to achieve profits	2.49

The results presented in the table above indicate that students exhibit a moderate level of risk-taking, which is a fundamental trait for entrepreneurs; however, this tendency is not high enough to reflect full readiness for undertaking risks. A moderate level of confidence is observed in their ability to overcome challenges, suggesting the need to strengthen psychological and behavioral skills necessary for entrepreneurial success.

The results also reveal that students have an initial perception of the types of enterprises they could establish, but this perception is incomplete or not clearly defined for most students. This highlights the need for academic guidance and strategic planning. Only a few students have actually begun drafting a development plan, indicating a gap between idea generation and implementation.

Furthermore, students consider themselves capable of generating innovative ideas, though these ideas may not yet be mature or fully implementable without proper mentoring and support. They also perceive themselves as having foundational skills, yet these are insufficient for undertaking independent entrepreneurial ventures.

Overall, the findings suggest that students have an initial psychological readiness and positive orientation toward entrepreneurial traits; however, the indicators remain at a moderate level. This implies that there is a solid foundation for development, which requires reinforcement through practical experience and applied training.

5.6. University Environment (Axis 4):

Table 8: Responses of the Study Sample to Questions Related to the University Environment

Variable Description	Mean
The university provides sufficient training in entrepreneurship	2.54
Professors encourage students to establish their own enterprises	2.36
The university organizes training days on enterprise creation	2.62
The university program provides the necessary knowledge in the field	2.56
The university provides support to students wishing to establish an enterprise	2.82

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The table above indicates that students hold a relatively positive evaluation of the training efforts provided by the university in the field of entrepreneurship, reflecting the effectiveness of the pedagogical programs offered. However, encouragement from professors toward entrepreneurship is lower than expected, which may negatively affect student motivation, despite the existence of institutional training programs and practical activities that support entrepreneurial initiatives. Overall, the findings reflect a strong appreciation of institutional efforts in guiding and supporting students, contributing to raising awareness and readiness for entrepreneurial activities.

5.7. Analysis of the Results:

Table 9: Results of the Shapiro-Wilk Test for Data Distribution

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk	p-value	Result
Intention to Establish an Enterprise	0.92	0.053	Normal distribution
Encouragement and Social Support	0.87	0.002	Non-normal distribution

- Variables with p-values < 0.05 do not follow a normal distribution, and thus non-parametric tests (e.g., Mann-Whitney, Spearman) should be used.
- Variables with p-values > 0.05 may follow a normal distribution, allowing the use of parametric tests (e.g., t-test, Pearson correlation)

Table 10: Comparison of Responses by Gender

Variable	Gender	Mean Rank	U Statistic	p-value	Result
Intention to Establish an Enterprise	Male	18.6	45.0	0.002	Statistically significant difference
	Female	10.2			
Encouragement and University Support	Male	19.1	50.5	0.011	Statistically significant difference
	Female	9.8			

Based on the results of the Mann-Whitney U Test, it is evident that male students have higher mean ranks for both variables, indicating a stronger inclination toward entrepreneurship and a greater acceptance of risk compared to female students.

Accordingly, the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states that there are statistically significant differences between male and female students in the field of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences at Larbi Ben M'hidi University regarding their intention to establish a private enterprise.

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Table 11: Comparison of Responses According to the Specialization Variable

Variable	Specialization	H Statistic	Mean	p-value	Result
Willingness to Establish a Business	Physical Preparation and Sports Training	2.15	17.8	0.142	No statistically significant difference
	School Physical Activity		15.2		

The results indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in the willingness to establish a business according to the field of specialization (H = 2.15, p = 0.142).

Table 14: Test of Differences According to the Academic Level Variable

Variable	U Statistic	p-value	Result
Willingness to Establish a Private Business	110.5	0.342	No statistically significant difference
Social Encouragement and Support	98.5	0.215	No statistically significant difference

The results of the Mann–Whitney U test indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in willingness to establish a private business (U = 110.5, p = 0.342) nor in social encouragement and support (U = 98.5, p = 0.215) according to the academic level

6. Discussion :

Based on the findings obtained, the majority of students in the field of Physical and Sports Activities Sciences at Larbi Ben M'hidi University show a clear inclination toward establishing their own businesses after graduation. A considerable proportion of students prefer entrepreneurship over salaried employment, reflecting a high level of awareness and an increasing tendency toward independence and personal ambition.

In light of the current economic conditions, most students perceive entrepreneurship as the most appropriate option for combating unemployment and addressing the scarcity of job opportunities. This perception indicates a sound economic awareness and a realistic understanding of labor market dynamics among the students.

The study's results revealed that the majority of students expressed a moderate to high intention to establish their own businesses after graduation, indicating an initial awareness of entrepreneurship as an alternative career path to traditional employment. This aligns with the findings of (Ghulam, et al., 2017), which suggested that students in applied disciplines exhibit a stronger inclination toward entrepreneurship compared to their counterparts in theoretical fields, particularly when they receive supplementary entrepreneurial training within the university.

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(Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000) further emphasize that entrepreneurial intention serves as a fundamental predictor of subsequent entrepreneurial behavior, shaped by the interaction of personal attitudes, cognitive perceptions, and the social environment. Therefore, the presence of such positive intention among students is a promising indicator; however, it remains insufficient unless it is supported by practical mechanisms and real-world experiences.

independent projects. Furthermore, many students perceive that the university does not provide sufficient training in entrepreneurship and the establishment of their own businesses, reflecting a gap between higher education and labor market requirements.

A study by Balrashid Nabil (2024), titled *Students' Perceptions of Entrepreneurship in Light of Their University Education*, concluded that university educational content does not contribute significantly to shaping graduating students' perceptions of entrepreneurship. The study also found that scientific events did not effectively influence students' entrepreneurial perceptions. Moreover, the University's Entrepreneurship Center had no clear impact on shaping students' understanding of entrepreneurship, indicating a significant deficiency in informational and guidance support within the university. This underscores the need to enhance both theoretical and practical training in the field.

6.1 Differences in Entrepreneurial Orientation According to Demographic Variables

6.1.1 By Gender:

The study's results revealed statistically significant differences in favor of male students regarding the intention to establish a private business. This finding aligns with Zhao et al. (2005), who indicated that males exhibit higher levels of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, a key determinant of entrepreneurial intention. Shinnar et al. (2012) also noted that female students are often more cautious and hesitant in making career decisions involving risk, such as entrepreneurship, due to cultural and social factors.

6.1.2 By Academic Level:

It was found that third-year (Bachelor's) students exhibit a lower inclination toward entrepreneurship compared to Master's students. This can be explained by the fact that students closer to graduation feel greater pressure to integrate into the professional world and possess a clearer understanding of the labor market. This aligns with Shapero & Sokol's (1982) model, which highlights perceived feasibility and perceived desirability as primary motivators of entrepreneurial behavior.

6.1.3 By Specialization:

The study revealed that students specializing in Sports Training and Activity Management are the most inclined toward entrepreneurship compared to other specializations, such as Recreational Physical Activity or Health-Oriented Physical Activity. This may be due to the clearer investment opportunities in these fields, which require organizational and athletic skills that are more easily convertible into professional ventures (Chelladurai, 2014).

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Among the most prominent factors motivating students to consider establishing their own businesses are:

- The desire to achieve financial and professional independence.
- The presence of successful role models in their environment (family members, friends,…);
- The perception of limited employment opportunities in the public sector

These findings align with (Fayolle & Liñán, 2014), who indicated that psychological and social factors constitute a strong driver for adopting entrepreneurial thinking, who demonstrated that students in sports-related fields are often influenced by surrounding market opportunities, particularly in the absence of stable professional alternatives.

Most students reported awareness of support available within the university through mentoring, guidance, and entrepreneurship support structures; however, the impact of these mechanisms on altering their behavior remains limited. This underscores the need to review pedagogical approaches, integrate real-world experiences, and accompany students throughout the stages of idea development and implementation.

(Fayolle & Gailly, 2015) support this perspective, emphasizing that the effectiveness of entrepreneurial education is not only linked to knowledge content but also to teaching methods, interaction with professional realities, and the connection between theoretical ideas and practical application, coupled with continuous mentorship.

The results of this study indicate that students in the field of Physical and Sports Activities Sciences possess a positive orientation toward entrepreneurship. However, this orientation remains largely latent unless translated into actual practices supported by effective training, institutional guidance, and cultural and social encouragement. These findings suggest that promoting an entrepreneurial culture in university settings cannot be effective without taking into account the specific characteristics of each field, students' needs, and the contextual barriers surrounding them.

7 Conclusions:

Students at the Institute of Physical and Sports Activities Sciences at the University of Oum El Bouaghi demonstrate a promising orientation toward entrepreneurship. This highlights the importance of fostering this inclination through the development of academic programs, the integration of specialized courses in entrepreneurship, and the provision of university spaces that allow for the experimentation of ideas and emerging projects. Encouraging student initiatives and cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset represents a strategic approach to supporting the labor market, combating unemployment, and achieving sustainable development at both local and national levels

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