

Learning experiences and entrepreneurial intentions among college students

Most of member countries of the European Union are dramatically affected to a large extent by the effects of globalization and economic crisis. Reducing unemployment and promoting decent work have become two critical priorities to foster inclusive and sustainable growth for both economic and human growth (European Commission, 2011, 2013). As a consequence, a strategic action plan has been elaborated to target job creation and entrepreneurship, and especially for the youngest generations. The role of entrepreneurship education to increase entrepreneurial intentions and to develop a positive view toward entrepreneurship is now supported by numerous studies (Bae, Qian, Miao, & Fiet, 2014; Martin, McNally, & Kay, 2013; Pittaway & Cope, 2007) and widely recognized by both international organizations and governments (European Commission, 2008; International Labour Organization, 2014; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). Examining the antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions has been particularly investigated over the last decades. Accordingly, several authors have acknowledged the importance of learning experiences (Erikson, 2003; Peterson & Kennedy, 2003; Rae & Carswell, 2000). As pointed by the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT, Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2000), learning experiences may refer to four major sources: mastery experiences, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and affective states. Such theoretical framework has been recently used to understand the formation of entrepreneurial intentions (Atitsogbe, Mama, Sovet, Pari, & Rossier, *submitted*; Farashah, 2015; Lanero, Vazquez, & Aza, 2016; Tran & Von Korflesch, 2016). Nevertheless, the various aspects of learning experiences that may explain the engagement into an entrepreneurship education programme and the intentions to start a business have not been explored extensively yet while cross-cultural differences are likely to moderate the relevance and the weight of each aspect (Bae et al., 2014). The aim of the current project is to address the current gaps by conducting a mixed-methods study in order to provide a more comprehensive view of learning experiences influencing entrepreneurial intentions among college students in different cultural settings. During the first phase of the study, semi-structured interviews will be conducted among college students engaged in an entrepreneurship education programme. Based on the outcomes, a survey will be elaborated and administrated to a large sample of college students as the second phase of the study. Cross-

cultural research methods will be applied to ensure the comparability of the data collected. The final research design and the planning will be discussed with participants of the ARTS 2018.