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Intersection between the need for academic achievement and entrepreneurial intentions in Mexican university students

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship and its evolution from intention have garnered increasing interest in research. Borrayo, Valdez & Delgado (2019), indicate that in Mexico, young people are motivated to undertake entrepreneurial ventures during their university years through education and training. Araya-Pizarro (2020), suggests that entrepreneurial education significantly and positively impacts the intention to undertake. The objective of this study is to determine whether the need for academic achievement as part of this type of education received by university students has a positive influence on their entrepreneurial intentions. Quantitative research with a descriptive, correlational-causal approach was conducted involving a sample of 361 students. Descriptive statistical techniques and simple regression analysis were applied based on tested assumptions. The findings revealed a direct yet weak correlation between the variables. It is concluded that the relationship between the need for academic achievement and entrepreneurial intention is complex and variable, with inconsistent outcomes based on cultural and educational contexts. Although the connection exists, its impact does not entirely explain entrepreneurial motivations, emphasizing the necessity for further research to strengthen this field and explore new areas of study.

Keywords: Need for academic achievement; entrepreneurial intention; entrepreneurship; University students; Mexico.

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Intersección entre la necesidad de logro académico y las intenciones emprendedoras en estudiantes universitarios mexicanos

Resumen

El emprendimiento y su evolución desde la intención han despertado un interés cada vez mayor en la investigación. Borrayo, Valdez y Delgado (2019), indican que en México los jóvenes se motivan a emprender emprendimientos durante sus años universitarios a través de la educación y la capacitación. Araya-Pizarro (2020), sugiere que la educación emprendedora impacta significativa y positivamente en la intención de emprender. El objetivo de este estudio es determinar si la necesidad de logro académico como parte de este tipo de educación que reciben los estudiantes universitarios influye positivamente en sus intenciones emprendedoras. Se realizó una investigación cuantitativa con enfoque descriptivo, correlacional-causal, involucrando una muestra de 361 estudiantes. Se aplicaron técnicas estadísticas descriptivas y análisis de regresión simple basados en supuestos probados. Los hallazgos revelaron una correlación directa pero débil entre las variables. Se concluye que la relación entre la necesidad de logro académico y la intención emprendedora es compleja y variable, con resultados inconsistentes según los contextos culturales y educativos. Aunque la conexión existe, su impacto no explica completamente las motivaciones empresariales, lo que enfatiza la necesidad de realizar más investigaciones para fortalecer este campo y explorar nuevas áreas de estudio.

Palabras clave: Necesidad de logro académico; intención emprendedora; emprendimiento; estudiantes universitarios; México.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship, according to Hernández (2019); Londoño & Álvarez (2021); Pacheco-Fuentes et al. (2023), is increasingly of interest to governments, the academic community, and researchers, who have directed their programs and public policies towards the development of an “entrepreneurial mindset” to foster economic and social development. Research in this field has gained relevance because significant efforts have been made to detail how and why entrepreneurial ventures are created (González, Sánchez & Sánchez, 2021). However, according to Sánchez et al. (2019), the new policies in Mexico have aimed to promote a more socially oriented and equitable education, moving away from the neoliberal focus on economic growth.

Following these new policies in Mexico, the facilitating elements for business creation

from university levels have been analyzed. It has been found that the intersection between the need for academic achievement and the intention to undertake has been the subject of growing interest in academic literature due to its influence on personal development, business innovation, and economic growth. Several authors have addressed this relationship and its significance in the educational and business context, emphasizing the importance of understanding how the desire for academic achievement influences individuals’ entrepreneurial disposition (Johnson, 1990; Gutiérrez & Miranda, 2018; Shahid & Ahsen, 2021).

McClelland (1989), established the theory of achievement motivation, suggesting that the drive for success and the desire to excel in challenging tasks are key factors in the development of entrepreneurial behavior. Similarly, Krueger (1993) highlighted that

educational experience and academic success can foster the confidence and skills necessary for entrepreneurship.

The importance of this topic lies in its potential to identify and understand the factors that affect the transition from entrepreneurial intention to effective action. Nevertheless, current challenges include the diversity of cultural and educational contexts, as well as the need for research that delves into the causal relationship between academic achievement and entrepreneurial disposition, considering psychosocial and economic variables. Current issues encompass the lack of consensus on how specific academic experiences can influence the development of business skills and the limited understanding of how educational environments can foster or inhibit entrepreneurial disposition.

Taking into account the information above and the premise that entrepreneurs develop in accordance with their environment (López, Moreno & Sanchez, 2020), university students in Mexico aspiring to venture into entrepreneurship should aim to be dynamic and adept at thriving within a challenging social context. In this scenario, lack of experience is not a primary hindrance to turning the situation into a positive one; rather, it is their innovative ideas that matter. These aspects may be strengthened through university education, where the transmission of knowledge, skills, and attitudes conducive to entrepreneurship generation takes place (Sánchez, Caggiano & Hernández, 2011).

The analysis of the relationship between the need for academic achievement and the intention to undertake is crucial for better understanding how entrepreneurial skills can be enhanced and developed in diverse educational contexts, addressing current challenges such as cultural diversity and the causal relationship between academic achievement and entrepreneurial intention.

The need for academic achievement is defined here as the motivation to perform well academically. In this context, the present research aimed to determine the intersection between the need for academic achievement and the intention to undertake among Mexican university students.

The study conducted a thorough and updated review of existing literature, enabling access to and integration of empirical findings up to the present. This allowed for a comparison of these findings with the current scope of the variables studied concerning the subjects under examination, in this case, referring to students at the Universidad Politécnica de Victoria in Mexico. The research employed a quantitative study with a causal correlational scope.

1. Theoretical framework

1.1. The need for academic achievement

McClelland (1989), defined the need for achievement as an impulse to excel, attain goals, strive for success, as a natural incentive for seeking improvement, although this may be for various reasons like complacency, avoiding criticism, seeking recognition, or deserving a reward. However, the essence of the need for achievement is doing well for oneself, deriving intrinsic satisfaction from doing it better, aiming for a superior performance.

The need for academic achievement is defined here as the motivation to perform well academically. Based on this concept, Tang & Tang (2007), suggest that students with higher achievement motivation in this aspect tend to exhibit a greater propensity to take risks, such as those involved in entrepreneurship, compared to students with lower achievement motivation. Morán & Menezes (2016) view the need for achievement as an aspiration to engage in new activities, explore new places, or even try exotic foods. This fosters a greater intellectual interest and a desire to obtain new ideas, as well as an openness to social, political, or religious values.

On one hand, Indarti, Rostiani & Nastiti (2010) point out that a high need for achievement has emerged as an important characteristic of entrepreneurs' personalities. Saadat, Moreno & Shumaila (2014); and Hussain & Norashidah (2015), determined that there is a positive and significantly meaningful relationship between the need for achievement and students'

entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, it can be argued that the need for achievement can be considered a trigger for entrepreneurial intention. It is reasonable to expect that, for students, their need for academic achievement will have a significant positive impact on their intention to undertake.

On the other hand, Tong, Kin & Chen (2011); Rishipal & Nidhi (2012); and Farouk & Ikram (2014), point out that studies have investigated the relationship between the need for achievement and entrepreneurial intention, resulting in a positive and significant outcome. Hence, it could be said that the greater the students' need for achievement is, the greater prediction it will have for their entrepreneurial intentions.

In summary, these studies support the idea that there is a significant relationship between the need for academic achievement and the intention to undertake, suggesting that a higher need for achievement could be associated with a greater willingness to start a business or vice versa in some cases. This connection underscores the importance of motivation and personal drive in the development of entrepreneurial or professional initiatives among students. Based on all the above, the hypothesis is established that the

need for academic achievement has a positive and significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention.

2. Methodology

A quantitative approach, with a correlational-causal scope was implemented, it assumed a non-experimental classification and a cross-sectional design. Data were collected at a single point in time through a questionnaire without deliberate manipulation of variables. A logical deductive foundation was employed, aiming to move from general to specific, from theory to hypothesis generation, and then testing the data in its entirety (Hernandez, Fernández & Baptista, 2014).

Once the constructs were defined, the instrument was designed based on a literature review. Items were adapted and created to form a questionnaire. Its validity was established through content, construct, criterion, and expert validation. Consequently, the instrument consisted of 17 questions distributed across 11 items for the variable of academic achievement need and 6 items for the entrepreneurial intention variable (see Table 1).

Table 1
Items for dependent and independent variables

Items for the Entrepreneurial Intention variable (dependent)		Items for the Need for Academic Achievement (independent)	
1.	I have seriously considered and have a strong intention to create my own company or business someday.	1.	I have much more energy than most of my classmates at school.
2.	I am determined to create my own company in the future, offering innovative products or services in the market.	2.	I enjoy completing work correctly in class.
3.	I believe that starting my own business is a good option for self-employment.	3.	When we work on a school project, I am always in the center of things.
4.	My goal/objective is to become an entrepreneur.	4.	I like to take the lead when we are working on a project.
5.	I will do everything to create my company.	5.	I usually try to be the driving force among my friends to study and pursue ideas.
6.	If I have the necessary resources in the future, I will start a company.	6.	I like to have a role on the sidelines of a project.
		7.	I actively seek opportunities and take initiative.
		8.	I demand efficiency and quality from myself.
		9.	I am willing to take calculated risks.
		10.	I have a strong need for independent work.
		11.	I believe that mistakes are only learning opportunities for entrepreneurship.

Source: Own elaboration, 2023.

Regarding the sample size, recommendations from Morales (2009) for finite populations were considered, establishing a minimum sample size of

308 students. This estimation was based on assuming a 50% probability of participation from the population. Ultimately, a total of 361 validated responses were obtained.

The data collection was conducted through convenience probabilistic sampling via electronic means, utilizing information provided by the University. The questionnaire was distributed to students through these electronic channels, forming a sample composed of 46.8% female participants and 53.2% male participants.

For data analysis, a simple linear regression was implemented with the need for academic achievement as the independent variable and entrepreneurial intention as the dependent variable. The summary of the regression analysis followed the guidelines indicated by Vilà, Torrado-Fonseca & Reguant (2019), ensuring compliance with criteria such as linearity, independence, homoscedasticity, normality, and non-collinearity of the variables. All data were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS®) version 29.0.

3. Results and discussion

For this study, an assessment of the intersection between the variables of need for academic achievement (independent variable) and entrepreneurial intention (dependent variable) was indirectly conducted. This was carried out through a simple linear regression analysis and the verification of its assumptions

in a preliminary phase. To begin with, a reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which yielded a value of 0.949, indicating a high internal consistency of the instrument used (see Table 2).

Table 2
Reliability statistics

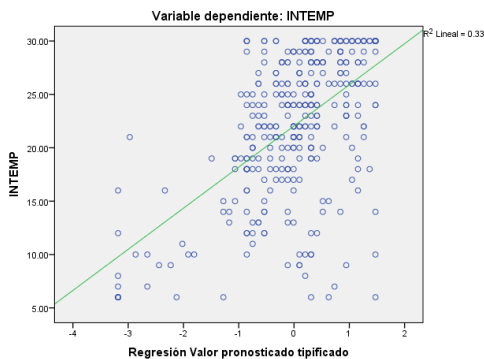
Cronbach's Alpha	N of elements
0.949	17

Source: Own elaboration, 2023.

3.1. Simple linear regression analysis

A regression analysis is used to analyze the relationship between two or more variables. In this case, the relationship between academic achievement needs and entrepreneurial intention is based on the fulfillment of certain assumptions as a preliminary phase, which were verified.

The linearity assumption determines if the relationship between variables is linear. Graphic I displays and verifies this assumption between the variables. Additionally, a correlation of .576 was identified between the dependent and independent variables, indicating a strong positive correlation, suggesting that the variables have a good linear proximity in the space (Hernández et al., 2018).



Source: Own elaboration, 2023.

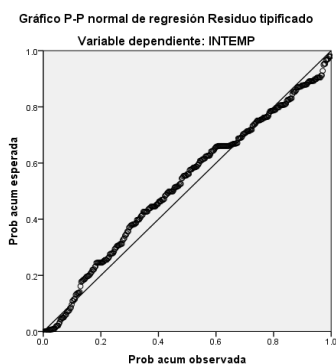
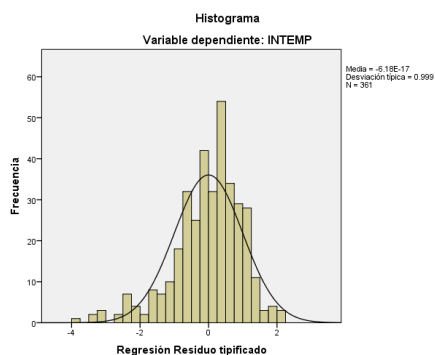
Graphic I: Assumption of linearity

The second assumption to verify is the independence of errors, which entails that errors in the measurement of explanatory variables are not dependent on each other. This principle can be checked using the Durbin-Watson statistic, considered independent if the statistic falls between the values of 1.5 and 2.5. In this case, a value of 2.122 was obtained, verifying that this requirement is fulfilled, indicating this autonomy.

The third assumption analyzed was homoscedasticity, which implies that errors possess constant variance, suggesting that the variation of residuals is uniform. An analysis was conducted on the aforementioned variables, resulting in an adequate value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (0.500).

According to the criteria for evaluating the statistic, significance was also achieved below .05 in Bartlett's test of sphericity, indicating that the variables are related and suitable for structure detection (Montoya, 2007). It is with this latter test that this assumption is confirmed (Díaz, 2009).

For the fourth assumption, normality is verified, which is met when the variables follow a normal distribution. This assumption may be analyzed using a normal probability plot, representing the accumulated proportions of the expected variable against the accumulated proportions of the observed variable. In Chart II, the normality of the variables under study is suggested or inferred.



Source: Own elaboration, 2023.

Graphic II: Assumption of normal probability

The fifth and final assumption refers to non-collinearity, which implies that the independent variables are not correlated with each other. Multicollinearity among the explanatory variables is considered when a strong correlation is found between them. To detect this, tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) were observed, both of which should have values less than 0.10 and not greater than 10, respectively. These criteria have been met satisfactorily.

The results shown in Tables 3, 4, and 5

indicate that the relationship between the need for academic achievement and entrepreneurial intention has a correlation value of 58% between the variables ($R=0.58$). However, the explanatory power of the variance is 33% ($R^2=0.33$), which does not fully capture the true strength of the relationship between the variables. In the ANOVA analysis, the F statistic assesses if there is a significant linear relationship between the dependent variable and the set of independent variables in the model, primarily determined by significance.

Table 3
Results of the linear regression analysis

R	Squared R	Adjusted R-squared	Standard Error of the Estimate
0.58	0.33	0.33	5.48

Source: Own elaboration, 2023.

Table 4
ANOVA Analysis

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sign.
Regression	5343.60	1	5343.60	177.85	0.000
Residual	10786.60	359	30.05		
Total	16130.20	360			

Source: Own elaboration, 2023.

Table 5
Regression analysis coefficients

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Error typ.	Beta		
(Constant)	5.297	1.289		4.111	0.000
NECDELOGAC	0.408	0.031	0.576	13.336	0.000

Note: a. Dependent variable: INTEMP

Source: Own elaboration, 2023.

A significance level below 0.05 indicates a significant relationship. In this case, the relationship of the model shows significance at < 0.001 . The B value (0.408) indicates the number of units the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention) will increase for every unit increase in the independent variable (academic achievement need), which is shown to be significant (Sig.= 0.000).

This work determines the degree of intersection in the relationship between entrepreneurial intention and the need for academic achievement among students, demonstrating that the most relevant factors of the need for academic achievement include the demand for efficiency and quality, the inclination to finish or complete tasks correctly in class, and the preference for things to take off when working on a project. Based on the results of the regression analysis obtained,

these findings serve as the basis for subsequent comparisons and discussions.

A weak positive relationship has been confirmed between the need for academic achievement and entrepreneurial intention, aligning with Baidi's study (2018), which indicates an R2 of merely 0.208. Furthermore, it suggests that the need for achievement as an independent variable might have a statistically positive influence with similar values.

Indarti et al. (2010), in their study across various countries, analyzed the relationship between the need for achievement and entrepreneurial intention using multiple regression. They found that the need for achievement did not significantly influence students' entrepreneurial intentions in most countries, with only one country showing a positive relationship. They concluded that a higher need for achievement was associated

with a low level of entrepreneurial intention. However, in the study by Saadat et al. (2014) with a sample of 805 individuals, it was determined, through an exploratory study, that the need for achievement is a motivating factor for entrepreneurship at an individual level. This influence was observed under the condition of a familial business background, suggesting an intergenerational influence.

In Loli, Del Carpio & Vergara (2012), a relationship was found between the need for achievement and entrepreneurial intentions, whether such need is low or high, with a high need being a strong predictor of intention. Similar findings were observed in the research by Johnson (1990); and Gutierrez & Miranda (2018), which indicate that although the need for achievement alone may not fully explain entrepreneurial intention, it is one of the main elements for entrepreneurial development. These findings align with the results of Indarti et al. (2010), where the need for achievement was determined as one of the most important characteristics of an entrepreneur.

On the other hand, in Shahid & Ahsen (2021), it was found that the relationship between the need for academic achievement and entrepreneurial intention is not statistically supported. They did not discover a positive and significant relationship between the entrepreneurial intention of students with either low or high need for academic achievement. This coincides with the findings of Indarti et al. (2010), who verified in their research across Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, and Thailand that the need for academic achievement does not have significance in its interaction with entrepreneurial intention.

The lack of a positive and significant statistical relationship in the interaction between the need for academic achievement and entrepreneurial intention has been discussed by various authors in the field of entrepreneurship research. One reason for this lack of relationship could be that the need for achievement in this academic context is more aligned with personal and performance-related goals (Morán & Menezes, 2016), especially

in an academic setting, rather than solely the desire to start a business.

Another likely cause is that entrepreneurial intention doesn't have a single basis solely on the desire to achieve something, but other factors influence it, such as cultural and social aspects. Considering that entrepreneurial intention is derived from an outcome, ease of realization, and responsiveness to opportunities (Querejazu, 2020), rather than from a specific need.

Another explanation for the lack of a significant or predominant interaction may be based on Ajzen's (1991) Belief-Action Theory model, which highlights that behavioral intentions, such as entrepreneurial intention, are influenced by various factors such as attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral control. The need for achievement may be just one of these factors and not the sole predictor of entrepreneurial intention.

Given these results, the need for academic achievement is not considered a variable that, on its own, significantly explains entrepreneurial intention. Although this work on academic achievement need expands the literature on entrepreneurial intention, it should be noted that according to Hmieleski & Baron (2009); and Phan et al. (2009), there should be an additional multilevel approach in entrepreneurship research focusing on the elements that favor entrepreneurial intentions.

Davidsson & Wiklund (2001), highlighted that a single factor alone cannot entirely explain the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial intention, suggesting instead a combination that provides deliberations on this process. Based on this, this work offers a new literary context regarding entrepreneurial intention by demonstrating the need for academic achievement as a perspective that may belong to a multilevel combination with other factors of entrepreneurial education.

Conclusions

The relationship between the need for academic achievement and entrepreneurial

intention has been studied in academic literature, and the conclusions drawn from various research studies offer a complex and nuanced perspective: In some studies, a positive, albeit weak, relationship has been found between the need for academic achievement and the entrepreneurial intention. This connection suggests that those with a high need for achievement may be more inclined to consider entrepreneurship as an attractive option.

However, this relationship is not consistent in all contexts. Some studies indicate that the need for academic achievement does not always significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions, showing differences depending on the country, culture, or educational environment.

Although the need for academic achievement can be a factor, it is neither the only nor the most decisive one in entrepreneurial intention. Other factors such as entrepreneurial skills, previous experiences, or individual characteristics also play crucial roles in the willingness to undertake.

Studies suggest the need to adopt a multilevel perspective to better understand the influence of the need for academic achievement need on entrepreneurial intention. This involves considering different levels, such as the individual, community, or socio-cultural levels, to fully capture its impact.

A complete understanding of entrepreneurial intention seems to require a combination of multiple factors, where the need for academic achievement may be just one of them. The interaction among different variables could be key to providing a more comprehensive explanation of entrepreneurial intentions.

While the need for academic achievement may have a relationship, albeit weak and contextual, with entrepreneurial intention, its role alone is neither definitive nor sufficient to fully explain the motivations behind the entrepreneurial spirit. The combination of this factor with other individual, contextual, and cultural elements is essential for a more holistic understanding of entrepreneurial intentions.

It is worth mentioning that currently there is not enough empirical evidence to precisely establish the relationship between the need for academic achievement and entrepreneurial intention as statistically significant. This underscores the necessity for further research efforts to strengthen the studied topic. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct investigations that reinforce the determination of the relationship between these variables.

This information will serve as a foundation for future research in the context of entrepreneurship and all factors related to entrepreneurial education, aiming to achieve conclusive results. Given the limitations of this study regarding time constraints that did not allow for a longitudinal study encompassing all factors, new lines of investigation may emerge concerning the subject matter addressed in this work.

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