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Research Article

Undertaking a business or not? Which is the best option? Analysis of the entrepreneurial intention profile of employees of startups and information technology companies in Rio Grande do Sul

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of this study was to investigate the entrepreneurial intention profile of the employees of startups and small companies in the technology segment of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, when they working to an organization. **Methodology:** The research is characterized as descriptive, using a quantitative approach, using the survey method. The data collection instrument was the questionnaire, based on the model by Kristiansen & Indarti (2004). **Findings:** The results demonstrate that more than 60% of the respondents intend to undertake, especially when perceiving themselves as a desired professional in the job market. **Theoretical contributions:** The study contributes theoretically to studies of entrepreneurial intent in Brazil, mainly because it provides a view outside the sphere of higher education institutions, the setting for most of the studies already published. **Originality:** When conducting a survey of data on Startups and Small Companies in the Technology segment, in the State of Rio Grande de Sul, it was found a small number of employees involved in the operations of these businesses, but with a good percentage interested in undertaking. **Contributions to management:** The study contributes to the advance of management in the sectors of startups and the technology area of Rio Grande do Sul, by identifying that incentive work and skills development can generate new business partnerships within the startups themselves, generating growth and competitive potential.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial intention. Startups. IT companies.

Resumo

Objetivo: O objetivo deste artigo foi investigar o perfil de intenção empreendedora de funcionários de startups e empresas de pequeno porte do segmento de tecnologia do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul, quando estão vinculados a uma organização. **Método:** O trabalho é caracterizado como descritivo, utiliza uma abordagem quantitativa, por meio do método survey. O instrumento de coleta de dados foi o questionário, baseado no modelo de Kristiansen & Indarti (2004). **Resultados:** Os resultados encontrados demonstram que mais de 60% dos respondentes têm a intenção de empreender, especialmente ao perceber-se um profissional desejado no mercado de trabalho. **Contribuições teóricas:** O artigo contribui teoricamente com os estudos de intenção empreendedora no Brasil, principalmente por oportunizar uma visão fora da esfera de instituições de ensino superior, cenário de boa parte dos estudos já publicados. **Originalidade:** Ao realizar o levantamento dos dados sobre as Startups e empresas de Pequeno Porte do segmento de Tecnologia, no Estado do Rio Grande de Sul, constatou um número pequeno de funcionários envolvidos com as operações destes negócios, porém com um bom percentual com interesse em empreender. **Contribuições para a gestão:** O artigo contribui para o avanço da gestão nos setores de startups e da área de tecnologia do Rio Grande do Sul, ao identificar que um trabalho de incentivo e desenvolvimento de habilidades pode gerar parcerias de novos negócios dentro das próprias startups, gerando crescimento e potencial competitivo.

Palavras-chave: Intenção Empreendedora. Startups. Empresas de TI.

INTRODUCTION

The scenario of opening and closing companies is dynamic, mainly because it is related to the movements of the economy in the world. While one person can look at the indicators and become pessimistic about the possibility of economic growth and the creation of new businesses, another one can look at the same indicators with an optimistic perception. This is because there is no exact formula to tell a person the best time to open a new business and because individuals in general analyze several factors before starting their own business (Fontenele et al., 2015).

Although the beginning of a business activity may be a planned behavior, Fontenele et al. (2015) believe that intention is the key variable to explain real situations in the decision-making process, that is, even individuals who cannot design a proper planning to start their own business can succeed in the medium and long term because of their intention, their attachment to the idea of building an enterprise and taking it forward. This is so because an entrepreneurial action is intentional and surrounded by the motivating factors that influence a behavior indicating the intensity with which individuals want to try and how hard they intend to work for it. The more the individual sees the opportunity as feasible and desirable, the stronger his/her intention to act will be (Hisrich et al. 2009).

New ideas and the acknowledgment of emerging opportunities need to take place in an individual's mind, and they only occur when the basic human cognition perception is active. In this case, the entrepreneurship process would be correlated with the individual's experience in each education area and his/her greater probability of identifying opportunities (Baron & Shane, 2007).

In the literature there are different positions on the reasons that lead an individual to become an entrepreneur (Levie & Autio, 2007; Souza & Junior, 2011; Vale et al., 2014). According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor - GEM (2019), 30.2% of Brazilians would like to start their own business in the next three years, a rate that considers those who are not entrepreneurs. Data from the same survey indicate that in 2019, according to those entrepreneurs who had just started in the market, the main motivations to start a business would be to earn a living because jobs are scarce (88.4%), make a difference in the world (51.4%), build wealth (36.9%), and continue a family tradition (26.6%).

The percentages above show that a new enterprise rarely is rarely established without intention. There is a context of intention in which one's professional and personal trajectory seems to be linked to decision-making processes. Thus, the investigation of how the individual perceives his/her professional trajectory becomes relevant to his/her understanding of the importance of organizations in his/her professional background, what he/she is and can become as a professional, and which factors associated with his/her employment relationship can structure his/her projections for life, in this case considering the decision to become self-employed. Consequently, the aspects related to one's professional trajectory are involved in one's process of developing an entrepreneurial intention.

Quitting a career or changing one's lifestyle is not a simple decision (Hisrich, 1990), especially when it involves the establishment of a new company. But what if the person already works in an industry whose characteristics are innovation and business creation? Would it be easier to become an entrepreneur being in a sector that is structured by the constant formation of new businesses? What about in companies which are also associated with technology?

Technology companies and startups have achieved representativeness in the Brazilian economy. Between 2017 and 2018 alone, startup openings increased by 68.77% in Brazil, according to data from the Brazilian Association of Startups - Abstartups (2021). In 2019 Rio Grande do Sul alone had 918 startups in operation. The state is among the top 4 with the highest number of companies in this category. In Brazil that same year the number of startups reached 12,727 (Abstartups, 2021). Are the people who work in this sector more prone to entrepreneurship? Based on questions like this, this research aimed at investigating the existence of entrepreneurial intention in employees of startups and small information technology companies in the State of Rio Grande do Sul. The purpose is to verify the interest of individuals in having their own business, measure the characteristics of this specific population, and understand their professional history.

It is worthy of mention that understanding issues related to the concept of entrepreneurial intention is crucial for the advancement of research on entrepreneurship and can be a way for the academic environment to contribute with future data on where and how new businesses can be established. The choice for employees of IT companies and startups as the object of research was because their environment, permeated with innovation, can impact their entrepreneurial intention and because they can become future business partners of the owners of these organizations. In addition, a search in the SPELL¹ database of articles on entrepreneurial intention published in the last five years (2017 to 2021) showed that no one associating the subject with startups was published, leaving a research gap to be filled.

ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION

The entrepreneur plays a critical role in economic development. It is the individual identified as responsible for fostering market innovations. Through his enterprise, this entrepreneur generates a new movement in the economy and establishes a new market position according to the 'creative destruction' logic (Schumpeter, 1982). Moreover, entrepreneurs play an important role as gap fillers, and their ability to enter the market is different from that of other economic agents (Leibenstein, 1968).

The literature indicates that the entrepreneurial process is correlated with the individual's experience in a given area and his/her greater probability of identifying opportunities. These individuals use the knowledge they acquired to generate something new, new products or services and the stimulus therefor occurs with a specific event or something external, such as information granted by someone else, a recent experience or the observation of the surroundings (Baron & Shane, 2007).

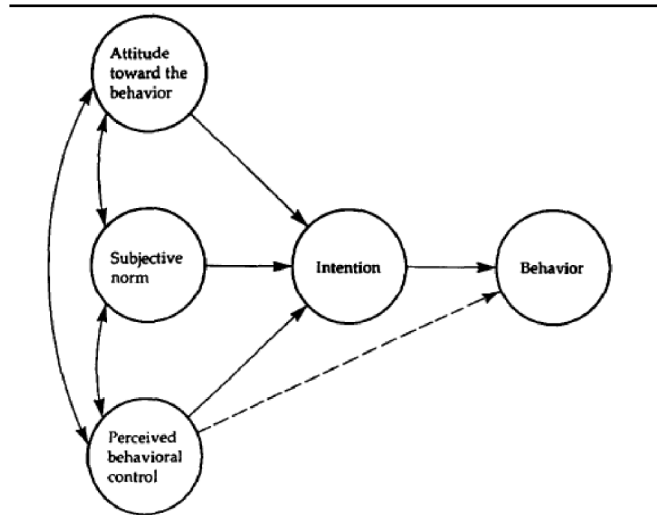
The entrepreneur's skills are presumably linked to his/her, willingness to act, educational background, training and available financial resources) (Littunen, 2000). These factors can be referred to as "entrepreneurial intention", a subject that has drawn the attention of academics, who want to understand how new companies can be born.

Conceptually, according to Sousa et al. (2019), there are two currents of research about entrepreneurial intent: one originated in social psychology, with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) as one of its bases, and the other originated in the specific entrepreneurship research, with the Theory of Entrepreneurial Intentions (TEI) by Shapero & Sokol (1982) as one of its main references. The study by Sousa et al. (2019) mapped the main international publications on the subject and demonstrated that, in addition to the progress of the subject being concentrated in the last decade, studies using the line associated with social psychology were the ones that advanced the most, especially as from Ajzen's work (1991). This article

follows this line. In his theory of planned behavior, Ajzen (1991) states that three distinct, conceptually separated variables shape an individual's behavioral intentions: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These variables directly influence the individual's intention, as can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1

The theory of planned behavior



Note: Elaborated by the authors from Ajzen (1991, p. 182).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) assumes that intentions are formed an individual's beliefs. Advancing this model's arguments, Ajzen & Fishbein (2005) explained that beliefs are divided into behavioral, normative, and control, culminating in the individual's intention and behavior to become an entrepreneur. The authors argue that behavioral beliefs directly impact attitude, normative beliefs impact subjective norms, which would indicate intent, and, consequently, the behavior. And control beliefs cause the perceived behavioral control, which is also linked to an individual's intention and is the indirect outcome of his/her actual behavioral control (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005).

The model defended by authors Ajzen & Fishbein (2005, p. 23) states such premises as: a) the intention is the immediate antecedent of actual behavior; b) this intention, in turn, is determined by the attitude toward the behavior, based on subjective norms and perceived behavioral control; c) the direct determinants of behavior are based on normative and control beliefs, and d) behavioral, normative, and control beliefs may vary according to a number of previous contextual factors.

The authors also state that contextual factors have three dimensions: individual, social, and informational. The individual dimension covers factors such as personality, mood, emotion, intelligence, values, stereotypes, general attitude, and experience. The social one encompasses education, age, gender, income, religion, race, ethnicity, and culture, and the informational dimension includes knowledge, media, and intervention (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005).

For Ajzen & Fishbein (2005), an individual's beliefs, present in the individual dimension, do not necessarily need to be true. They can be inaccurate, biased, and even irrational. However, once this set of beliefs is established, it provides the cognitive basis for attitude, perceived social norms, and intentions to be assumed consistently and reasonably. Oliveira et al. (2016) say that the entrepreneurial intention depends on the combination of personal values and social factors. For the authors, the attitude

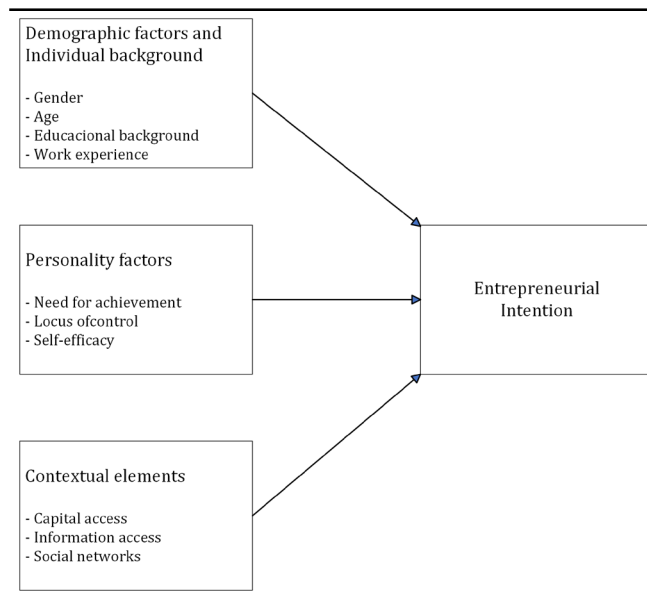
toward behavior, as presented in the Ajzen model, refers to the degree to which the individual positively or negatively evaluates a behavior.

Although the usual audience of entrepreneurial intention analysis since the beginning of research on the subject in both international and national publications (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993; Krueger et al., 2000; Nascimento et al., 2010; Scherer et al., 1989; Zain et al., 2010) has mostly been university students, one understands that the theoretical contribution is relevant enough for it to be contextualized in the organizational environment. Proof of this is that, out of the 23 studies published on the subject between 2017 and 2021 on the SPELL platform, four conducted the analyses with university students (Paiva et al., 2021; Lopes et al., 2020; Paiva et al., 2018; Barral et al., 2018). Corroborating the use of this public as of interest in these studies, more than 10% thereof were with the same group of individuals; however, the other 19 studies focused on assorted topics. The themes about which more than one publication was presented ere: Religion (Paiva et al., 2020; Sousa et al., 2020), which also reached more than 10% of the research; Literature Review and model applicability (Martins et al., 2019; Sousa et al., 2019; Souza et al., 2018), also more than 10%, and Sustainability and Innovation (Paiva et al., 2018; Silveira et al., 2018). The remaining 12 articles had various themes and did not mention the groups researched or themes associated with entrepreneurial intention.

There were also studies that presented a model for measuring entrepreneurial intention through scales. One of them is the work of Kristiansen & Indarti (2004), whose structure is based on five elements identified in the entrepreneurial intention theory (Figure 2). At the end, the study distinguishes three main constructs: demographic factors and personal experience, personality and attitudes, and contextual elements. This article used the Kristiansen & Indarti model (2004) to measure entrepreneurial intention.

Figura 2

Model consolidated by Kristiansen e Indarti



Note: Elaborated by the authors from Kristiansen e Indarti (2004, p. 63).

For the authors, the first construct (demographic factors and personal experience) was associated with characteristics such as gender, age, professional experience, and educational background. The second construct (personality and attitude) was associated with the individual's need to perform, locus of

control, and self-efficacy. The locus of control refers to the sense of control a person has over his/her life, his/her perception of success or failure in his/her personal initiatives. And self-efficacy indicates one's perception about his/her ability to start a business. The third construct (contextual elements) highlights environmental characteristics, i.e., the individual's ability to perceive the important points for beginning businesses, access to capital, determinant for the beginning of a business, and availability of information, which may be indispensable, along with social contacts (Kristiansen & Indarti, 2004).

It is understood in the literature that the second and third constructs address aspects that involve more subjective entrepreneurial intention issues. In the case of the second construct, "need for achievement", according to Santos et al. (2009), refers to a person's need to perform, overcome obstacles, stand out, and maintain a high standard of performance. These individuals set high personal standards and seek to achieve them in every way, try to occupy higher-status positions in organizations, and have higher expectations. They usually prefer to own their own business.

Also, in the second construct and according to Kaufmann et al. (1995), locus of control refers to how strongly an individual believes he/she has control over the situations and experiences to achieve the results he/she wants. There are two types of locus of control: internal, when the individual believes that he/she achieves his/her results guided by his/her skills and efforts, and external, when the individual believes that external forces control the results. The association of the concept of locus of control with entrepreneurial behavior is connected to the individual's perception of his/her ability to achieve results. If the dimension of locus of internal control appears positively and the locus of external control presents a negative association, this indicates characteristics of the behavior of the entrepreneur (Maciel & Camargo, 2010).

Still regarding the second construct, self-efficacy, translated by some authors as own efficacy, relates the individual's perception of his/her ability to perform a particular job or task. According to Hisrich et al. (2009), people with high self-efficacy think differently and behave differently from those who have low self-efficacy. The high self-efficacy influences the initiative and persistence of the individual, making their performance improve, while low self-efficacy reduces performance and effort in tasks. These are relevant points for detecting entrepreneurship.

Another relevant point for the entrepreneur's training is the search for information, a characteristic that describes the personal and professional support system that helps the entrepreneur to carry out his/her activity. Information access can be incorporated into the networks of interpersonal relationships, considered to be a characteristic of the third construct (contextual elements) (Hisrich et al., 2009). Figure 2 is a visual representation of the model structured by Kristiansen & Indarti (2004). The next section will present the methodology used in this study.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is characterized as descriptive with a quantitative approach. The method used was the survey. The data collection instrument was the questionnaire, comprising three blocks of questions: the first contained the questions proposed by Kristiansen & Indarti (2004), the second, questions regarding sociodemographic data, and the third, questions about the individual's work background up to his/her current job, in addition to the question about the individual's interest in becoming an entrepreneur. In the latter question, if the respondent said "yes," i.e. he/she was interested in starting

his/her own business, he/she was directed to an open field to present arguments about what prevented him/her from starting his/her own business.

In the block regarding the Entrepreneurial Intention model proposed by Kristiansen & Indarti (2004) there were 15 questions distributed in three dimensions: Demographic Factors and Personal Experience; Personality and Attitude, and Contextual Elements (Figura 2). This section mapped the profile associated with the Entrepreneurial Intention of each respondent.

The structure used by the authors had a 7-point Likert scale, where total disagreement with the statement was attributed to number 1 and total agreement to number 7, bearing in mind that an odd Likert scale differs from the even one because it allows respondents to annul their position on the proposed statement. To this end, number 4 is attributed as neutrality in the scale, that is, the respondent neither agrees nor disagrees with the statement. Although the authors validated the scale with 7 points, it is understood that, just as in a translation the statements must be rewritten in a way that they are understandable in the new language, the score of the scale can also be revised so that the objectives of the proposed research can be contemplated in a better way. The researchers in this article chose to adapt the scale to 6 points and remove the point of neutrality, thus forcing respondents to position themselves on the statements. The literature shows that choosing an odd or an even-numbered scale is up to researchers, who will know if they need to force or not respondents to a choice (Hair et al., 2005; Dalmoro & Vieira, 2013). However, it is understood that the most important thing in this research is to justify one's decision.

The research data ratify that the business scenario of startups and technology companies is dynamic and made up of many young people, most of those have just entered the labor market. In this scenario, being obliged to take a position is considered important since the content of the research addresses issues such as satisfaction with one's current job and interest in leaving the company to become an entrepreneur. The justification was to prevent respondents from going to "neutral" answers and showing a position that could generate issues within the organization, which would make it impossible to measure adequately the level of entrepreneurial intention or could even generate bias in the average results, since the midpoint on an odd scale would measure indifference, and not an average degree of entrepreneurial intention as an even-numbered scale would allow.

The following techniques were used for data analysis: descriptive statistics, hypothesis tests and variance analysis (ANOVA). The descriptive analysis allowed the detailing of the personal information of respondents and the average obtained in the entrepreneurial intention construct, indicating the profile of the respondents. To evaluate the relationships between averages and personal characteristics, we used the t-test and variance analysis (ANOVA) according to the need to test two or more groups. The difference in behavior (entrepreneurial intention profile) in relation to the other research data was identified through the averages obtained.

The group of respondents contained employees working in startups and/or small information technology companies. The choice for this group of respondents was because it is understood that precisely in these organizations there is a close relationship with innovation and entrepreneurship. They have potentially dynamic structures, whether in business or industrial sectors, and entrepreneurial intention could be implicit in the behavior of the people who work in them. Moreover, it is a group little explored with regard to entrepreneurial intention. We reinforce the argument with the data presented in the introduction that in

the last five years (2017 to 2021) no article has been published in the SPELL database associating entrepreneurial intention to startups.

The initial sample had 191 questionnaires answered, 66 from startups and 125 from IT companies.

This article understands “startups” as innovative companies, which “are characterized for developing their innovations in uncertain conditions that require constant experiments and validations, including through provisional experimental commercialization before proceeding to full commercialization and obtaining revenue” (Complementary Law no. 167, dated April 24, 2019). Even though not all startups are in the technology sector, these companies are linked to innovation and the dynamics of activity development, just like technology companies. That is why the two types of organization were researched together. In addition, we opted for the two segments to enable a larger group of respondents, since most startups have few employees: they often have only the co-owners, who are already entrepreneurs.

The non-probabilistic intentional sampling technique was chosen, which, according to Hair et al. (2005), should be used when the researcher needs to choose the respondents according to the proximity and the possibility of access to the target population. To obtain data and get in touch with startups, all the state’s technology parks, and Associação Gaúcha de Startups were contacted. Technology companies were directly contacted. The effort was to seek respondent proportionality in the regions of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, and we located companies whose related activities were technology, such as companies that work in the IT area. For this, we used references of companies that had already been searched, searches on Google, and in some locations with the assistance of APLs (Local Productive Arrangements). Out of the state APLs, only Trino Polo from Caxias do Sul assisted us and participated in the research.

Of the 191 questionnaires answered, 12 had to be excluded for the following reasons: they either were inadequately filled out or were filled out by entrepreneurs or co-owners, who are not the target of this research because they are already entrepreneurs. Thus, 179 valid questionnaires remained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the results and discussions of the article. The sociodemographic data of the respondents are presented first, followed by the descriptive results of the questionnaire and statistical tests.

The research respondents are predominantly male: 106 (58.9%). Women represented 41.1%, or 73 respondents. The respondents had an average age of 29, ranging from 17 to 62 years old. Regarding marital status, 56.98% were single and 39.10% were in a stable union or married, only 4% being divorced or widowed. The jobs of the respondents are described in Table 1. It should be observed that the administrative and management positions do not include the owners of the organizations researched.

The research participants had a high level of education, since 89.38% had at least finished high school and started college, 5% of which were doing or had already done a technical course after completing high school. When asked about children, 78.21% of the respondents stated that they did not have children, against 21.79% who had at least one child. Out of the 179 respondents, 46.37% were the main responsible for the family income and 53.63% share the family income responsibility with another family member or other family members.

When asked about their work history, the proportion with greater scope shows that almost 70% of the respondents have a relationship of up to 3 years with the organization in which they

work. Those who have been in the organization for more than 10 years are part of 4 companies, 3 of which are in the countryside of the state and only 1 in the metropolitan region.

Table 1

Job description

Jobs	Frequency	Percentage
Administrative (Administrative, Administrative Assistant, Financial)	24	14.54%
Analysts (Support Analyst, Process Analyst, Test Analyst, Systems Analyst, IT Analyst)	24	14.54%
Developers (Developer, Software Developer, Web Developer, Systems Developer, Web Systems Developer)	26	15.76%
Managers (Art Director, General Manager, People Management Director, Manager, Director, Project Manager, Security and Technology Manager, Operations Manager, Systems Manager, Technical Manager)	26	15.76%
Responsible for Database	2	1.22%
Support Technician (Technical Support, Support Technician, Support)	13	7.88%
Programadores (Programador de sistemas, Programador, Programador web)	21	12.73%
Interns	9	5.45%
Other positions (Designer, Tester, Development Leader, Quality Inspector)	20	12.12%
Total	165	100%

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on research data (2021).

When examining the individual’s years of work in the market, the findings were a concentration of 52.52% with up to 10 years, 24.59% with up to 5 years, and 27.93% with 6 to 10 years. This fact is consistent when one takes respondents’ average age, 29, into account. The remaining respondents, 47.48%, were distributed between 11 to 15 years (18.99%), 16 to 20 years (10.61%), and over 20 years (17.88%) of professional experience.

When asked if they already had their own business, 81% said they did not, indicating that they always worked for an employer. On the other hand, 34 individuals reported having had their own business (19%) but abandoned it. The justifications were different and included such problems as low financial return, difficulty to stabilize the business, lack of specific knowledge and experience in the area. Eight individuals said that they continue to run a business in parallel to their full-time employment.

About the willingness to become an entrepreneur, 61.45% of the respondents said that they intend to start their own business in the future, whereas 38.55% said they did not. This contradicts the data from GEM (2019), which points out that only 38.7% of non-entrepreneurs intend to have their own business. The value found in the research is close to the data of start-up entrepreneurs (66.7%).

When questioned what prevented respondents from starting their own business, respondents’ answers varied. However, the most representative reason in the population studied was financial capital, present in 53.63% of the answers. Table 2 shows the variations presented by those who mentioned capital as a limiting factor for starting their own business or capital with other related items.

The lack of access to financial resources for the beginning of one’s own business highlighted by the individuals participating in the research is corroborated by the data presented in 2017, according to which 58.6% of the entrepreneurs reported lack of access to financial resources as the greatest limiting factor to the opening and maintenance of a new businesses. This factor

permeates the projection only in the beginning of the business, since the percentage does not vary much among the starting (60.2%), new (60.0%), and established (57.6%) entrepreneurs, consisting as a persistent barrier to entrepreneurship in Brazil (GEM, 2017).

Table 2*Description of impediments for starting their own business*

Categories	Respondents' descriptions
Capital and knowledge	"Initial value and experience"; "Graduation/capital"; "Experience, Working Capital, Cash Flow, Business Model"; "Time, knowledge and money"; "Lack of experience, ideas, capital"; "Knowledge and money"; "I don't have the money and I also intend to complete my graduation to focus more after it and run my own business."; "Competence, money, complacency"; "I thought about another area, but first I need a degree to think about that later"; "I need more knowledge and learning"; "Experience and psychological capacity".
Capital and courage	"Lack of money, fear of failure and good companies"; "Fear"; "Courage"; "I'm afraid of new things; to leave certainty for uncertainty"; "Fear of making mistakes"; "What holds me is the risk of investing and then the business doesn't succeed considering the crisis in which the country is and people's financial difficulties, little purchasing power, that is, our current economic situation."
Capital and money	"Team and money".
Capital and market	"The market is already saturated with so many communication/digital agencies; taxes are too high to start your own business; lack of capital to invest in one's own business; companies that do not want to invest in communication."; "Correct choice of type of business"; "The safe sector and location"; "Something innovative linked to technology and focused on the near future..."; "Seek a differential in the area in which I intend to start my own business".
Capital and time	"Time and capital"; "Time and money" (x2); "Time, money, courage"; "Time to think about the creation of my business"; "Time and lack of practical ideals".
Capital and planning	"Planning and money"; "I would only become an entrepreneur in my area and would not do it alone. I look forward to partnerships and more future experience. I don't think it's worth becoming an entrepreneur without initial planning and I also don't believe it's worth investing in Brazil, neither in the present nor in the near future."
Capital	"I would like to become an entrepreneur with my own capital. Therefore, the financial planning for the enterprise needs to be a little more conservative. Moreover, I consider myself - perhaps as opposed to average - more competent, like a person more capable of making ideas operational (both in marketing and in finance and technology). I see that people usually have a lot of ideas, but they don't know how to get them out of the paper. I would like to have more contact with creators of ideas so that I could join them as a partner"; "An original and viable idea in the current market within my financial limitations."; "At the moment I don't have working capital; I need to raise money because I would like to start a business of my own (gradually) in an area very different from the one I work in."; "But yes, my idea for the near future is to be only an entrepreneur so that I can have more time for my family. I think I have the conditions and I have a good spirit of leadership."; "Financial commitments (fixed expenses) already established that would be difficult to maintain at first as an entrepreneur"; "Fear of becoming self-employed for financial reasons, return time and initial investments"; "Capital for investment, insecurity regarding the return"; "Capital and finalize the design of the project".

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on research data (2021).

GEM specialists (2019) point out that bureaucracy and tax burden (government policies) (47.8%) and access to financial resources (34.3%), which includes the interest rates charged by banks for access and maintenance of productive credit for the operation and the guarantees required for financing, are factors that restrict the development of entrepreneurship. The studied population ratifies this by stating that easy access to credit (45.7%) would be a stimulus to become an entrepreneur.

The items that presented the highest average of the exposed were "I try intensely to improve my relationship with what I have done in the past" and "I believe that commitment and intense work usually lead to success", which obtained an average of 5.24 and 5.09, respectively. The first statement is part of the characteristics associated with the need for realization and the second to the locus of control. Both represent the perception of individuals that effort, skills and abilities are points to be achieved gradually over time or with experience.

On the other hand, the group of statements that presented the lowest mean value (2.52) corresponds to the Search for Information. The statement "I have access to capital to start being an entrepreneur" was the one that reached the lowest average among respondents, which indicates that, in the perception of individuals, they do not have access to capital to start their business. This point had already been evidenced in the qualitative responses of respondents, who mentioned capital as the greatest impediment to invest in their own enterprise and demonstrates that for the population surveyed the capital has direct interference in the reflection on entrepreneurship, a characteristic that also meets what is presented by GEM (2019).

Table 3 shows the means achieved by the respondents when evaluating the dimensions measured by the instrument of entrepreneurial intention.

Table 3*Descriptive analysis of entrepreneurial intention statements*

Item	Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mode
1	In relation to my work and/or my studies I do very well in tasks considered to be very difficult.	4.76	0.90	5
2	I try intensely to improve my relationship with what I have accomplished in the past.	5.24	0.99	6
3	I seek additional responsibilities in the tasks they give me.	5.02	0.96	5
4	I try to work more than my colleagues.	4.18	1.16	4
5	I believe that commitment and intense work often lead to success.	5.09	1.01	6
6	If I don't succeed in an activity/task, I tend to give up.	2.06	1.24	1
7	I certainly don't believe in luck.	3.80	1.54	3
8	I have the leadership skills that are necessary to become an entrepreneur.	4.10	1.27	4
9	I have mental (psychological) maturity to start being an entrepreneur.	4.19	1.35	5
10	I have access to capital to start being an entrepreneur.	2.52	1.55	1
11	I have a good network of social contacts that can be used when I decide to become an entrepreneur.	3.54	1.57	4
12	I have access to support information to start being an entrepreneur.	3.89	1.61	4
13	I want to pursue a career as an entrepreneur.	3.91	1.74	5
14	I want to pursue a career as an employee in a company/organization.	3.53	1.67	4
15	I'd rather be an entrepreneur than an employee in a company/organization.	3.96	1.70	4

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on research data (2021).

The dimension that presented a high average was need for achievement, bearing in mind that an average is considered high when it reaches more than 4.50. The average 4.79, however,

means that individuals have characteristics to overcome their limitations in the proposed activities, whether in the organization where they work or in life. When it comes to entrepreneurship, it is inconceivable not to mention an individual's need to have personal achievement goals, a factor that previous studies also considered as a determinant (Hisrich et al., 2009; McClelland, 1961).

Table 4*Entrepreneurial intention mean per dimension*

Construct	Dimension	Mean	Interpretation
Personality and Attitude	Need for achievement	4.79	High
	Locus of control	3.65	Upper Median
	Self-efficacy	4.15	Upper Median
Contextual Elements	Search for information	3.32	Lower Median
	Entrepreneurial intention	3.80	Upper Median

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on research data (2021).

As far as the remaining dimensions are concerned, Table 4 shows that there is an identification of respondents classified as higher median as regards their ability to perceive that their actions interfere in the results of their activities (locus of control) and their ability to see in themselves leadership skills and the maturity to become an entrepreneur (self-efficacy) and that they want to pursue a career as an entrepreneur, not as an employee (entrepreneurial intention). Nonetheless, they state that they have a smaller capital structure, network of contacts and access to information to start their business, which is demonstrated by the lower average (search for information).

To deepen the understanding of the respondents' behavior regarding their real intention to start their own business, statistical tests test t and ANOVA were performed to evaluate whether their personal and professional characteristics interfere in any way in their entrepreneurial intention of the individual or not.

Factors age, education, and marital status did not present any significance in the dimensions of the entrepreneurial intention scale, which shows that they do not interfere in an individual's willingness to become an entrepreneur. Another factor that was tested and showed no significant difference was the location where respondents live. A comparison of averages was made between two groups – those living in the capital and those living in other cities of the state – and there was no difference in their perception, even if the opportunities differ from one region to another.

Regarding the sex of the respondents, the tests did not present significant results. A remarkably interesting factor to be observed, compared to other studies such as that by Zhang, Duyster & Cloodt (2014) in China, is that women have less entrepreneurial intention than men (a distinct logarithmic difference), even having the same education for entrepreneurship. There is also a difference in the self-efficacy average, as shown in the studies by Nikou, Brännback, Carsrud & Brush (2019).

Only two personal factors of the respondents showed differences when the structure of their entrepreneurial intention was analyzed. As can be seen in Table 5, locus control had different averages in two situations: being responsible for income (sig 0.027) and having children (0.002).

Locus of control, presented to both those responsible for income and those who have children, represents an individual's perception that his/her success and failure are linked to the results he/she obtains. This statistical test clearly distinguishes those who are responsible for their own livelihood or family

income as well as those who have children. They believe that the factors of good execution of their professional activities depend solely on their work.

Table 5*Anova test for entrepreneurial intention dimension*

Dimension	Responsible for the income?			Do you have children?		
	Sig.	No	Yes	Sig.	No	Yes
Locus of Control	0.027	3.54	3.77	0.002	3.56	3.96
General entrepreneurial Intention	0.045	3.90	4.07			

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on research data (2021). Sig. = significance.

Kaufmann et al. (1995) describe this characteristic – locus of control – as part of the condition under which an individual strives to do things more efficiently to achieve his/her goals as he/she believes that this only relates to personal attitude. The commitment to support a child or be responsible for the family income impacts on their reflection on care.

The general entrepreneurial intention index also showed a representative sig when the profile of those responsible for the family income (0.045) was evaluated, as shown in Table 5. It indicates that those individuals who are responsible for such income have a higher entrepreneurial intention profile than those who are not.

The analysis of the relationship between work experience with entrepreneurial intention was also performed to identify whether the experience interfered in any factor relevant for becoming an entrepreneur. The respondents were then divided into 5 groups according to their experience (in years) in the labor market: up to 5, from 6 to 10, from 11 to 15, from 16 to 20 and more than 20.

Two factors that change when considering work experience and the structure of entrepreneurial intention were identified. Table 6 shows that dimensions Search for Information (0.001) and General Entrepreneurial Intention (0.057) are dissimilar. Table 7 shows the values found with the Tukey test.

Table 6*ANOVA test – work experience x entrepreneurial intention*

Dimension	Significance
Need for achievement	0.664
Locus of control	0.722
Self-efficacy	0.168
Search for information	0.001
Entrepreneurial intention	0.289
General Entrepreneurial Intention	0.057

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on research data (2021).

An interesting observation of the results shown in Table 6 is that individuals with up to 10 years or work experience or more than 20 consider themselves less structured in the information search dimension, whereas those with 11 to 15 years are neutral in this regard. However, individuals with 16 and 20 years of work experience differ – a perspective that is clearly distinguished with the Tukey test: they consider themselves more structured when considering initial capital, network of contacts and initial support information to start their own business.

Table 7

Tukey test – work experience mean

Search for information	
Tempo de trabalho	Média
From 6 to 10 years	2,8980 H
Up to 5 years	3,3178 H
More than 20 years	3,3854 H
From 11 to 15 years	3,5000 HL
From 16 to 20 years	4,1754 L
General entrepreneurial intention	
Tempo de trabalho	Média
From 6 to 10 years	3,8531 H
Up to 5 years	3,9411 HL
More than 20 years	4,0396 HL
From 11 to 15 years	4,0725 L
From 16 to 20 years	4,2772 L

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on research data (2021).
H = High; HL = High-low; L = Low.

This behavior was seen for both the information search dimension and the general entrepreneurial intention, being different only in the subcategories of general entrepreneurial intention, where the lowest average is only in the bracket of 6 to 10 years of work experience. This may indicate that the perception that an individual has when starting his/her career in the market interferes less when he/she feels that he/she has the characteristics to become an entrepreneur more than those in the other brackets. An interesting factor that can be observed when analyzing this data is that, for the research participants, the experience gained over time has a greater weight in evaluating their intentions of having their own business. However, after an even longer time in the labor market, expressed by those who have more than 20 years of experience, the evaluation is the opposite. Although they have more experience, greater knowledge about the tasks performed and the market, they think more about becoming an entrepreneur.

To assess whether (or not) the structure used by Kristiansen & Indarti (2004)'s study really explains the attitude of individuals who are interested in starting their own business in the future, a t-test was applied using the direct question if he/she is interested or not in becoming an entrepreneur. Table 8 presents the data obtained.

Table 8 shows that the construct "entrepreneurial intention" proposed by the authors can measure part of an individual's behavior as regards his/her thinking about becoming an entrepreneur, since only one dimension did not present significance with its comparative, "need for achievement". This is consistent if it is considered that regardless of whether they want to remain linked to an organization or want to start their own business, they seek personal fulfillment.

If one's work is part of the construction of an individual's identity, as Magalhães & Bendassolli (2013) state, more than just something that allows him/her to have in a place in the sun or a social status, it allows him/her to organize his/her personal narrative about who he/she is. That is, regardless of a chosen career, people seek personal fulfillment with the activity they carry out, and this can take place either by becoming an entrepreneur or being an employee of an organization.

Table 8

Test t – Wan to to become an entrepreneur and entrepreneurial intention

Dimensão	Sig.	Z	Want to become an entrepreneur?	
			Yes	No
Need for achievement	0.368	2.449	4.82	4.71
Locus of control	0.001	1.911	3.75	3.34
Self-efficacy	0.000	0.070	4.36	3.26
Search for information	0.003	0.012	3.40	2.80
Entrepreneurial intention	0.000	0.920	4.05	3.24
General Entrepreneurial Intention	0.000	0.975	4.11	3.57

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on research data (2021). Sig. = significance.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Entrepreneurship is centralized in the figure of the entrepreneur. The aim of this article, therefore, was to investigate the entrepreneurial intention of individuals linked to startups and small information technology companies in the State of Rio Grande do Sul.

Given the analyses brought to discussion in this article, we found that most of the respondents (more than 60%) intend to start their own business even if they have an employment relationship with an organization and also that lack of capital to start a business is the greatest impediment. This aspect confirms that becoming an entrepreneur is part of a planned behavior; one in which the individual has the intention, but, more than that, he/she can understand that, in order to be secure enough to give up his/her relationship with the company where he/she works at the moment, some factors need to be present.

Among the particular characteristics of the population studied, there was an undeniable predominance of people with a high level of education in these types of companies when compared to those in other sectors, probably due to the complexity of the products they work with. The predominant age group in the population studied is young adults, a condition that ends up impacting the characteristics of responsibility for income and family business if we consider the current context.

It was possible to map some specific characteristics, such as the fact that an individual is responsible for the family income and has children implies the need for good execution of tasks, and that the experience acquired with years of work, especially in the bracket of 16 to 20, shows that he/she feels more prepared to become an entrepreneur than others in the other brackets – topics to be investigated in new research.

One of the most interesting findings of this research was that the need for achievement, one of the dimensions of the Entrepreneurial Intention model, is not only associated with individuals who intend to start their own business, but with all participants. This evidences that the need for achievement is a central objective of an individual's professional achievement, that work, regardless of career choice, has its relevance in the lives of respondents.

A good representativeness of the population research was obtained. It portrayed responses from all regions of Rio Grande do Sul, even though it could not reach in its entirety the cities in which the presence of startups and information technology companies was identified. It should be emphasized, thus, that this research does not intend to generalize the data to the population studied, only to focus on one sector and go back to the analysis of the behavior of individuals linked to an

organization, since national and international studies evaluate only the perspective of students, and not of individuals with a consolidated professional background.

The limitations found for the full execution of the objective of this research were: the difficulty of the researcher to be able to identify the specific population and get in touch with it and the difficulty of getting entrepreneurs to reply. Many claimed that it was impossible to stop the activities of their employees so that they could fill out questionnaires because the topics addressed in the research were not compatible with the interest of their companies.

As a suggestion for future studies, we recommend applying this structure in other organizations to verify whether people's behavior is different in scenarios not associated with innovation and entrepreneurship. We also suggest that research related to entrepreneurial intention investigate if knowledge about capital investors, angels, and financing programs that help new business provides a greater drive for an individual to become an entrepreneur.

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Conflict of interest statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Authors' statement of individual contributions

Roles	Contributions	
	Rosa JR	Fleck CF
Conceptualization	■	■
Methodology	■	■
Software	■	■
Validation	■	■
Formal analysis	■	■
Investigation	■	■
Resources	■	■
Data Curation	■	■
Writing - Original Draft	■	■
Writing - Review & Editing	■	■
Visualization	■	■
Supervision	■	■
Project administration	■	■
Funding acquisition	■	■

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Note

- ¹ http://www.spell.org.br/documentos/resultadobusca/?eou%5B%5D=&tipo_busca=avancado&campo%5B%5D=TITULO&texto%5B%5D=inten%C3%A7%C3%A3o+empreendedora&eou%5B%5D=E&campo%5B%5D=RESUMO&texto%5B%5D=&eou%5B%5D=E&campo%5B%5D=TITULO&texto%5B%5D=&mes_inicio=1&ano_inicio=2017&mes_fim=&ano_fim=&busca_tipo_documento%5B%5D=6

