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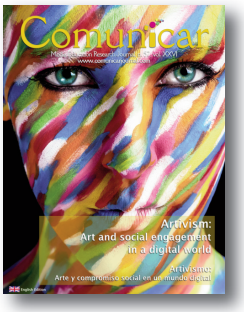

University training on entrepreneurship in communication and journalism business projects

Formación universitaria sobre el emprendimiento en proyectos empresariales de comunicación y periodismo

Dr. Pedro Aceituno-Aceituno is Associate Professor in the Department of Business Administration and Management and Economics at the Madrid Open University (Spain) (pedro.aceituno@udima.es) (https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9034-8673)

Dr. Andreu Casero-Ripollés is Associate Professor and Dean in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Jaume I University of Castellón (Spain) (casero@com.uji.es) (http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6986-4163)

Dr. José-Joaquín Escudero-Garzás is Research Scholar in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering at the University of Florida (United States of America) (jescuderogarzas@ufl.edu) (https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1456-7764)

Dr. Carlos Bousoño-Calzón is Associate Professor in the Department of Signal Theory and Communications at the Carlos III University of Madrid (Spain) (cbousono@tsc.uc3m.es) (https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7065-5692)

ABSTRACT

The current scenario of crisis and change has prompted the idea of entrepreneurship as a way to develop new media business models that can be promoted by university training. In this study, we aim to assess the effects of such training. A qualitative study was conducted using in-depth interviews of Spanish journalism and communication entrepreneurs who have undergone university training in business creation and management. Our results show the positive effects of this training on entrepreneurship both in general and on specific aspects of entrepreneurial projects such as organization, business plan/model, marketing, in-novation, social aspects and quality of life. Different patterns between the effects of university training on new initiatives and advanced projects were also observed. In this respect, the training supported the creation of new businesses and the development of existing ones. Finally, the suggestions for improving training and the limitations to entrepreneurship have revealed the importance of providing this type of education with a more practical, up-to-date approach that is interconnected with the business and university world. Therefore, examples of this work can be of vital importance in opening up new opportunities for sector development to enable future generations of journalists to fulfill their important social function.

RESUMEN

El escenario actual de crisis y cambios ha llevado a pensar en el emprendimiento como una nueva vía para el desarrollo de nuevos modelos de negocio en los medios de comunicación, que puede ser fomentado por la formación universitaria. El objetivo de este estudio es valorar los efectos de dicha formación, para lo que se ha desarrollado una investigación cualitativa basada en entrevistas en profundidad entre emprendedores españoles de periodismo y comunicación que han recibido formación universitaria en creación y gestión de empresas. Los resultados muestran el efecto positivo de esta formación sobre el emprendimiento en general y también sobre aspectos concretos de los proyectos empresariales: organización, plan/modelo de negocio, marketing, innovación, aspectos sociales y calidad de vida. También, se han observado diferentes pautas entre los efectos obtenidos para las nuevas iniciativas y para los proyectos avanzados. En este sentido, la formación ha apoyado la creación de los nuevos negocios. Por último, las sugerencias para mejorar la formación y las limitaciones al emprendimiento aportadas han revelado la importancia de dotar a este tipo de educación de mayor carácter práctico, actualizado e interconectado con el mundo empresarial y universitario. Por ello, los ejemplos de este trabajo pueden resultar de vital importancia para abrir nuevas oportunidades al desarrollo del sector que permitan a las futuras generaciones de periodistas cumplir su importante función social.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

University training, journalism, communication, marketing, innovation, social, crisis, job.
Formación universitaria, periodismo, comunicación, marketing, innovación, social, crisis, empleo.

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1. Introduction and state of the art

The journalistic crisis and views of the media sector's transformation from an economic perspective have generated a great number of studies (Siles & Boczkowski, 2012). However, few studies have examined the application of entrepreneurship to the field of communication and journalism (Weezel, 2010). Within this field, the influence of media entrepreneurship training and education has been scarcely studied (Hang & Weezel, 2007). However, the existing literature raises a number of interesting points. One of these points has to do with the reluctance of future journalists and communication professionals to embrace entrepreneurship. Some studies provide evidence of the small number of students who consider entrepreneurship and self-employment a career option both in Spain (Casero-Ripollés & Cullell-March, 2013) and in other countries –the United Kingdom, for example– (Delano, 2002). Furthermore, as students progress in their training, they develop a disenchanted and cynical view towards entrepreneurship (Barnes & de-Villiers, 2017; Casero-Ripollés, Izquierdo-Castillo, & Doménech-Fabregat, 2016). The motives that explain this low predisposition in students to media entrepreneurship are both ethical issues and the primacy of the journalist model, understood as an employee, distanced from ownership structures. Some studies show that journalists distance themselves from and turn their backs to business issues to protect their professional independence (Ferrier, 2013). Renouncing entrepreneurship may thus avoid conflicts of interest that arise from simultaneously having to serve the public and pursue economic benefit (Baines & Kennedy, 2010).

Despite journalists' disinclination to entrepreneurship, various research studies show that university training, in particular, creates positive stimuli and increases students' entrepreneurial intentions (Aceituno, Bousoño, Escudero, & Herrera, 2014; Aceituno, Bousoño, & Herrera, 2015; Barnes & de-Villiers, 2017; Paniagua, Gómez, & González, 2014). Even media sector entrepreneurs themselves attach great importance to university training to generate innovative and creative businesses (Beltrán & Miguel, 2014). However, this issue raises a broad debate in the literature. Other research studies conclude that the effects of this training are not well known or consistent (Von-Graevenitz, Harhoff, & Weber, 2010) because it is difficult to assess the effect of training programs on entrepreneurship (Rasmussen & Sørheim, 2006). Even some educational programs that adhere very closely to the business reality are minimally effective and may even fail to support the students' entrepreneurial intentions. This is the case of the "Junior Achievement Young Enterprise Student Mini-Company" (SMC), which is the main entrepreneurial initiative in secondary schools and colleges in the United States and Europe (Oosterbeek, Van-Praag, & Ijsselstein, 2010). Other studies also report the ineffectiveness of such training (Souitaris, Zerbinati, & Al-Laham, 2007). However, media entrepreneurship programs are proliferating, especially in the USA, and becoming more legitimate in the academic realm, although their contents are similar to each other to the point of being isomorphic (Sindik & Graybeal, 2017). Entrepreneurs are made, not born and it is therefore necessary to train them to take advantage of market opportunities (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994). This positive perception of entrepreneurship training is confirmed by other research studies (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Wang & Wong, 2004). Even in the United States, this is one of the fundamental trends from the educational world to face the journalism crisis (Anderson, 2017).

However, the literature reveals that journalism curricula are rarely oriented towards entrepreneurship (Blom & Davenport, 2012; Elmore & Massey, 2012; Hunter & Nel, 2011). University education is dominated by a traditional view of what journalism is and should be, and it prepares its professionals to be media workers or employees (Deuze, 2006). Universities lack the speed and agility to respond to the technological and business changes affecting journalism as well as the innovation and creativity required by media entrepreneurship (López, Rodríguez, & Pereira, 2017). Various experiences and experts show the need to equip students with attributes and skills related to business innovation, the empowerment of startup culture, statistical reasoning and entrepreneurship so that they can adapt to the new reality and take advantage of it (Baines & Kennedy, 2010; Barnes & de-Villiers, 2017; Briggs, 2012; Claussen, 2011; Ferrier & Batts, 2016; Griffin & Dunwoody, 2015; Lassila-Merisalo & Uskali, 2011), being able to become, in this way, both entrepreneurs of their own companies and intrapreneurs of the companies in which they work for others. It is important to do it from the very beginning of the Journalism curriculum (Chimbel, 2016). In this sense, these experts say journalism training should not be restricted to meeting the employee requirements of mainstream media companies. Instead, self-employment skills must be incorporated into the curriculum, so that, in addition to acquiring skills in developing journalistic and communication content, future professionals acquire business and financial management skills relevant to their sector. This approach poses a challenge for educators in the field of journalism and communication (Ferrier, 2013).

Given this context, the objective of this study is to assess the effects of university entrepreneurship training on entrepreneurial projects in communication and journalism in order to add understanding on the creation and management of new opportunities in this sector from which future generations of journalists can benefit.

2. Materials and methods

This study is based on the use of semi-structured interviews to explore the effects of university entrepreneurship training on the creation and development of entrepreneurial projects in the journalism and communication fields. The semi-structured interviews are a qualitative method and can be considered the most suitable approach to achieve our research objectives. It allows us to obtain data on the participants' views, practices, and behavior, offering a complete approach to a complex study topic for which quantitative approaches have not produced conclusive results (Rasmussen & Sørheim, 2006). Qualitative interviews also provide access to information that is difficult to obtain through other research techniques. The answers to research questions about the how and why of a process require qualitative approaches such as semi-structured interviews because quantitative approaches are geared towards responding to the what, who, where and how much (Yin, 2014). This study specifically focuses on how training affects entrepreneurship in the field of media and communication; therefore, the use and appropriateness of the qualitative method is justified. The study was conducted using COREQ guidelines (Tong, Sainssbury, & Craig, 2007) and RATS qualitative research review guidelines (BioMed Central, 2017). In our study, the questionnaire for the interview has been split into four general blocks as shown in Table 1.

> It can be even asserted that the training has allowed more professional management of the projects, more innovation and better relation with stakeholders and society, elements which contributed to increase the student's satisfaction and therefore to positive effects on these aspects.

2.1. Participant selection and recruitment

Participants were included in the sample if they met the following two main criteria: (1) They have acquired, in their undergraduate university education, knowledge in the field of business creation and management, (2) they have started to develop a full business plan for new business initiatives or have launched product or process expansions or innovations in entrepreneurial projects in the journalism and communication fields. The interviewees are active participants in business creation; hence, they are defined as promoters who have undergone a learning process to develop new initiatives or to expand or conduct product or process innovations. The inclusion of such participants enables access to accurate knowledge regarding the effect of entrepreneurship directly through the protagonists' experience and perceptions. Spain is the geographical scope of reference of this study. In selecting sample participants, people from various Spanish regions (Valencia, Asturias, Canarias, Andalucía, Castilla-La Mancha and Cantabria) were selected, with a significant number of people from regions with a larger business network and greater population size (Madrid and Cataluña).

Participants were volunteers recruited through convenience sampling (Martín-Crespo & Salamanca, 2007). The sampling strategy prioritized feasibility, as the study's subjects were difficult to reach. Therefore, as a starting point for finding participants that met the two main criteria, we used a list of 25 university students who pursued academic study in business creation and management in the Madrid Open University (MOU) and Jaume I University of Castellón between 2012 and 2016. The MOU students come from all over Spain, whereas the Jaume I University of Castellón students mainly come from Valencia and nearby regions, such as Cataluña or Aragon. The selection mentioned above was the main criteria for these lists of students, and we add a geographic criterion: subjects from several Spanish regions were included to ensure diversity, and a large number of subjects from the two major regions in the Spanish economy (Madrid and Cataluña) were included to ensure higher representativeness.

Table 1. In-depth interview questionnaire

Questionnaire
Block 1
a) Project description and type of entrepreneurship supported by the training: - Expansion - Process or product innovation: - New initiative/ Projects in their early stages b) Variation of entrepreneurial intentions - To which extent (positive, neutral or negative) have you modified your entrepreneurial intentions because of the training received in this course?
Block 2
c) Organization: - Before receiving the training, how were your entrepreneurial activities organized? - Has the training allowed you to learn a new way of organizing your company better? In what way(s)? d) Business plan/model: - Before receiving the training, how developed was your business plan/model? - Has the training facilitated the development of your business plan/model? In what way(s) has it allowed you to increase your income level? What are your expectations in this regard? e) Marketing: - Before receiving the training, how were your marketing activities organized? - Has the training enabled you to better organize your marketing plan? In what way(s)? f) Innovation: - Before receiving the training, what was the level of innovation in the products and services you offer? - Has the training helped you build or develop an innovative product or service? In what way(s)?
Block 3
g) Social aspects: - What type of relationships are currently being established, or could be established in the future between your entrepreneurial project and the major stakeholders interested in its implementation (customers, local community, suppliers, shareholders, employees, among others)? - Has the training encouraged you to hire people, now or in the future? How many people? - What type of benefits can your entrepreneurial project bring to your local society and to all other stakeholders? h) Quality of life: - Have your quality of life and level of happiness improved with the creation and development of your entrepreneurial project? In what ways?
Block 4
i) Limitations: - What are the main limitations regarding the implementation of your project? j) Suggestions: - Could you suggest some recommendations to improve the training?

In interview 14, data saturation was reached; there was no new or relevant material, and it was highly probable that additional interviews would not influence the results. The reason for this data saturation is due to aspects such as the reduction of barriers to enter the journalism sector (Hang & Weezel, 2007) and, additionally in the Spanish case, entrepreneurial effervescence and job loss (Asociación de la Prensa de Madrid, APM, 2014; APM, 2015). When students have entrepreneurial intentions and get through the appropriate training, they may get very motivated and transcend the barriers to implement their plans. This allows us to obtain a reasonable number of in-depth interviews for our research objectives. Also, it is important to note that the availability of key informants, those with innovative proposals likely to be imitated, is of concern in a difficult moment for the journalism sector in need to find new business models (Casero-Ripollés, 2010). Finally, our research sample comprised 14 participants (9 men and 5 women).

2.2. Ethics statement and data collection

The Ethics Committee of the MOU has approved this research. The potential members for our sample were initially contacted by phone by the authors and invited to participate. They were informed that the data they shared would be used for this study. Those who showed interest in participating did provide verbal expression of consent. Then they were extensively briefed on the research objectives and on the contents of the four blocks of the questionnaire for the semi-structured interviews.

This first phone contact lasted 30-40 minutes. Subsequently, the complete questionnaire was emailed (Table 1) to their personal addresses as provided by the participants. Once the researchers received the complete document, a first analysis of the interview content was conducted. The participants were contacted again by

phone, to recheck the interview, ask for clarification or additional data, complete the answers to some questions or ask new questions that arose from previous answers. This second contact lasted 45-60 minutes.

The researchers served in both facilitative and neutral roles. They had a facilitative role in helping participants understand exactly what was expected of them in the questionnaire to obtain the maximum amount and quality of data. They played a neutral role to avoid influencing the participants' answers. For that reason, it was determined that allowing the participants to respond to the interview questionnaire through email was the best strategy to avoid influencing the responses and affecting the results. On this basis, the researchers' subsequent involvement in the recheck and interview enlargement process prevented the loss of information and guaranteed a minimal influence on the respondents.

The answers for blocks (2) and (3) were coded by three of the researchers involved in this study, with one of them acting as the coding coordinator. The fourth researcher, who was not involved in coding, reviewed the data and interpretations generated by the other researchers. No computer software was used for coding. The coding was designed following the guidelines below:

• Answer with positive effect (P). The student entrepreneurial intentions are increased due to its application of the acquired knowledge to the business project at the present moment.

• Answer with neutral effect (N). The student entrepreneurial intentions do not change either because he has not acquired knowledge to apply or because its application to the business project has not occurred at the present moment.

• Answer with negative effect (NE). The student entrepreneurial intentions diminished because of the acquisition of knowledge provided by the training.

Thereafter, the results from the 14 participants in the study were individually compared. As the second step, the results obtained for each of the 6 characteristics of these two blocks (2) and (3), were analyzed. Finally, we proceeded with the suggestions to improve the training and the suggested obstacles to entrepreneurship.

The analytic approach was based on an inductive method; it established a chain of evidence to formulate common patterns (and draw conclusions that were representative of the group) and build the explanation of the studied phenomenon. Thus, external validity is guaranteed (Dubé & Paré, 2003). The methodological approach for the data analysis was ethnography combined with discourse analysis. This study is based on approaches developed in a study on the entrepreneurial culture of young people in rural areas in Argentina (Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganadería, Pesca y Alimentación de Argentina, 2007), but adapted to the needs of entrepreneurship in the journalism and communication fields, characterized by the search for business models and innovative benefits that make this new work sphere highly desirable for future entrepreneurs.

3. Analysis and results

A detailed description of the entrepreneurial projects can be found in Table 2. As this table shows, students have increased their entrepreneurial intentions because of the provided training; in some cases, such as those of Castilla-La Mancha and Cataluña 2, this increase is quite significant.

In order to assess how the acquired knowledge has been applied to business projects, the information is summarized and coded according to the six characteristics established for this study, namely organization, business plan/model, marketing, innovation, social aspects and quality of life (Table 1).

According to this information, the training had positive effects on the organization of all entrepreneurial ventures. The technical and professional criteria provided were used to allow the projects in their early stages to lay the foundation for entrepreneurship planning and organization and in some cases to turn their business idea into a business plan (Asturias, Andalucía 1 and Valencia 1) and to learn organizational skills (Andalucía 2) For more advanced projects, these contributions improved the established organizational structure and permitted the expansion to new departments. Only in the case of Cantabria, a neutral effect is observed for the current non-application of organizational concepts.

Regarding the business plan/model and for most of the projects in their early stages, the provided expertise has had positive effects on its application to create a business plan, except for the cases of Madrid 1, Cantabria (for which the business plan was finished and to which new knowledge may only be incorporated if the company grows) and Valencia (financial knowledge to be applied in the future). In contrast, in the most advanced projects, the training fundamentally supported changes to the business plans of older businesses, except for Canarias 2, whose business plan was created as a result of the training.

Table 2. Project description and variation in entrepreneurial intentions

Project and type of entrepreneurship	Variation in entrepreneurial intentions
Cataluña 1: Multimedia communication of music content distribution using online resources. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Madrid 1: Digital magazine specializing in local cultural events. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Asturias: TV magazine related to new technologies and electronic entertainment. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Andalucía 1: Popular science magazine. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Valencia 1: Digital media characterized by the selection of general media information useful to readers (only five daily news articles and an editorial). Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Andalucía 2: Creation of a company to improve workers' communication in the flamenco scene and thereby expand the target audiences. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Canarias 1: Multimedia communication platform disseminating an innovative idea for a rural and active tourism product different from the typical sun-and-beach product. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Cantabria: Online information musical culture portal for a specific geographical scope, with a wide implantation and constant promotion on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Valencia 2: Entrepreneurial project of external communication for local cultural institutions. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Valencia 3: Development of a professional project created by a media company that supports visual information based on computer graphics. Projects in their early stages.	Positive
Canarias 2: Academy for the provision of the following types of courses: public speaking and communication, audiovisual locution for radio and television and commercial speech. Expansion.	Positive
Castilla-La Mancha: Local broadcasting station. Process or product innovation.	Very positive
Madrid 2: Communication agency providing the following services: press office, social networking management, public speaking and communication training, digital marketing, editorial services and content management. Process or product innovation.	Positive
Cataluña 2: Company generating a corporate magazine supporting the work of business travel managers. Process or product innovation.	Very positive

Moreover, in the projects on their early stages, some initial business model cost optimization was observed (as in the cases of the Cataluña 1, Canarias 1 and Valencia 3 projects); furthermore, the Valencia 3 project even found a solution to its financial difficulties. In this regard, in all of the advanced projects, revenue growth and cost reductions were observed as a result of university training.

Regarding marketing, the training had positive effects on most projects in their early stages except in the cases of: Cantabria, which had already formalized their plans, Madrid 1, Andalucía 2 and Valencia 3. These effects are reflected in the support for planning and organizing this activity. Similarly, advanced projects were able to improve, develop and create new business plans by learning the importance of improving their adaptation to customer needs (Canarias 2 and Castilla-La Mancha) and to new technological realities (Madrid 2 and Cataluña 2).

Regarding innovation in early stage projects, positive effects were lower than on previous characteristics. Some of these projects had no positive effects (Cataluña 1 and Madrid 1), and some others exhibited only the assimilation of the importance of continuous innovative efforts necessary to achieve business success (Andalucía 1, Valencia 1 and Cantabria). In contrast, among advanced projects, training had a higher effect both on organisation (all projects) and on the creation of new products and services (all projects except Canarias 2).

According to the information obtained, only one entrepreneur who underwent training (Valencia 2) considered that the creation of a company might give rise to problematic relationships. Since this appreciation is related to the student's training, it could be understood as a negative effect, as it reduces his entrepreneurial intentions. In the case of projects on their early stages, most of the effects related to the social aspects are neutral and come from the project itself and not from the training, except in the cases of Valencia 1 (stakeholder and society relationship planning) and, Canarias 1 and Valencia 2 (product and service improvement and innovation). In contrast, for projects in their advanced stages it has had a positive effect in all cases except Canarias 2, whose social benefit is the achievement of a more communicative society and it comes from the project itself and not from the training.

Most projects experienced an improvement in quality of life and happiness; the two that did not (Andalucía 1 and Cantabria) neither showed a decrease of these characteristics (neutral effect). However, other factors related

to the projects (personal fulfillment for being able to work in journalism or being their own boss, for example) are more typical of the projects in their early stages (neutral effect). In projects in their advanced stages, other factors related to the satisfaction to provide more professional management (positive effect) are observed.

Even though positive effects appear in all the projects, there are 5 projects on their early stages in which the neutral effects are predominant: Madrid 1 (1 Positive and 9 Neutral), Cantabria (1 Positive and 7 Neutral), Andalucía 2 (3 Positive and 4 Neutral), Cataluña 1 (3 Positive and 5 Neutral) and Andalucía 1 (3 Positive and 4 Neutral). The other 5 projects on their early stages have mostly positive effects: Valencia 2 (7 Positive and 1 Negative), Canarias 1 (7 Positive and 3 Neutral), Valencia 3 (6 Positive and 3 Neutral), Valencia 1 (5 Positive and 4 Neutral) and Asturias (4 Positive and 3 Neutral). Within advanced stage projects, there is a predominance of positive effects: Madrid 2 (12 Positive), Canarias (13 Positive and 1 Neutral), Castilla-La Mancha (9 Positive) and Cataluña 2 (9 Positive and 1 Neutral). The only case of a negative effect is Valencia 2.

As for the characteristics, they all have positive effects too. These effects are predominant over neutral ones in 4 characteristics: business/plan model (21 Positive and 3 Neutral), organization (17 Positive and 1 Neutral), marketing (13 Positive and 4 Neutral) and innovation (12 Positive and 5 Neutral). Neutral effects take over in the quality of life and happiness (12 Neutral and 7 Positive) and relationships and benefits with local society and stakeholders (19 Neutral and 13 Positive). This last characteristic is the only one with a negative effect.

To summarize, positive effects (83) are predominant in all projects and all the characteristics, over the neutral effects (44) and only one negative effect.

Regarding suggestions for improving training, providing expertise is the most prominent recommendation in the information obtained, especially concerning the presentation of case studies (Andalucía 2, Canarias 1, Canarias 2, Valencia 2, Valencia 3, Madrid 2 and Cataluña 2). Other options in this regard include providing more practical training (Madrid 1, Valencia 3 and Cataluña 2) and integrating the development of a personal project into the training (Cataluña 1 and Valencia 1). No clear consensus was observed in this key recommendation among the proposals of projects in their early stages and those of advanced projects. Discussions and interaction among students were also suggested and was very important to students of five projects in their early stages (Cataluña 1, Andalucía 1, Valencia 1, Canarias 1 and Valencia 2), which establishes a pattern among these new projects. Other recommendations provided by the students included making business creation and management a required course (Madrid 1 and Canarias 1), receiving personalized advice and moral support from teachers (Asturias), establishing contacts with editorial teams to understand the processes and conducting entrepreneurship workshops (Madrid 2).

To end the presentation of results, the limitations highlighted most frequently by students are closely related to the difficulty of making the business model feasible (Cataluña 1, Madrid 1, Asturias, Valencia 1 and Andalucía 2) or improving it (Castilla-La Mancha), the lack of entrepreneurship advice and support (Canarias 1, Cantabria, Madrid 2 and Cataluña 2) and an excessive legal and administrative burden (Andalucía 1, Cantabria, Canarias 1 and Madrid 2). The remaining limitations are of a personal nature: the lack of entrepreneurial experience (Valencia 2 and Valencia 3), a more significant personal commitment to enhancing activities with the newly acquired knowledge (Canarias 2) and the need to attract entrepreneurial project partners (Valencia 3). It was observed that there are greater limitations on projects in their early stages, and these limitations are especially concentrated when setting up a viable business model. This aspect is essential for the survival of and further development of new businesses and it is less critical in advanced projects.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The results show how university training, when applied to entrepreneurial projects in the journalism and communication areas, is capable to increase the students' entrepreneurial intentions (Aceituno & al., 2014; Aceituno & al., 2017; Paniagua & al., 2014). Therefore, these results support the positive perceptions towards entrepreneurship training (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994; Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Wang & Wong, 2004).

In addition, it is worth noting that this training has had positive effects in all the characteristics. In particular, these positive effects have been predominant over neutral effects in the business plan/model, organization, marketing, and innovation. Students have been able to perceive how effective training on these issues can increase the feasibility of their projects even in a highly competitive context where new business is difficult to formulate. This fact can explain the positive predominance effects.

In contrast, neutral effects are more significant than positive effects in quality of life, happiness and relationships and benefits with local society and stakeholders. These neutral effects should be attributed to the projects rather

than to the training. It can be even asserted that the training has allowed more professional management of the projects, more innovation and better relation with stakeholders and society, elements which contributed to increase the student's satisfaction and therefore to positive effects on these aspects.

Different patterns for projects in their early stages and those in advanced stages were observed. For the latter, their organizational structures, business plans/models, cost and revenue structures and marketing plans were fundamentally improved by training support. Furthermore, organizational innovations and the creation of new products and services were observed. On the other hand, for the projects in their early stages, the basis for company planning and organizing were primarily created, with special attention to their business plans/models and marketing plans. In most projects, positive effects are predominant over neutral and negative effects. Therefore, it can be said that the training has supported the creation of new businesses and the development of others.

The most important recommendations collected from students suggest, on the one hand, to increase the expertise and the practical focus of the training and, on the other hand, to increase the discussion and interaction among students, especially in the projects on their early stages. These suggestions may be related to the scarcity of examples and the need to create or reformulate new business models in the sector. Therefore, studies such as the one presented in this work may bring significant value to student entrepreneurs. It is important to point out that although financing is a common difficulty for entrepreneurs, it does not require specific training for students with entrepreneurial projects in the journalism and communication areas because, as discussed above, new digital technologies considerably lower the entry barriers.

The most common limitations are the difficulty to create feasible business models, the lack of advice and follow-up and excessive bureaucracy. These problems highlight the importance of training that offers up-to-date knowledge in such areas as administration, grants and funding, management and new market opportunities.

Although the results on which these conclusions are sound in terms of the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training in entrepreneurial journalism and communication projects, future studies should complement this approach with other techniques and quantitative methods, such as surveys.

For all the above issues, the study's findings indicate that training is effective in the creation and development of entrepreneurial projects in journalism and communication. This important feature may open new alternatives and opportunities to develop the sector and to help future generations of reporters fulfill their important social function.

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