

Belgian Entrepreneurship Research Day (BERD) 2025
Manuscript Abstract

Nurturing Entrepreneurial Intention of PhD Students Across Academic Disciplines: A Multigroup Analysis

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Full reference

Delzenne, E., Slabbinck, H., Vanderstraeten, J., Branca, E., & Ismail, R. (2025). Nurturing Entrepreneurial Intention of PhD Students Across Academic Disciplines: A Multigroup Analysis. *Belgian Entrepreneurship Research Day (BERD)*, Namur, 16 May 2025.

Abstract

Owing to their specialised knowledge and advanced skillset, PhD students are uniquely positioned to contribute to the knowledge economy, including through the development of innovative ventures. Consequently, their engagement in entrepreneurial activities has garnered growing attention from both scholars and policy-makers, with increasing interest in the role universities can play in guiding PhD students from various disciplines towards entrepreneurship. Against this background, this study examines whether the effectiveness of curricular and extracurricular entrepreneurship education activities (EEAs) in fostering entrepreneurial intention (EI) among PhD students is moderated by disciplinary affiliation. Drawing upon institutional logics theory, we posit that the moderating effect of disciplinary affiliation is contingent upon the extent to which a discipline is itself embedded in an entrepreneurial logic. Relying on data collected through the Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey (GUESSS) 2023, a multigroup structural equation model was tested on a total sample of 586 doctoral students, including 381 Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) PhD students and 205 PhD students from the medical sciences. The results indicate that while curricular EEAs are most effective in raising EI among medical sciences PhD students, STEM PhD students respond better to extracurricular EEAs. For both STEM and medical sciences PhD students, opportunity recognition capacity (ORC) partially mediates the relationship between extracurricular EEAs and EI, but not the relationship between curricular EEAs and EI. The study provides valuable insights to support strategies aimed at increasing the participation of future doctorate holders in entrepreneurship.