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The Role of Sexual Orientation in Entrepreneurial Intention: The Case of Parisian LGB People

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The role of sexual orientation in entrepreneurial intention: the case of Parisian LGB People

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Abstract:

Purpose: This paper explores the role that sexual orientation and, more precisely, declaring oneself a lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) person can play in entrepreneurial intention.

Design/Methodology/approach: This study is based on a sample of 654 individuals and, among them, 266 LGB people in the Paris region (France).

Findings: The study reveals that LGB people express a higher entrepreneurial intention than non-LGB people. The study also reveals that sexual orientation positively impacts the 3 antecedents of entrepreneurial intention, namely attitudes, perceived behavioral control and subjective norms.

Research limitations/implications: The study was conducted in a specific context: an LGB-friendly region and among a population of well-educated people. One could also have investigated the impact of femininity and masculinity on entrepreneurial intention among this population.

Practical implications: LGB People adopt entrepreneurial cognition different to that of other minorities, which tends to confirm that LGB entrepreneurial norms and beliefs are not really the same as those of the dominant culture. The study sheds light on the key antecedent one has to work on to increase the entrepreneurial intention of LGB people.

Originality/value: This study focuses on an underexplored population: LGB people.

The role of sexual orientation in entrepreneurial intention: the case of Parisian LGB People

This paper explores the impact of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention and seeks to contribute to the emerging literature on the topic of sexual orientation and entrepreneurship (Shepherd & Patzelt, 2015). It can also be integrated into broader trends to explore better how minorities manage to enter and participate in entrepreneurial life (Edelman et al., 2010).

This research also questions not only how society and stakeholders judge homosexual orientation – an area on which management sciences cannot comment per se – but the role that gender, beyond the biological sex of individuals, can have on entrepreneurship. The literature on gender in entrepreneurship is prolific and strongly focused on a somewhat narrow approach to gender, which is often reduced to the fact of being a woman (Marlow & McAdam, 2013). For more than a decade, the literature on women in entrepreneurship has been seeking any differences that might exist between male entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs the better to understand the role of gender in entrepreneurial practices (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Marlow, 2014). This search relies on the assumption that entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial practices are masculine (Bruni et al., 2004). Those, especially women, who refuse to play by these masculine norms, or who simply cannot accept these masculine rules (Héritier et al., 2001; Bourdieu, 2001), such as seeking high growth ventures, expanding rapidly, and searching for new markets – have fewer chances of succeeding in creating a new venture. Stakeholders, who tend to judge projects not only based on masculine norms but also on stereotypes, evaluate them negatively (Marlow & Patton, 2005). Such a result leads to a feeling of a lack of self-esteem among these nascent entrepreneurs (Marlow & Patton, 2005; Wilson et al., 2007). Consequently, these results are consistent with those reported by Shepherd & Patzelt (2015) previously mentioned.

Therefore, following the call for a better consideration of the role of gender, as masculine or feminine attributes, and, in addition, the role of sexual orientation on entrepreneurship, we investigate the role of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention. Thus, women express lower entrepreneurial intention than their male counterparts mostly because of the role of social norms and the role of self-efficacy (Diaz-Garcia & Jimenez-Moreno, 2010). Since recent research shows that being gay or lesbian might have a negative impact on the judgement that stakeholders might make regarding entrepreneurial initiatives, we explore the assumption that Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender people might suffer from a lack of self-esteem that could have an impact on their intention to create a venture.

To explore this effect, we conduct a study on a sample of 654 individuals in the Parisian region and tested the impact on their entrepreneurial intention. Results show that sexual orientation has a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention: LGB people develop more entrepreneurial intent than people who do not declare they are LGB. The study also reveals that sexual orientation positively impacts the 3 antecedents of entrepreneurial intention: attitudes; perceived behavioral control; and subjective norms, and validate our whole model, at least in the Parisian region.

This paper is structured as follows: in the first part, we elaborate hypotheses that emerge from the literature review and formulate a model that could explain the positive link existing between individual sexual orientation and individual entrepreneurial intention. In the second part, we present our research design and the sample composition. Results are presented in the third part and, finally, the paper concludes with a discussion that covers two main aspects. Firstly, the role of the context in these results, secondly on the entrepreneurial intention of LGT as opposed to those of other minorities. We conclude the paper by dealing with the limitations and contribution of this paper, and by calling for further research on LGB persons within the

entrepreneurial field as well as a better study of the cognition of “minorities” in terms of entrepreneurship.

1. Theoretical background

1.1. Sexual orientation and LGB entrepreneurial intention

LGB entrepreneurs have recently attracted the curiosity and attention of researchers into entrepreneurship and its potential contribution to society. In fact, the entrepreneurial intention of heterosexual individuals has been widely discussed in previous entrepreneurship literature. However, to our knowledge, no specific research has explored the role played by LGB entrepreneurial intention.

In the current research, we aim to fill this gap. Considered a minority group, LGB people are still not widely targeted in entrepreneurship research (Martin and Roberts, 1984, Wilsdom, 2005). This research gap may be due to their invisibility, which is less easy to study (Wilsdom, 2005; Galloway, 2007; Colgan and Rumens, 2015; Köllen, 2016; Ng and Rumens, 2017).

In entrepreneurship literature, few studies discuss sexual orientation, and where such studies do exist, they focus on lesbians as a minority, given that gay men are considered part of the dominant gender (Nam Cam Trau and Hartel, 2004; Galloway, 2007). Entrepreneurs in general and homosexual individuals share some common attributes, including “deviance” from what is considered acceptable behavior (Wilsdom, 2005; Ragins, Singh and Cornwell, 2007).

In fact, homosexuals have traditionally been considered marginalized, displaced and deviant people whose behavior, especially sexual behavior, deviates from what is considered acceptable (Collins, 1986; Maher & al. 2009; Anteby & Anderson, 2014; Everly & Schwarz, 2015). Wilsdom (2005) argues that, from puberty, homosexuals may feel different, unaccepted by society, and hence deviant. Entrepreneurs have also been described by several scholars (e.g., Kets de Vries, 1977; Scase and Goffee, 1980; Shapero, 1975; Stanworth and Curran, 1976) as deviant, marginalized and displaced. Moreover, it appears that homosexual and heterosexual entrepreneurs are motivated by the same factors (Wilsdom, 2005). Indeed, in a comparative study, Wilsdom (2005) shows that homosexual entrepreneurs in the UK appear to have their own reasons for starting businesses, but they are motivated by the same factors as their heterosexual male and female counterparts.

Contrary to what was expected, many homosexual male entrepreneurs are not pushed into entrepreneurship because of factors such as homophobia or discrimination at work. In fact, gay entrepreneurs are generally pulled into entrepreneurship; they are attracted and motivated by an economic opportunity that presents itself (Wilsdom, 2005). Similarly, Schindehutte, Morris and Allen (2005) find that gay entrepreneurs are motivated by the desire for freedom and of making a living, not to escape discrimination. It has been shown that discrimination or harassment is not the real motivation for self-employment (Schindehutte, Morris and Allen, 2005). Therefore, similar to female entrepreneurship, research on gay entrepreneurs has shown that they are frequently pulled into entrepreneurship by positive motivators (Galloway, 2012). On the other hand, as some gay and lesbian people find difficulty in expressing their identity openly and completely, they prefer this business sector since entrepreneurship affords them the opportunity for self-expression (Schindehutte, Morris and Allen, 2005).

Among the most frequently reasons cited by gay individuals for starting a business is to work in an environment they can define themselves with their own ideals (Galloway, 2012). Galloway (2012) associates this fact with the strong locus of control of entrepreneurs (Rotter, 1966) in general. Furthermore, psychological, sociological and historical studies have shown that gay and lesbian people face homophobia, sexual prejudice and heterosexism in their everyday lives (Drydakis, 2009), which can push them into the business sector. In some cases, gay and lesbian people may choose business ownership because of the push factors that they face in paid employment, such as the perceived inappropriateness of certain occupations (e.g., military), job discrimination, homophobia, fear of AIDS and societal stigmas (Schindehutte, Morris and Allen, 2005).

In fact, gay entrepreneurs in the UK report that they experience homophobia in both paid employment and business ownership. However, the homophobia is indirect and implicit, and it is not the real reason for embracing entrepreneurship (Galloway, 2012). In fact, differences in career decisions have been pointed out among homosexual and heterosexual individuals (Whitam and Mathy, 1986), notably for gay and heterosexual men (Chung, 1995).

Compared to heterosexual men, gay men are more likely to make non-traditional career choices (Chung, 1995). In fact, gay men choose entrepreneurship in order to work in a comfortable environment without workplace and social barriers (Galloway, 2007). Hence, the entrepreneurial intentions of gay men may be higher than that of their heterosexual counterparts. Koellen, Bendl and Steinbacher (2012) show that the choice of self-employment by homosexual individuals in Austria is significantly associated with sexual discrimination and prejudices experienced as an employee. Thus, homosexual individuals choose self-employment, as they consider themselves free to work in this business sector (Koellen, Bendl and Steinbacher, 2012).

Similarly, Howell (2002) states that gay and lesbian individuals are more likely to work in less conventional territory, such as entrepreneurship. Surprisingly, Conti, Kacperczyk and Valentini (2018) claim that a decrease in employer discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender has a negative effect on entrepreneurial entry. In other words, according to Conti, Kacperczyk and Valentini (2018), antidiscrimination laws related to sexual orientation and gender discrimination in the United States have had a negative effect on entrepreneurial ventures given that these laws may encourage LGB people to retain their paid employment. Leppel (2016) highlights the fact that heterosexual men in the USA are most likely to be self-employed, followed by gay men, then lesbian and heterosexual women.

Furthermore, Coad and Greene (2014) show that heterosexual men are more likely to be self-employed than gay men. On the other hand, lesbians are more likely to be self-employed than heterosexual women in the UK, although the difference was not statistically significant. It was also shown that the political and cultural polarization of individual appropriateness, which is assimilated into the subjective norms of Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour, fosters gay entrepreneurial intention (Redien-Collot, 2012). In summary, LGB people believe that self-employment is easier than paid employment, since they can be treated more equally and be open about their sexual orientation in the business sector (Galloway, 2012; Chugh and Nguyen, 2016). Thus, building upon these theoretical underpinnings, we hypothesize as follows:

H1. Sexual orientation has a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention: LGB people develop more entrepreneurial intent than people who are not LGB.

1.2. The Ajzen theory of planned behavior (TPB) and sexual orientation

Ajzen (2011) defines intention as a person's readiness to behave in a certain way (Kautonen, Gelderen & Tornikoski, 2013). Currently, we have numerous studies on the entrepreneurial intention of individuals (Thompson, 2009). When a person starts a new business, entrepreneurial intention is defined as the individual's intention, awareness and determination (Bird, 1988; Hmieleski and Corbett, 2006; Krueger, 2009, De Clercq et al., 2011; Fitzsimmons & Douglas, 2011). Entrepreneurship, as planned behavior, allows researchers to study the determinant of entrepreneurship based on the intention model framework (Bird, 1988; Katz and Gartner, 1988). Applied to variety of contexts, intention theory suggests that behavior can be predicted (Kruger and Brazeal, 1994; Sutton, 1998; Armitage and Cornner, 2001).

A meaningful set of studies concerning individual entrepreneurial behavior and motivation has been developed based on the intentions-based models of (Ajzen, 1985) and entrepreneurship literature (Krueger, 2000).

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) framework is based on the individual's intention to define relationships among beliefs, attitudes, norms, perceived behavioral control, intentions, and behavior. Ajzen's TPB introduces three main antecedents to predict intentions:

- "Personal attitude" is a subjective assessment that refers to the perception and evaluation of one's own performance on acting the intended behavior, which ultimately determines how much one likes or dislikes that behavior.
- "Subjective" refers to the effect of the opinion that others who are important to him/her (family, friends and peers) have on an individual's intended behavior.
- "Perceived behavioral control" refers to the personal perception of the feasibility (easy or hard) evaluation of performing the intended behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Ajzen, 1988, 1991).

The TPB leads to our understanding of the appearance of entrepreneurial behavior prior to the onset of any observable action (Kautonen, Palmroos & Vainio, 2009; Kautonen et al., 2013; Liñán & Chen, 2009; Maalaoui & Germon, 2017; Maalaoui et Al., 2018).

In this paper, we study the role of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention. As explained in the first part of our paper, given that LGB people experience various problems, such as sexual discrimination and prejudice, we believe that they will have specific attitudes towards entrepreneurship compared with non-LGB people. Therefore, we assume that sexual orientation could have an indirect effect on entrepreneurial intention through different factors, including attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control.

Thus, in our research, we hypothesize about how the three factors of the TPB model mediate the impact of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intentions. This mediation allows us to determine how and why sexual orientation affects entrepreneurial intentions through its antecedent factors (Edelman, Brush, & Manolova, 2005). We address the question: Does sexual orientation explain personal attitudes, subjective norms and/or perceived behavioral control? The relationships are summarized in Figure 1.

1.2.1. The indirect effect of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention through attitudes

In the TPB model, attitude allows us to understand how experience gives rise to a predisposition to certain attitudes (Petty et al., 1997). Ajzen (1985) postulates that participants are more likely to behave in certain ways when they think that participating in a certain act will be advantageous for them. Therefore, measuring attitudes towards entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behavior reflects individuals' beliefs about how desirable or undesirable the overall outcomes of entrepreneurship are. In fact, the more positive the attitude towards entrepreneurship, the more favorable the overall perceived usefulness of a new business venture (Shook & Bratianu, 2010). The greater the extent to which one establishes a positive attitude towards entrepreneurial behavior and the consequences of its outcomes, the more likely LGB people are to exhibit positive entrepreneurial behaviors, such as starting new businesses. LGB attitudes have a positive impact on the intention to choose entrepreneurship as a career. In sum, a favorable attitude by LGB people may be more likely to strengthen an individual's intention to participate in entrepreneurship. Based on these propositions, we hypothesize as follows:

H2. Attitudes mediate the effect of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention.

H2a. LGB people develop more favorable attitudes towards entrepreneurship than individuals who are not LGB.

H2b. Attitudes towards entrepreneurship have a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention.

1.2.2. The indirect effect of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention through perceived behavioral control

The point at which members of a community trust that they can act in a given way or choose a given conduct is known as perceived behavior control (PBC). PBC has been defined as a main determinant of behavioral intention (Chen and Tung, 2014). PBC measures an individual's opportunity and ability to perform a behavior. It determines his or her convictions about the impact of both situational and interior factors on performing certain behavior (Klockner, 2013). As suggested by Azjen (2015), PBC can hinder participants from performing a behavior when obstacles exist, or facilitate participants' performance of a behavior when resources are available. The principle of PBC in the entrepreneurial context permits the start of a new business based on the person's perceived personal ease or difficulty in adopting an entrepreneurial behavior. It is essential to differentiate between internal and control beliefs because they have different effects on the individual's intention. Internal control beliefs are linked to an individual's personal capabilities, while external control beliefs are related to situational control. Thus, the following can be hypothesized:

H3. Perceived behavioral control mediates the effect of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention:

H3a. LGB people develop more favorable perceived behavioral control than individuals who are not LGB.

H3b. Perceived behavioral control has a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention.

1.2.3. The indirect effect of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention through subjective norms

Both descriptive and injunctive normative beliefs are essential for determining subjective norms (Ajzen, 2015). Our personal decisions are based on the actions or reactions of family members, friends, experts or professionals. (Davies et al., 2002) describe this situation as descriptive normative beliefs. Individuals' behavioral cognition can be modified based on feedback, advice or suggestions from referents. This scenario is known as injunctive normative beliefs (Arvola et al., 2008). Subjective norms are the opinions of others that influence an individual's decision making, for example, the opinions of others that are influential on an individual's decision making. If a person believes that people who are significant to him or her approve of the behavior, they are likely to perform it and vice versa (Hee, 2000). For LGB people, it has been observed that the political context and how the gay community perceives entrepreneurship will decisively influence entrepreneurial intention (Ellis, 1996; Corrigan and Matthews, 2003; Schindehutte & al. 2005; Radu & Redien-Collot 2008; Collot-Redien, 2012).

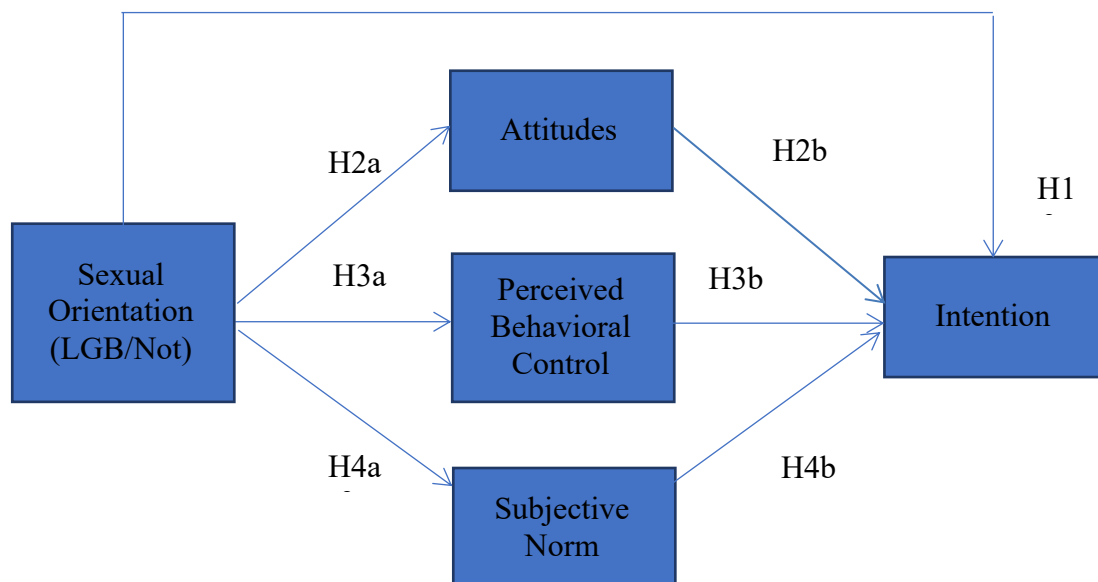
Thus, the following can be hypothesized:

H4. Subjective norms mediate the effect of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention.

H4a. LGB people develop more favorable subjective norms than people who are not LGB.

H4b. Subjective norms have a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Figure 1. The Role of Sexual Orientation in the Formation of Entrepreneurial Intentions



2. Research methods

2.1. Sample

In this study, we analyze the effects of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention. Our final sample includes 654 people (266 who are LGB and 388 who are not). Our empirical analysis relies on a dataset collected between September 2016 and May 2017 from a survey of 1154 questionnaires in the Parisian region (France). The choice of this region is interesting for different reasons: since the French have a low recognition of the rights of LGB people, but even so some LGB people occupy top positions in companies, LGB status still divides French society. In that respect, we assume that the LGB population remains a minority who still find it difficult to become fully integrated within this society.

Our LGB and non-LGB respondents were recruited by administering our questionnaire to various associations of students and alumni associations in Parisian universities and business schools in Paris. This sampling method provided a sample with young individuals (student associations) and older individuals (alumni associations – where we focused on those who live in the Parisian region). Moreover, in order to represent LGB people in our final sample, we targeted LGBT student associations in these same universities and Parisian business schools (*for example*, L'Aumonerie ENS Paris; In and Outside HEC Paris; UNITE ESSEC Paris; ESCAPE ESCP Europe; Equal Science Po Paris; etc).

Out of 1154 individuals, 654 declared themselves to be 100% heterosexual, bisexual or 100% homosexual. Women represented 55% of the sample, and the average age of the participants was 40.5 years. Of the respondents, 64.7% are in relationships, 63% are graduates, and 66.1% are full-time employees.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

| <i>Items</i> | <i>Mean/n</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Gender</i> | | |
| Male | 294 | 45 |
| Female | 360 | 55 |
| <i>Age</i> | | |
| 18-25 years | 103 | 15.7 |
| 26-35 years | 219 | 33.5 |
| 36-45 years | 169 | 25.8 |
| 46-55 years | 114 | 17.4 |
| 56 years and more | 49 | 7.5 |
| <i>Education Level</i> | | |
| Not graduate | 43 | 6.6 |
| High School | 199 | 30.4 |
| Bachelor Degree | 254 | 38.8 |
| Master Degree | 136 | 20.8 |
| Doctorate | 22 | 3.4 |
| <i>Career</i> | | |
| Student | 59 | 9 |
| Part-time employee | 65 | 9.9 |
| Full-time employee | 432 | 66.1 |
| Unemployed | 67 | 10.2 |
| Retired | 31 | 4.7 |

2.2.Measures

The survey was divided into three sections. The first section contained the measures of entrepreneurial intention and its three antecedents. The second section presented sexual orientation measures. In the third section, we focused on demographic variables, such as, gender, age, and education.

Participants were asked to respond on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “very unlikely” (1) to “very likely” (7). In the following, we provide details of all the variables used in our analysis.

2.2.1. Sexual orientation

To measure sexual orientation, we follow previous studies in sociology and psychology by using the scale of Kinsey et al. (1948), which is based on the following items: (i) “100% heterosexual”; (ii) “mostly heterosexual, but sometimes attracted to people of your own sex”; (iii) “bisexual, attracted to men and women equally”; (iv) “mostly homosexual, but sometimes attracted to people of the opposite sex”; (v) “100% homosexual”; and (vi) “not sexually attracted to either men or women”. Variable sexual orientation allowed us to have two groups: LGB individuals and those who are not LGB.

LGB people are the ones who responded (iii) “bisexual, attracted to men and women equally” and (v) “100% homosexual”. Not LGB (HET) people are those who declared to be “100% heterosexual”. We excluded from our final sample individuals who are (ii) “mostly heterosexual, but sometimes attracted to people of your own sex”; “mostly homosexual, but sometimes attracted to people of the opposite sex” and (vi) “not attracted to either men or women” (See Table 2).

Table 2. Sample distribution

| Sexual Orientation | | LGB or Not |
|--|-----|---------------|
| 100% heterosexual | 388 | Not LGB (HET) |
| bisexual, attracted to men and women equally | 59 | LGB |
| 100% homosexual | 207 | LGB |

2.2.2. Entrepreneurial intention and its antecedents

Entrepreneurial intention and its three antecedents (attitude, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms) were measured based on Ajzen’s original protocol (Ajzen, 1991) and previous research, such as Fitzsimmons and Douglas (2011) and Kautonen et al. (2015).

We measure entrepreneurial intention using three items: asking the respondents whether they (i) “have started a business plan”; (ii) “intend to start a business”; or (iii) “will try to take steps to start a business in the next year and a half (OR 18 months)”. This three-item scale displays good reliability ($\alpha = 0.97$).

Attitude was assessed using Kautonen et al.’s (2015) work. We asked the participants to rate the statement "For me, taking steps to start a business in the next 18 months would be ...", using the word pairs 'unpleasant-attractive', 'useless-useful', 'foolish-wise', 'negative-positive', 'insignificant-major', and 'tiresome-inspiring'. However, after the principal component analysis (PCA), we excluded the items 'tiresome-inspiring'. Cronbach's alpha for this variable reflects adequate reliability ($\alpha = 0.96$).

To measure PBC, respondents were asked to indicate their opinions about four statements: (i) “if I wanted to, I could take steps to start a business in the next 18 months”; (ii) “if I took steps to start a business in the next 18 months, I would be able to control the progress of the process to a great degree myself”; (iii) “It would be easy for me to take steps to start a business in the next 12 months” and (iv) “if I wanted to take steps to start a business in the next 18 months, no external factor, independent of myself, would hinder me from taking such action” (Kautonen et al., 2013; Kautonen et al., 2015). This scale initially contained 5 items. After a principal components analysis, we removed items (iii) and (iv) and obtained a 3-item structure ($\alpha = 0.82$).

Based on Kolvereid (1996) and Kautonen et al. (2015), subjective norm (SN) was assessed by multiplying 2 groups by three items: (i) attitude-related items, capturing the attitudes of the respondent’s family, friends and other significant people in his/her life towards the idea that he/she starts his/her own business in the next 18 months, and (ii) motivation-to-comply items that reflect how much the respondent cares about the opinions of these people if he/she wanted to start his/her own business in the next 18 months. This approach allows us to obtain a three-item scale that displays good reliability ($\alpha = 0.95$).

2.2.3. Control variables

In addition to the above variables, several control variables were also assessed to minimize the potential confounding effects. We used gender, age, marital status, residence, religion, and education.

3. Results

Before testing our hypotheses, we checked the psychometric properties of our scales. The PCA verified the factorial structure of the scales of measure and resulted in one-dimensional scales with a good level of reliability as well as a good level of convergent validity. The results are presented in table 3:

Table 3: Psychometric quality of measure scales

| | Number of items | Cronbach's alpha* | Rho of convergent validity | Rh  (Joreskog) | Eigen-value | KMO | Percent explained variance |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------|----------------------------|
| Intention | 3 | 0.972 | 0.921 | 0.972 | 2.841 | 0.773 | 94.703 |
| Attitude | 5 | 0.964 | 0.843 | 0.964 | 4.370 | 0.902 | 87.408 |
| PBC | 3 | 0.828 | 0.638 | 0.838 | 2.236 | 0.673 | 74.521 |
| SN | 3 | 0.955 | 0.877 | 0.955 | 2.735 | 0.765 | 91.779 |

To investigate the effect of sexual orientation on attitude, PBC, SN and entrepreneurial intention (H1, H2a, H3a, H4a), we performed a T-test comparing two means from independent samples.

Next, we tested the effects of 3 independent variables (attitude, PBC and SN) on entrepreneurial intention (the dependent variable) with a multiple regression analysis (H2b, H3b, H4b).

Finally, we checked the indirect effect of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention through attitude, PBC and SNs (H2; H3; H4; H2b) using the bootstrapping procedure suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008).

3.1. Effects of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention (H1)

To test the influence of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention, we compared the responses of heterosexual people (388 individuals) and LGB people (266 individuals) through a comparison of means t-tests. The results (Table 4) show that sexual orientation has a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention ($t = -22,642$; $p = 0.000$). Thus, LGB people develop more entrepreneurial intent than people who are not LGB ($M_{LGB} = 4.718$ vs. $M_{NotLGB} = 2.062$). The hypothesis relating to the influence of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention (H1) is confirmed.

3.2. Effects of sexual orientation on attitude (H2a)

Sexual orientation significantly influences attitude ($t = -13,948$; $p = 0.000$). Thus, it can be concluded that LGB people develop more favorable attitudes towards entrepreneurship than individuals who are not LGB ($M_{LGB} = 4.911$ vs. $M_{NotLGB} = 3.210$). H2a is accepted.

3.3. Effects of sexual orientation on perceived behavior control (H3a)

Then, we examined the influence of sexual orientation on PBC. We found that sexual orientation has a positive effect on PBC ($t = -10,623$; $p = 0.000$). Thus, LGB people develop more favorable PBC than individuals who are not LGB ($M_{LGB} = 4.770$ vs. $M_{NotLGB} = 3.506$). The hypothesis relating to the influence of sexual orientation on PBC (H3a) is verified.

3.4. Effects of sexual orientation on subjective norms (H4a)

When we tested the influence of sexual orientation on SNs, the results showed that sexual orientation has a positive effect on SNs ($t = -11,534$; $p = 0.000$).

Therefore, we can say that LGB people develop more favorable SNs than people who are not LGB ($M_{LGB} = 20.256$ vs. $M_{NotLGB} = 10.685$). The hypothesis relating to the influence of sexual orientation on SNs (H4a) is confirmed.

Table 4: Results of mean's comparison between LGB and HET

| | | Mean | t | Sig |
|------------|-----|---------|---------|-------|
| EI | HET | 2.0627 | | |
| | LGB | 4.7180 | -22,642 | 0.000 |
| ATT | HET | 3.2105 | | |
| | LGB | 4.9110 | -13,948 | 0.000 |
| PBC | HET | 3.5060 | | |
| | LGB | 4.7707 | -10,623 | 0.000 |
| SN | HET | 10.6856 | | |
| | LGB | 20.2569 | -11,534 | 0.000 |

3.5. Effects of attitude, perceived behavior control and subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention (H2b, H3b, H4b)

The hypotheses of the effects of the independent variables (attitude, PBC, SN) on the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention) are tested using multiple linear regression in IBM SPSS24, given the quantitative nature of the independent variables and the dependent variable. The results of the collinearity test (Table 5) show that the collinearity condition is respected given the acceptable levels of the estimated values of the tolerance coefficient and the variance inflation factor (VIF). These values are under the recommended limits ($Tolerance > 0.3$ and $VIF < 3$). The independent variables are thus slightly correlated with each other, and this attests to the quality of the model.

In addition, the results of the regression test (Table 5) show that attitudes significantly influence intention ($t = 16.851 > 1.96$; $p < .01$). This effect is positive and relatively important ($\beta_{std} = 0.598$). The results also indicate that PBC significantly influences intent ($t = 2.616 > 1.96$; $p < .05$). This influence is positive but remains very weak or marginal ($\beta_{std} = 0.085$). The results also show that SNs significantly influence intent ($t = 7.007 > 1.96$; $p < .01$). This effect is positive but remains moderate ($\beta_{std} = 0.211$). The three variables, attitude, PBC, and SN, jointly account for approximately 66% of entrepreneurial intent ($R^2_{adjusted} = 0.658$). It appears that attitude is the most significant variable in comparison with the other antecedents. For all these reasons, the 3 hypotheses (H2b, H3b, H4b) regarding the influence of attitude, PBC and SN on entrepreneurial intention are verified.

Table 5: Results of Multiple Linear Regression

| Paths | Coefficient estimates | | | R ² adjusted |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | $\beta_{std}(p\text{-value})$ | C.R (t) | Collinearity (Tolerance, VIF) | |
| Attitude → Entrepreneurial Intention | 0.598 (.000) | 16.851*** | 2.405 | 0.658 |
| PBC → Entrepreneurial Intention | 0.085 (.009) | 2.616* | 2.028 | |
| SN → Entrepreneurial Intention | 0.211 (.000) | 7.007*** | 1.728 | |

Note: *** $p\text{-value} < .01$; ** $p\text{-value} < .05$; * $p\text{-value} < .10$; β_{std} : Standardized β values, C.R: Critical ratio (Student's t)

3.6. Indirect effects of sexual orientation on entrepreneurial intention through attitude, perceived behavior control and subjective norms (H2; H3 et H4)

We tested the indirect effects of sexual orientation (X) on entrepreneurial intention (Y) using a parallel mediation model with 3 mediators: attitude (M1), PBC (M2) and SN (M3). The analysis was performed according to model 4 of the Hayes (2013) process macro, with 5000 bootstraps. The indirect effect of sexual orientation through attitude (H2) is significant and positive ($a \times b = 0.930$), with a 95% confidence interval excluding 0 ($IC = [0.767 \text{ to } 1.113]$). The indirect effect of sexual orientation through PBC (H3) is significant and positive ($a \times b = 0.980$), with a 95% confidence interval excluding 0 ($IC = [0.012 \text{ to } 0.193]$). Finally, the indirect effect of sexual orientation through SN (H4) is significant and positive ($a \times b = 0.251$), with a 95% confidence interval excluding 0 ($IC = [0.143 \text{ to } 0.378]$). These results provide support for H2, H3 and H4.

Table 6: Results of indirect effects (Process-Model 4)

| Antecedent | Consequent | | | | Indirect effect | 95% bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---|
| | Attitude (M_1) | PBC (M_2) | SN (M_3) | Intention (Y) | | |
| | Coeff. (p -value) | Coeff. (p -value) | Coeff. (p -value) | Coeff. (p -value) | (ab) | BootLLCI; BootULCI |
| Sexual orientation (X) | 1.700*** (<.01) | 1.264*** (<.01) | 9.571*** (<.01) | | | |
| Attitude (M_1) | - | - | - | 0.547*** (<.01) | 0.930 | [0.767; 1.113] |
| PBC (M_2) | - | - | - | 0.077** (<.05) | 0.980 | [0.012; 0.193] |
| SN (M_3) | - | - | - | 0.026*** (<.01) | 0.251 | [0.1436; 0.378] |
| Constant | Coeff=-2.246; SE= 0.109; p=0.0243 | | | | | |

Note: *** p -value < .01; ** p -value < .05; * p -value < .10, Coeff: Non-standardized coefficient

4. Discussion

There are two aspects of these results which invite discussion. Firstly, our results confirm the robustness of our theoretical model, but is it generalizable across contexts, especially in “less LGB friendly zones”? Secondly, they partly contradict existing results on the recognition of minorities but is it time to call for an end to grouping all minorities into a single category?

4.1. Are results generalizable across contexts?

Our results show that our theoretical model is validated. However, we agree with Welter et al. (2016), who argue that context matters and results might differ across contexts. Therefore, we can discuss the applicability of our model to other contexts. Here, the sample comes from Paris. This city is not always ranked as the most welcoming city according to LGBT persons – and **obviously** LGB persons who live there¹ - but is still considered one of the most LGBT friendly cities in the world among the LGBT community². However, according to IFOP, a leading private French company ranked first in the production of statistics, whose services are often bought by French Governments and French Political Parties to get fresh and reliable information about any current societal issue, 14% of the Parisian population declares itself Gay or Lesbian, as opposed to 7% the rest of the French population³. If our study had been conducted in other places, where LGB people are less accepted, recognized or, more numerous, would have results been different?

In answer to that question, we argue that the answer might be “partly”. We can assume that there are less declared LGB persons in less “friendly LGB zones”. Non-declared LGB persons could suffer from a lack of self-esteem and consider that they might not be capable of creating their own business. In that case, attitude could negatively impact the entrepreneurial intention. Moreover, we can argue that they might not have contact with a network of LGB persons, who might also have created their own company and who could encourage them to create their own business. In that sense, we could argue that the positive impact of social norms on LGB entrepreneurial intention would be lower.

¹For illustration, http://www.gayviking.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/TETU_Villes_GayFriendly.pdf. The study has been ordered by Tetu, the leading French Speaking Journal that targets LGBT Persons.

²<https://www.codesdegay.com/2016/10/07/top-5-villes-francaises-plus-gay/>

³<https://www.ifop.com/publication/observatoire-de-la-vie-sexuelle-des-parisiens-le-sexe-a-paris/>. These figures have been published in 2016. Note that the population of Transsexuals is not considered in the study.

4.2. Beyond context, a call for not considering “Minorities” as a whole single category?

The results of this research about the entrepreneurial intentions of LGB people Do not seem to be in agreement with results from other research that has been conducted on the entrepreneurial intentions of minorities, including women and black people. In Shane’s book (2008), which aims to provide a sort of critical synthesis of what is “real” entrepreneurship and what are myths, it is shown that minorities, especially black persons and women, express a lower intention to create their own business (Shane, 2008). Our results partly contradict this statement or, at least, tend to show that LGB persons, as a minority, would behave differently. In this way, our results could be seen as a call not to consider minorities as a single category, and would reveal differences of cognition, at least in terms of entrepreneurial intention.

How could we explain such a difference across minorities? Edelman et al. (2010) reveal that for minorities, especially black persons, the intention to create a venture is based on the idea that it is easier to create one’s own job than to obtain a job as an employee, because of the discrimination these persons usually meet. This entrepreneurial intention is all the stronger when minorities – but this is also true for the “majority” – are living in deprived economic areas (Shane, 2008). In this sense, minorities would ground their entrepreneurial intention in necessity (Heilman & Che, 2003). In our results, LGB people, especially in the context we studied – Paris – express a stronger intention to create their own job even in “richer areas” and in quite “friendly LGB” areas. We can look at these results in two different ways. The first interpretation is that the entrepreneurial intention of LGB people in Paris could be driven by the fact that, even in gay “LGB friendly” areas, they still feel discriminated against, and therefore aim to create their own jobs. A second interpretation is that this strong entrepreneurial intention might still be motivated by this perception but also by social norms, especially in the Parisian region. Our sample is composed of people with what we could qualify as a high level of education, who were contacted thanks to schools Alumni. In these schools, entrepreneurial training is strong, at least, much stronger than in the 90s: they all provide incubators, specific training in Entrepreneurship, etc. Therefore, these people, like any other Alumni or Student member of these schools, are exposed to a stronger social norm for entrepreneurship. In addition, most LGB people in Paris are part of LGB networks. Geographical research showed that some LGB persons tend to live in LGB friendly places that they had investigated and where they created their venture (Gates, 2013; Blidon, 2016).

Living in the same districts could also mean that LGB share similar networks. Other research conducted in Paris showed that the LGB who arrive first in these areas created their own ventures. This could explain the difference in entrepreneurial intention between LGB persons and other minorities, such as women or black persons, since the former mainly rely on the fact of belonging to networks of (LGB) entrepreneurs!

4.3. Limitation, contribution and further research

Of course, our study suffers from many limitations. The most significant one is related to the composition of our sample. As we discussed, our sample is not simply composed of LGB people from Paris, but they are also students and Alumni Members, most of them come from the French “Grandes Ecoles”. To some extent, as we previously discussed, the strong entrepreneurial intention might be due to their education. Therefore, this study remains contextualized. Following the call of Welter (2011), similar studies should be conducted in less favorable contexts for LGB People, for example, in a context with a soft legal framework related to the LGB. Similarly, our study does not test the impact of the female or male attributes of LGB people, which could actually make a real contribution to gender issues in entrepreneurship.

Similar studies should be investigated in other contexts: whether in Paris or elsewhere, but targeting a lower education level or less ‘LGB friendly’ zones.

Despite this limitation, this research on the entrepreneurial intention of LGB people contributes to a better understanding of the entrepreneurial cognition of this minority group (Galloway, 2011). It shows that, even in LGB friendly zones, LGB persons would express lower entrepreneurial intention than non LGB persons.

Another contribution is the evidence that one should not consider “minority” as a single category: the study reveals that LGB people might behave in a different manner that is similar to that of other minorities. One final contribution is that context matters, especially when you are in a minority, i.e. an LGB person, in a zone that also welcomes other LGB persons who are well educated and have created their own businesses.

Therefore, following the plea of Carsrud & Brännback (2011), this research encourages a better study of LGB persons, in the field of entrepreneurship. It could contribute to a better understanding of the entrepreneurial cognition of people who feel more male or female, beyond the biological sex of the person, and therefore, truly test the impact of thinking “like a male” in a male-dominated entrepreneurial context (Marlow, 2014). Moreover, future studies may be more meaningful if they use a qualitative research method (e.g. interviews) to explore in more depth the motives or antecedents of LGB people’s entrepreneurial intentions and to understand their background and previous life experience better, together with the extent to which the decision to start a venture could be influenced by certain values or particular experiences (Schindehutte, Morris and Allen, 2005). Furthermore, research on the entrepreneurial intention of transgender individuals is underdeveloped. Therefore, more research should focus on the entrepreneurial intention of this specific minority group.

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