

MODERATING ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED FAMILY, STRUCTURAL AND REGULATORY SUPPORTS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.

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Abstract

Many countries have increased the rate of entrepreneurship activities in order to promote economic and social well being. The objective of this paper is to review the related literature and highlight the need to investigate the role of entrepreneurship education on the relationship between perceived supports and entrepreneurial intentions among university students in Kano State. The study is theoretically based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Expectancy theory. The study provides insight on the implication of the theory to the practice of entrepreneurship. The study recommends empirical testing of the proposed framework, to better understand university students' entrepreneurial intention by both researchers and policy makers.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship education, perceived family support, perceived structural support, perceived regulatory support, entrepreneurship intentions.

1.0 Introduction

The increasing rate of unemployment, high population growth and entrepreneurial intention among individuals especially the graduates have become a major concern to many governments of developing countries. The entrepreneurial intention in the Sub-Saharan region is 44 percent based on (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2012). Today, the world currently requires people with complex and diversified entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to answer the challenges of shrinking economy and unemployment (Norman et al., 2016). This necessitates many nations to recognise and encourage entrepreneurial activities with much interest (Norman, et al,

2016; Anjum et al., 2022; Qudus, Mazhar & Tabassum, 2022). Many countries have increased the rate of entrepreneurship activities in order to promote economic and social well being (Peng, Lu, Kang, 2012).

Report shows that out of about 500,000 graduates of the Nigerian institutions of higher learning that graduates yearly, nearly 47 percent of them fail to find jobs and do not venture into entrepreneurship due to their skills deficiency (Abbas & Osunsan, 2020). Moreover, the Nigerian graduate report of 2023 revealed that the employability status of Nigerian university graduates has decreased from 36.26 percent in 2016 to 31.99 percent in 2022 and only

9.255 percent of the graduates are practicing entrepreneurship freelance and other self-employment activities 5 years after their graduation (Muhammed, 2021). This is an indication that the Nigerian economy is weak and cannot absorb the entire labour force in the country. Unfortunately, the university graduates lack adequate employable and entrepreneurial skill-training that is necessary for job creation and self-employment (Abbas, & Osunsan, 2020).

Nigeria records an unemployment rate of 27.1 percent in the year 2020 (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2020), which continues to rise as currently showing a rate of 33.3 percent in the year 2023 (NBS, 2023), which clearly indicates an increase of 6.5 percent higher when compared to last three years. Graduate employability, however, is only at 36 percent, which strongly indicates a serious problem to the country's graduate employability (Mahmoud & Garba, 2019). Consequently, when the number of available supports cannot accommodate the number of graduates, only few seeks to find solution in the form of entrepreneurship. Efforts to support young individuals' entrepreneurial aspiration have been made by providing many forms of supports in Nigeria. The country as reported has an estimated population of 212,837,074 million, based on Worldometer elaboration of the latest 2021 United Nations data, at the same time stating the Nigerian population as equivalent to 2.64 percent of the total world population. As an independent country for over 65 years, the country suffers from youth unemployment over the years, which leads to social and political instability

across the country. Thus, the need for intervention in form of entrepreneurship, so as to reduce the rate of unemployment in the country.

1.1 Problem Statement

Many studies have been conducted by scholars to examine the factors that impact on Entrepreneurship Intention (EI) of higher education students. Social and environmental researchers have identified elements such as prior experience, family background, regional culture and government support as critical factors that affect EI of students (Ahamed & Rokhman, 2015; Ali et al., 2019; Tiwari et al., 2020). Another fundamental factor contributing to the formation of students' EI is entrepreneurial education. Entrepreneurial education in higher education plays an important role in enhancing foundational entrepreneurial knowledge and various cognitive and non-cognitive skills by stimulating students' entrepreneurial activities (Walter & Block 2016; Brune & Lutz 2020).

However, with all the reported development in the number of studies on factors affecting EI globally, the relationship between entrepreneurship education and student intention is still under investigation in developing countries of sub-Saharan Africa, particularly West Africa, which includes Nigeria (Nuhu, *et al*, 2018; Abubakar & Yakubu, 2020). Researchers like, Hussein and Hashim (2015); Hou et al. (2019), have suggested the need for more studies to be conducted on the relationship between entrepreneurship education and EI in developing countries like Nigeria.

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Typically, in Nigeria, contemplating career options by Tertiary students leads-up to and after graduation. Report shows that out of about 500,000 graduates of the Nigerian institutions of higher learning that graduates yearly, nearly 47 percent of them fail to find jobs and do not venture into entrepreneurship due to their skills deficiency (Abbas, & Osunsan, 2020). More so, the National Bureau of Statistics (2022) has shown that among the rates of unemployed people in Nigeria are students from universities and these students cannot be employed all by both private and government sector (Idris, 2017). It is evidenced that fewer students are willing to become entrepreneurs (Ibrahim et al., 2017, Ali et al., 2021), very few students immediately after graduation will start a business due to the fact that many students do not consider entrepreneurship as a career option. On the other hand, Nabila and Haryani (2016) opined that developing countries like Malaysia encourage students to be involved in entrepreneurship and consider entrepreneurship as a career

choice. In addition, the importance and contributions of entrepreneurship towards economic growth and development, as well as competitiveness have been acknowledged and established (Ari Saptono, 2018; Prasetyo, 2019).

However, study on the interrelationships between these three concepts simultaneously is limited. Previous studies usually focus on how entrepreneurship education is, its impacts and to what level it promotes and supports entrepreneurial intention (Rideout & Gray, 2013). Thus, previous research failed to provide evidence on the interrelationship of these important variables in enhancing entrepreneurial intention, specifically, the moderating role of perceived entrepreneurship support on entrepreneurial intention (Nowinski et al., 2020).

This paper attempts to fill in the gap by providing single research framework for the relationships between entrepreneurship education, perceived family support, perceived structural support, perceived regulatory support and students' EI. As it is believed, EI intention is the foundation for new venture emergence. Entrepreneurial support can play an important role in the development of EI. Therefore, this study focuses on proposing a moderating role of entrepreneurship education on perceived family support, perceived structural support, perceived regulatory support and EI relationship of university students in Kano State.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Entrepreneurial Intention (EI)

EI is a condition where in someone's thoughts there is a wish to develop a trade or create a new business (Chen & Tian, 2022). EI is a person's intent to create a business on the basis of implementing business conceptions that do not yet exist with something new (Garaika, 2020). It refers to an individual's desire, wish and hope of becoming an entrepreneur (Isiwu & Onwuka, 2017). The desire of people to take specific activities or behaviors by taking actions to choose a job as an entrepreneur is the objective of entrepreneurship (Dinc & Budic, 2016). EI can be grown from the family environment, social environment and educational environment. For the purpose of this study, EI is an individual's intention to become an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur is an individual who is seen as a creative thinker, an innovator and as someone who volunteers to take risk and invest money for the purpose of making profit.

2.2 Entrepreneurship Education

An individual's ability to perceive risk and identify market opportunities can be improved through entrepreneurship education (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003). Entrepreneurship education is the development of knowledge and skills either "about" or "for the purpose of" entrepreneurship generally, as part of recognized education programs at primary, post-primary or tertiary-level of educational institutions (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2010). Entrepreneurship education is a means of providing entrepreneurship knowledge that improves entrepreneurship ability and psychological quality of students

who may likely turn to be potential entrepreneurs. According to several studies conducted, it was seen that entrepreneurship education has a positive impact on entrepreneurial intention (Rideout & Gray, 2013; Liu et al., 2019; Boldureanu et al., 2020; Jena, 2020).

2.3 Perceived Family Support

Family support is defined as a family's behavior and attitude in accepting its family members, which can take emotional, informational, and instrumental support (Friedman et al., 2010). Family support in the entrepreneurial context can be looked in form of information as well as help in acquiring or providing venture capitals, especially financial capitals (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015). Family support eases individuals in deciding to start a business, providing a boost of confidence in their abilities (Sahban, 2015), as well as a positive appraisal of their decisions (Harris, 2006). Sarafino and Smith (2014) suggested that family support includes several aspects, namely: 1) Emotional support, which involves expression of feelings, empathy, and attention to an individual, allowing one to feel comfortable, loved and cared for; 2) Appreciation support, which is a positive evaluation towards other's ideas, feelings, and performance, manifested through expressions of respect for family members; 3) Instrumental support, involving family members as a source of aid and unwavering supporting, can take the form of supervision, fulfilment of personal needs, as well as financial assistance or help in completing a task; 4) Informative support, which can take the form of information, advice, guidance, and feedback on how to solve a particular problem. Support from

families tends to increase togetherness over time and become sources of support for each other (Edelman et al., 2016).

Scholars have recognized a broad influence of entrepreneurial family support and background on the entrepreneurial intentions of offspring: modeling career options (Carr et al., 2007; Criaco et al., 2017), acquiring human capital especially entrepreneurial knowledge and skills (Eesley & Wang, 2016) providing better access to knowledge about entrepreneurial opportunities (Sørensen, 2007), and transferring financial and social capital to their children (Sørensen, 2007; Solesvik, 2013).

2.4 Perceived Structural Support

Structural support refers to the government support towards the development of entrepreneurship in terms which can come in form of technical and advisory assistance, marketing, funding schemes, tax incentives among others (Ambad & Ag Dami, 2016). Government policies, accessibility of strategic infrastructure and monetary financiers certainly influence the improvement of entrepreneurial development (Fini et al., 2009).

Structural support is a favorable and orderly environment with regards to physical infrastructure, provision of physical assets, Research and Development laboratories and intangible things that have a role in encouraging entrepreneurial intentions (Fini et al., 2009). Supportive environment that exist in order to achieve a goal can be seen as structural support. Environment is an atmosphere or situation in a place where social relations occurs and gives encouragement in mindset and contributes

directly and indirectly to the development of the soul and individual attitudes (Widaryanti & Luhglatno, 2018). A good and systematic environment has a role in promoting entrepreneurship. Once favorable facilities, initiatives and motivations are available, individuals will develop the intention to start their own activities or business (Denanyoh et al., 2015).

Perceived structural support can be defined as an individual's perception of the availability of government support in assisting them during their entrepreneurship activities such as capital, taxes exclusion, and guidance (Minniti, 2008). Structural support is also conceptualized as the policies, and programs that the country has undertaken to support entrepreneurship. Turker and Selcuk, (2009) opines that structural support can come in form of economic support for entrepreneurship which includes venture capital availability, friendly credit conditions, and infrastructures.

2.5 Perceived Regulatory Support

The regulatory environment is defined as a formal system of rules and regulation that constrains or promotes certain behavior (Bruton et al., 2010). Research on social entrepreneurship shows that regulatory support has an association with entrepreneurial intention (Urban & Kujinga, 2017). The regulatory system can provide a threat to entrepreneurs, such as the rules that can limit them to innovate for business development. More so, entrepreneurship development within the society relates directly to the existing regulations and policies in that society which determines

and governs the allocation of rewards (Baumol et al., 2009).

Nevertheless, if the regulation supports the entrepreneurship development, entrepreneurs are more likely to develop their business (Gelard & Saleh, 2011) as supportive environment encourages a person to be more confident and enthusiastic in entrepreneurship (Ismail et al., 2009). Additionally, when individual recognize an unfriendly environment for business initiators (example, lending and borrowing conditions) as being too restrictive, they are less likely to become entrepreneurs regardless of their attitude toward self-employment (Gelard & Saleh 2011).

Researchers confirmed factors such as tax regulation, business regulation, legal system and labour regulation have emotional impact on entrepreneurial intention (Gelard & Saleh, 2011; Denanyoh, Adjei & Nyemekye, 2015).

2.6 Empirical Review

Several studies have been conducted to examine the factors that impact EI of higher education students. Social and environmental researchers have identified elements such as prior knowledge, family background, regional culture and government support as critical factors that affect EI of students (Ahamed & Rokhman 2015; Ali et al. 2019; Tiwari et al. 2020). Another fundamental factor contributing to the formation of students EI is entrepreneurial education. Entrepreneurial education in higher education plays an important role in enhancing foundational entrepreneurial knowledge and various cognitive and non-cognitive skills by

stimulating students' entrepreneurial activities (Walter & Block 2016; Brune & Lutz 2020).

Previous research found that entrepreneurial intentions are influenced by Perceived structural support that can encourage or discourage the level of participation in entrepreneurial activity (Al-Issa, 2020). Likewise Hechavarria and Ingram (2019) established in their study that individual have a tendency to choose an entrepreneurial career when the environment has low barriers to entry. Studies have shown that structural support impacts on entrepreneurial intentions (Tranga & Doanh, 2019; Otchengco Jr & Akiate, 2021).

According to Kosa and Mohammed (2017) government supports strengthens new business creation. Results of a study by Waseem et al., (2021) stress the importance of formal institutions in promoting entrepreneurial activities in a country. Then, Persada et al. (2019) proved the impact of regulatory support on innovation among SMEs in Surabaya. Chen et al. (2021) also proved the role of government support in small service-businesses in Taipei.

Numerous studies have reported positively significant relationship between EE and ENTI (see for instance; Liu et al., 2019; Asimakopoulous et al., 2019; Boldureanu et al., 2020; Jena, 2020). The study of Turulja et al. (2020) indicates that there is no significant impact of formal and regulatory support on entrepreneurial intentions. Similarly, Farashah (2015) failed to confirm that regulatory profile is a predictor of EI. Turulja et al. (2020) affirms that with

respect to the influence of informal support and entrepreneurial capacity, the findings corroborate previous assertions and findings that support these variables as an important predictors of entrepreneurial intention (Rokhman & Ahamed, 2015; Linan, 2011; Rodriguez-Cohard, et al., 2011).

2.7 Entrepreneurship Education as a Moderator

Baron and Kenny (1986) postulated that what calls for the introduction of a moderator is when there are mixed or weak research findings, however for the moderating variable, significant relationship must exist with the dependent variable. Therefore, in line with the inconsistencies of findings on the relationship between PFS, PSS and PRS towards EINT, for instance see: (Liu et al., 2019; Asimakopoulous et al., 2019; Boldureanu et al., 2020; Jena, 2020; Al Issa, 2020; Muhammed, 2021) found that entrepreneurship education have a positive relationship with the entrepreneurship intention, however others like (Anjum, et al, 2019; Turulja et al. 2020; Kusumojanto, et al 2021) reported entrepreneurship education for having no significant impact on students willingness to create new ventures. Turulja et al. (2020) indicates that there is no significant impact of formal and regulatory support on entrepreneurial intentions. Similarly, Farashah (2015) failed to confirm that regulatory profile is a predictor of entrepreneurial intention. More so, the positive relationship that exists between EE and EINT, the moderating influence of EE on the TPB model relationships is suggested in this study. The choice of EE as a moderator in this study

was reinforced by the role of Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) on human development and economic success. The Expectancy theory holds that individuals have different sets of goals and can be motivated if they have certain expectations. Since knowledge/human capital development is contingent on economic progression (the same way as entrepreneurship), this study argues that EE can moderate the relationship between PFS, PSS, and PRS towards EINT of students.

2.8 Theoretical Review

The study is theoretically based on the theory of planned behavior (TPB) and Expectancy theory. The theory of planned behavior (TPB) as developed by (Ajzen, 1988, 1991) is the most popularly used as a central framework to establish the reasons behind the study of individual action (Ajzen, 2001) and precisely the intention of an individual to involve in different actions. It provides the ability to predict and understanding to variety of types of human behavior. Ajzen (1991) affirmed that individual intention to execute a particular behavior under consideration will be stronger under a more favorable attitude, subjective norm with a greater perceived control of behavior. However, depending on different behaviors, the effect of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control might differ.

However, Expectancy theory by Vroom (1964) states that individuals have different sets of goals and can be motivated if they have certain expectations. It is a framework that provides understanding through which individuals form interests via expectations and make choices with regards to

Reference

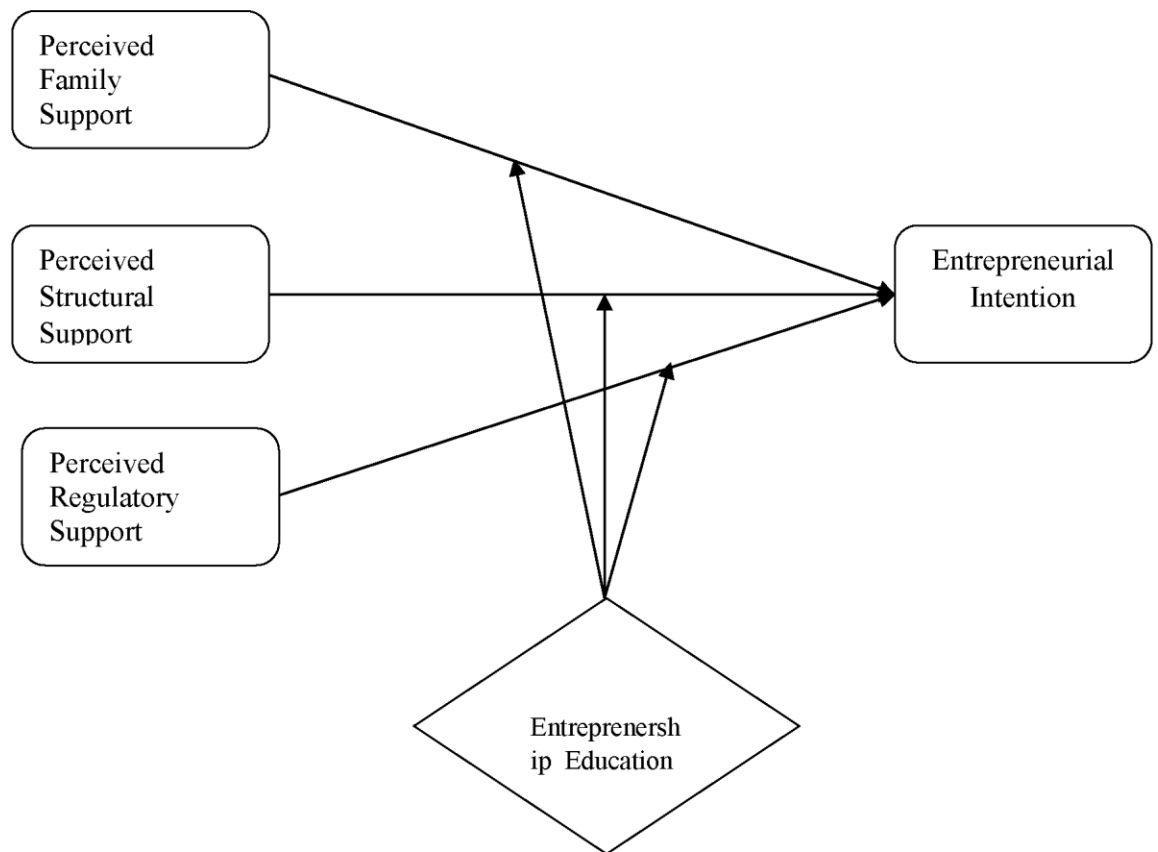
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occupational pursuits. Expectancy is the individual's belief that effort will lead to the intended performance goals. Expectancy theory suggests that behavior is motivated by anticipated results or consequences.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

In the study, perceived entrepreneurship education can moderate the relationship

between perceived family support , perceived structural entrepreneurship support as well as perceived regulatory support which are regarded as the independent variables that positively influence student entrepreneurial intention which is the dependent construct. As such, the proposed framework is presented below:



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