

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The cultivation of entrepreneurial intention among youth, particularly college students, faces significant challenges that impede its development into actionable entrepreneurial behaviour. Globally, youth unemployment a persistent economic issue stands at 13.1% as of 2023, according to the International Labour Organization, with rates soaring to over 40% in many developing economies¹. This crisis is compounded by economic instability, rapid technological disruption, and limited access to resources, all of which erode the confidence and capacity of young individuals to pursue entrepreneurial ventures². Additionally, socio-cultural barriers, such as risk aversion, a preference for stable employment, and quick rich syndrome often deter youth from embracing entrepreneurship as a viable career path². These challenges are particularly acute among business education students, who, despite their potential as drivers of innovation, frequently lack the practical skills, market awareness, and supportive ecosystems needed to translate intention into action².

The intention to establish a business is widely recognized as a critical antecedent to entrepreneurial behaviour at the global level. This is because entrepreneurial intention constitutes a decisive factor in determining the extent of commitment, resources, and effort that a prospective entrepreneur is willing to invest in the processes of business creation and subsequent growth. Empirical evidence further underscores that the establishment of new ventures serves as a catalyst for economic advancement across nations. Specifically, the proliferation of new enterprises contributes to economic growth through the expansion of employment opportunities and the generation of new jobs, which subsequently facilitate wealth creation, stimulate innovation, enhance market competition, lower consumer prices,

promote export activities, and broaden consumer choices^{3,4,5}. Addressing global challenges and taking the most crucial step in entrepreneurship, it is college students who are in dire need of nurturing an entrepreneurial spirit. The desire to initiate a business venture is not merely a precursor to entrepreneurship but a fundamental element that shapes the extent of effort an entrepreneur will dedicate to launching and expanding a business.

In developing economies like Nigeria, the obstacles to entrepreneurial intention among youth are magnified by structural deficiencies. With a youth unemployment rate of approximately 42.5% in 2023, as cited in a study that National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria exemplifies the dire need for entrepreneurial solutions to alleviate economic stagnation³. Nigerian college students face extra hurdles, including an entrepreneurial curriculum that, while mandatory, often fails to connect academic objectives with practical implementation⁶. This gap is reflected in graduates' reduced capacity for initiative and weakened entrepreneurial self-efficacy, thereby highlighting the persistent challenge of fostering an entrepreneurial mindset that is sufficiently resilient and adaptive to navigate the complex, volatile, and unpredictable dynamics of the national business environment⁷. Moreover, young Nigerians face challenges in identifying and capitalising on business opportunities due to insufficient role models, inadequate institutional assistance, and restricted access to financing⁸.

College students, in particular, have the most to gain from developing entrepreneurial intentions. Given the global challenges such as high youth unemployment rates, economic instability, and the rapid pace of technological change, fostering entrepreneurial intention among college students is one of the most important steps toward building a resilient and dynamic economy³. Equipping students with the requisite entrepreneurial skills and motivation to establish their own ventures presents a strategic approach to mitigating these challenges, as it fosters job creation and stimulates economic

innovation. Entrepreneurial intention, in this regard, is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing attitudes, competencies, and behavioural dispositions that enable individuals to effectively manage uncertainty, identify and exploit opportunities, and create sustainable value¹. This intention is typified by opportunity recognition, risk-taking, innovation, resilience, and proactiveness traits that are integral to entrepreneurial success.

In the Nigerian academic context, fostering entrepreneurial intention among college students is critical for catalyzing innovation, stimulating economic growth, and mitigating unemployment⁴. The entrepreneurship curriculum in Nigerian universities is pivotal in cultivating students' entrepreneurial capabilities, emphasizing critical thinking, idea generation, and commitment to entrepreneurial objectives. Nonetheless, a disconnect persists between the curriculum's objectives and the actual entrepreneurial assurance and initiative students exhibit upon graduation.

Consequently, if appropriate information and skills are cultivated through education to stimulate the creativity and capabilities inherent in humans, thereby fostering significant value creation for societal benefit, entrepreneurial intention can be substantially elevated and motivated. Given that entrepreneurship education has been observed to positively influence students' productivity in entrepreneurship, it is essential for enhancing entrepreneurial intention⁵. Higher education institutions must provide entrepreneurship education to students to successfully cultivate their innovative and creative skills, as they will be the future drivers of economic progress. Consequently, the notion of entrepreneurial education in both formal and informal educational contexts has grown essential in recent decades due to persistent and escalating economic challenges such as unemployment⁵.

In the Nigerian context, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among college students has been institutionalized through the compulsory inclusion of entrepreneurship development programmes for all third-year tertiary students, irrespective of their academic

specialization. This policy underscores the recognition that entrepreneurship education plays a pivotal role in equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for opportunity recognition and venture creation. Scholars have consistently emphasized the significance of embedding entrepreneurial training and skill development as a means of enhancing creativity, innovation, and the capacity to identify and exploit viable business opportunities. Consequently, many institutions have adopted various entrepreneurship programs that stimulate students' entrepreneurial interests and pursuits². These programs cultivate attitudes and behaviours that promote entrepreneurial intentions, contributing to national economic development. Business education, in particular, enhances skills, knowledge, and innovative mindsets, preparing students for enterprise development and self-employment. Additionally, internship programs improve career preparation and job satisfaction⁵. Business education equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to combat unemployment and poverty, fostering sustainable development.

A substantial body of research has examined the antecedents that shape entrepreneurial intention, recognizing it as a complex construct influenced by both individual and contextual factors. Entrepreneurial intention is not only shaped by personal attributes such as personality, abilities, and prior experiences but is also contingent upon external environmental conditions. Importantly, entrepreneurial traits are cultivated and expressed through continuous interaction with the environment and participation in entrepreneurial activities³. To gain a more nuanced understanding and accurate measurement of entrepreneurial intention, it is essential to identify and operationalize the key determinants underpinning this construct. Accordingly, the present study emphasizes three critical indicators: entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived entrepreneurial opportunity, and level of commitment.

Perceived entrepreneurial opportunity relates to an individual's perception of the access to viable business opportunities in their environment³. This perception is shaped by

market conditions, access to resources, and supportive networks and infrastructure. Indicators for this include market awareness, access to resources, and environmental support. The significance of this indicator lies in its ability to drive entrepreneurial action by highlighting the potential for success in the current market environment⁷. Educating individuals about emerging trends and market deficiencies directly influences perceptions of business opportunities. This is augmented by career awareness, which instructs students on how to capitalise on these opportunities in their entrepreneurial endeavours and elevates their commitment level.

Strong determination, a willingness to invest time and effort, and resilience in the face of obstacles are traits that reflect the degree of commitment, signifying an individual's dedication to participating in entrepreneurial endeavours and achieving entrepreneurial objectives⁴. Indicators here include goal setting, action orientation, and persistence. This indicator is significant as it determines the extent of effort and resources an individual is willing to invest in their entrepreneurial journey⁶. Knowledge of business opportunities provides the motivation to set realistic and achievable goals, while career awareness fosters a sense of purpose and direction, encouraging sustained commitment to entrepreneurial pursuits⁸. This sustained commitment ultimately feeds back into the cycle of enhancing entrepreneurial self-efficacy and perceived entrepreneurial opportunities.

Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Perceived Entrepreneurial Opportunity, and Level of Commitment are essential indicators of entrepreneurial intention. Knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness significantly influence these indicators by enhancing confidence, informing market perceptions, and fostering dedication, ultimately driving entrepreneurial success among undergraduate students in Nigeria⁸. The ability to recognize business opportunities constitutes a fundamental process in venture creation. At this stage, entrepreneurs identify the potential either to establish new enterprises or to enhance existing ones. Opportunity recognition is generally understood as a multi-stage process

comprising three essential steps: perception, discovery, and creation. Through these stages, entrepreneurs not only discern the existence of potential opportunities but also develop novel business concepts that strategically align available resources with identified market demands⁶.

Entrepreneurial concepts are often shaped by contextual challenges and the nature of social interactions. Possessing relevant business acumen is therefore critical, as it fosters the development of an entrepreneurial mindset while enhancing the capacity to recognize challenges and transform them into opportunities. This mindset is typically defined by the ability to perceive, respond to, and mobilize resources within dynamic and uncertain environments. To this end, entrepreneurs must remain attentive to both internal and external factors within their operational domain in order to identify and critically evaluate potential opportunities⁷. Opportunity recognition, therefore, extends beyond mere perception to include the development of a viable business concept, alongside the complex skills and behavioural dispositions required at various stages of the entrepreneurial process. Despite its importance, the mechanisms through which individuals identify opportunities remain insufficiently explored. In particular, empirical studies on entrepreneurship are relatively scarce in developing economies such as Nigeria, where business environments are marked by volatility and uncertainty. Additionally, multicultural variations in entrepreneurial activity, especially in Southwest Nigeria, further underscore the need for more context-specific investigations.

In the context of fostering entrepreneurship among students of colleges of education in Southwest Nigeria, the interplay between Knowledge of Business Opportunities, Career awareness, and Entrepreneurial intention is crucial. Knowledge of Business Opportunities equips students with the understanding of potential markets and viable business ideas, acting as a foundation for entrepreneurial activities. Career awareness further enhances this by informing students about the entrepreneurial career path, its benefits, and the necessary

steps to embark on this journey. Together, these elements significantly influence Entrepreneurial Intention, as students who are well-informed about business opportunities and aware of entrepreneurial careers are more likely to develop a strong intention to pursue entrepreneurship. This holistic approach ensures that students are not only motivated but also prepared and committed to launching their own businesses, thereby contributing to economic growth and innovation.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Undergraduate unemployment in Nigeria has emerged as a pressing socio-economic concern, attracting significant attention from both government and society. This challenge is particularly acute among students in business education programmes, where the expectation of employability does not always translate into meaningful labour market outcomes^{1,2}. Youth unemployment reached approximately 42.5 percent in 2023, leaving a large proportion of graduates without sustainable job opportunities and further aggravating national economic instability³.

In response, entrepreneurship education has been introduced into College of Education as a strategic intervention to promote self-reliance and economic empowerment. Business education students, in particular, receive additional exposure to business-related knowledge intended to foster entrepreneurial orientation. Despite these efforts, however, the level of entrepreneurial intention among students in Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria remains low. This situation is compounded by a growing tendency among some youths to embrace a “get-rich-quick” mindset, evidenced by the rise of internet fraud and other unsustainable ventures, which diverts attention from legitimate entrepreneurship and undermines contributions to long-term economic development.

Empirical studies in the field have primarily examined entrepreneurial education in general or focused narrowly on individual traits, often neglecting the specific roles of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived entrepreneurial opportunity, and level of

commitment in shaping entrepreneurial intention^{5,6,10}. Furthermore, there remains a dearth of empirical inquiry into the combined influence of knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness on entrepreneurial outcomes, particularly within the Nigerian context. This gap in the literature is especially critical given the volatile and uncertain business climate of the country, where entrepreneurial intention can serve as a vital mechanism for addressing unemployment and fostering innovation.

It is against this backdrop that the present study investigates the influence of knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness on entrepreneurial intention among students in Colleges of Education in Southwest, Nigeria.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate influence of knowledge of business opportunities, career awareness on entrepreneurial intention among business education students of colleges of education, Southwest, Nigeria. The objectives were to:

- i. identify the level of entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria.
- ii. examine the level of knowledge of business opportunities among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria.
- iii. assess the level of career awareness among business education students in colleges of education, Southwest Nigeria.
- iv. determine the joint influence of knowledge of business opportunities (awareness of market trends, access to resources, proficiency in entrepreneurial skills) and career awareness (exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, access to career counseling) on entrepreneurial intention among students of business education in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria.
- v. establish the relative influence of the business opportunities indicators (awareness of market trends, access to resources, proficiency in entrepreneurial skills) and career

awareness indicators (exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, access to career counseling) on entrepreneurial intention among students of business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of entrepreneurial intention among business education students of Colleges of Education, Southwest, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of knowledge of business opportunities among business education students of Colleges of Education, Southwest, Nigeria?
3. What is the level of career awareness among business education students of Colleges of Education, Southwest, Nigeria?

1.5 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance thus:

H₀₁: There will be no significant combined influence of knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness on entrepreneurial intention among business education students of Colleges of Education, Southwest, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There will be no significant relative influence of the knowledge of business opportunities indicators (awareness of market trends, access to resources, proficiency in entrepreneurial skills) on career awareness indicators (exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, access to career counseling) on entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest, Nigeria.

1.6 Significant of the Study

The following stakeholders will be benefited from this study including business educators, students, government, educational policy maker and training institutions:

Business education students aged 18 and above represent the primary beneficiaries of this study. These individuals, recognised as capable of independent entrepreneurial decision-making, will benefit through enhanced creativity, self-reliance, and practical skills that enable them to establish enterprises, improve living standards, and contribute to national economic development. The entrepreneurial education received can foster innovation and independence, empowering students to create their own businesses and generate wealth.

Educational institutions and policy makers will gain valuable insights to strengthen entrepreneurship curricula and inform policy formulation. The findings will support curriculum development for undergraduate business programmes across Nigerian tertiary institutions, ensuring graduates possess relevant entrepreneurial competencies. Government and educational policymakers will benefit from evidence-based recommendations that enable young people to capitalise on small business opportunities whilst supporting youth empowerment initiatives.

The academic community will receive high-quality empirical data contributing to Nigeria's entrepreneurship knowledge base and advancing both theoretical understanding and practical application. This research will strengthen the foundation for future entrepreneurship studies and provide benchmarks for comparative research within the Nigerian context.

The broader economic implications suggest that government will benefit from the presence of entrepreneurship-educated graduates who can enhance national revenue generation and economic competitiveness both domestically and regionally. This development supports economic diversification, reducing over-reliance on single sectors

whilst promoting balanced economic growth. The study's outcomes will facilitate evidence-informed policy development, enhanced educational provision, and ultimately contribute to Nigeria's economic development through youth entrepreneurship.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study examined two independent variables: Business opportunities and Career awareness. Business opportunities encompass the comprehension of market trends, access to resources, and the cultivation of entrepreneurial skills. Career awareness encompasses access to career advising, opportunities for skill development, and exposure to diverse job options. Key variables such as Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Perceived Entrepreneurial Opportunity, and Level of Commitment are utilised to assess the dependent variable, Entrepreneurial Intention.

The study respondents were 200-level Business Education students at Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria. Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo constitute the six states in the Southwest geopolitical zone. The study is confined to Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ogun, the four states where, throughout the data collection period, Colleges of Education offered 200-level Business Education programs. Due to the recent elevation of Ekiti and Lagos States' College of Education to Universities of education, they are excluded. These Universities are unsuitable for inclusion in this study as they have abandoned the conventional College of Education framework at the 200-level for Business Education due to this transition. The scope is confined to 200-level Business Education students attending accredited College of Education in the selected four states.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Entrepreneurial Intention: Represents the degree to which individual students are motivated and inclined to engage in entrepreneurial activities. It reflects their readiness and commitment of college students to start a business venture.

Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy: Confidence in one's ability to successfully start and manage a business, including problem-solving skills and decision-making abilities.

Perceived Entrepreneurial Opportunity: Perception of the students' attractiveness and feasibility of potential business opportunities in the current environment.

Level of Commitment: The extent to which students dedicate and persist towards pursuing entrepreneurial goals, including the willingness to invest time, effort, and resources.

Business Opportunities: Refers to the awareness and understanding among students of potential business ventures, market trends, and the skills necessary for entrepreneurial activities. It includes knowledge about identifying market gaps, evaluating business feasibility, and understanding entrepreneurial processes.

Market Trends Awareness: Understanding current trends in industries and markets that could present business opportunities and create entrepreneurial intention for students.

Access to Resources: Knowing how to access capital, networks, and other resources necessary for starting and growing a business by college students.

Entrepreneurial Skills: Acquiring and possessing the skills and knowledge needed by students to effectively manage and operate a business venture.

Career awareness: Involves initiatives and programs designed to cultivate entrepreneurial thinking among students. It includes activities aimed at helping students identify career paths that align with entrepreneurial goals, promoting self-employment, and enhancing awareness of opportunities in various industries.

Exposure to Career Options: The process of providing to individuals students with information and opportunities to explore various career paths, understand their requirements and prospects, and make informed decisions about their future careers.

Skill Development Opportunities: Activities and programs designed to enhance individuals students' abilities, knowledge, and competencies required for specific

occupations or career fields. These opportunities include training, workshops, internships, and practical experiences aimed at improving employability and career readiness.

Career Counseling: Professional guidance and support provided to individuals to help them explore, plan, and manage their career development. Career counseling involves assessing individuals' interests, strengths, and goals, providing information about career options, and offering strategies to achieve career objectives effectively.

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Endnotes

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Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter establishes the literature review in term of conceptual, theoretical, and empirical insights into the factors shaping entrepreneurial intention among business education students in colleges of education Southwest Nigeria as follows:

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Entrepreneurial Intention

2.1.2 Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

2.1.3 Perceived Entrepreneurial Opportunity

2.1.4 Level of Commitment to Entrepreneurship Activities

2.1.5 Business Opportunities

2.1.5.1 Awareness of Market Trends

2.1.5.2 Access to Resources

2.1.5.3 Entrepreneurial Skills

2.1.6 Career Awareness

2.1.6.1 Exposure to Career Options

2.1.6.2 Skill Development Opportunities

2.1.6.3 Career Counseling

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour

2.2.2 Social Cognitive Career Theory

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

2.3.1 Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Entrepreneurial intention

2.3.2 Career awareness and Entrepreneurial Intention

2.4 Conceptual Model

2.5 Summary of the Gap in the Literature Reviewed

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurial intention refers to an individual's conscious and deliberate resolve to initiate and manage a business venture. It represents a cognitive state that channels attention, experience, and action toward self-employment as opposed to wage employment. As such, entrepreneurial intention constitutes a precursor to entrepreneurial behaviour, serving as the foundational step in the entrepreneurial process. Understanding entrepreneurial intention is therefore critical, as it provides predictive insights into entrepreneurial actions and outcomes, thereby explaining how new ventures emerge and evolve¹.

Personality traits also play a notable role in shaping entrepreneurial intention. Traits such as risk tolerance, need for achievement, and locus of control have been extensively examined in the literature. Individuals with high risk tolerance are more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship despite the inherent uncertainties. The need for achievement motivates individuals to set ambitious goals and persist in attaining them, aligning closely with the challenges of entrepreneurial activity. Similarly, locus of control whether internal or external affects how individuals perceive their ability to influence life outcomes. Those with an internal locus of control, who believe success stems from their own effort and decision-making, are generally more likely to exhibit strong entrepreneurial intention². Beyond individual traits, environmental factors exert considerable influence on entrepreneurial intentions. Access to critical resources such as capital, technology, and human talent can either facilitate or constrain entrepreneurial action. Broader economic conditions including market demand, competition, and policy frameworks also shape perceptions of opportunity feasibility. Additionally, cultural and social contexts remain highly influential; societies that reward entrepreneurial initiative tend to record higher levels of new venture creation. In parallel, education systems that integrate entrepreneurial

pedagogy and practical business training enhance entrepreneurial intentions by equipping learners with relevant knowledge, creativity, and problem-solving capacities³.

Social networks and support systems constitute another critical dimension. Mentorship, peer networks, and professional affiliations provide aspiring entrepreneurs with both tangible and intangible resources, such as guidance, emotional support, and access to investors or customers. The visibility of entrepreneurial role models and success stories within a network can further inspire and motivate individuals to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours. Opportunity recognition is often the starting point in this process, involving the identification of gaps in the market that may be addressed through innovative products or services. This recognition may arise from deliberate scanning and active search⁴.

Following the recognition of an opportunity, individuals must assess both its feasibility and desirability. Feasibility relates to the perceived access to skills, resources, and capabilities necessary to exploit the opportunity, while desirability pertains to the alignment of expected outcomes with personal goals, values, and aspirations. This evaluative process ultimately determines whether an identified opportunity translates into a firm entrepreneurial intention, thus bridging the gap between entrepreneurial cognition and action.

Intentionality in entrepreneurship also involves a high level of planning and preparation. Aspiring entrepreneurs often engage in extensive planning to understand the market, develop business models, and devise strategies to overcome potential challenges. Business plans serve as blueprints for the venture, detailing the steps required to achieve business objectives. This planning process helps to solidify entrepreneurial intentions by providing a clear roadmap and increasing confidence in the venture's success. Entrepreneurial education and training programs can significantly enhance entrepreneurial intentions. Entrepreneurship development programmes are designed to equip individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, and mindset necessary for venture creation and

management. Typically, these programmes incorporate key components such as business planning, financial management, marketing strategies, and innovation practices. In addition, experiential learning opportunities such as internships, simulations, and business plan competitions provide participants with practical platforms to apply theoretical concepts in real-world contexts. Such experiential engagement not only bridges the gap between theory and practice but also plays a critical role in enhancing entrepreneurial self-efficacy, thereby strengthening individuals' confidence in their capacity to initiate and sustain entrepreneurial ventures⁴.

While many factors can positively influence entrepreneurial intentions, there are also barriers that can impede the formation of these intentions. Fear of failure is one of the most significant barriers. The uncertainties and risks associated with entrepreneurship can deter individuals from pursuing entrepreneurial ventures. Financial constraints, lack of access to capital, and regulatory hurdles are other common obstacles. Additionally, societal attitudes towards failure and risk can either inhibit or encourage entrepreneurial intentions. In cultures where failure is stigmatized, individuals may be less likely to take entrepreneurial risks. Psychological resilience and a proactive mindset can help individuals overcome these barriers. Resilience involves the ability to recover from setbacks and persist in the face of challenges. Entrepreneurs often face numerous obstacles and failures before achieving success, making resilience a crucial trait. A proactive mindset involves anticipating challenges, seeking opportunities, and taking initiative. This mindset enables individuals to navigate the uncertainties of entrepreneurship and adapt to changing circumstances.

Entrepreneurial intentions are not static; they can evolve over time based on experiences and changing circumstances. Positive experiences, such as successful business ventures or supportive feedback from mentors, can strengthen entrepreneurial intentions. Conversely, negative experiences, such as business failures or lack of support, can weaken

these intentions. Continuous learning, adaptation, and perseverance are essential for maintaining and strengthening entrepreneurial intentions over time⁵. The level of interest in entrepreneurship varies widely among individuals and is influenced by a multitude of factors, including personal attributes, cultural context, educational background, economic environment, and societal norms. This interest is a critical component in the entrepreneurial process as it drives individuals to consider, pursue, and ultimately engage in entrepreneurial activities. Understanding the factors that influence the level of interest in entrepreneurship is essential for fostering a conducive environment for new ventures and economic innovation.

At the core, personal attributes significantly shape an individual's interest in entrepreneurship. Personality traits such as risk tolerance, proactivity, and the need for achievement are commonly associated with entrepreneurial inclination. Individuals who exhibit a high tolerance for risk are more likely to be attracted to the uncertainties and potential rewards of starting a business. Similarly, proactive individuals who take initiative and seek out opportunities are often drawn to the dynamic nature of entrepreneurship. The need for achievement, characterized by a strong desire to set and accomplish challenging goals, also fuels entrepreneurial interest as it aligns with the inherent demands of launching and growing a business⁶. Beyond personality traits, psychological factors such as self-efficacy and locus of control play crucial roles. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to execute the tasks required to achieve specific goals. High self-efficacy boosts confidence in one's capacity to start and run a business, thereby increasing interest in entrepreneurial endeavors. Locus of control, whether internal or external, influences how individuals perceive their ability to control outcomes. Those with an internal locus of control believe they can influence events and outcomes through their actions, making them more likely to be interested in entrepreneurship.

Educational background and exposure to entrepreneurial education significantly impact interest in entrepreneurship. Formal education systems that incorporate entrepreneurship courses, workshops, and experiential learning opportunities such as internships and business simulations tend to cultivate entrepreneurial interest. These educational experiences provide the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path. Moreover, early exposure to entrepreneurial activities, such as school-based enterprises or family businesses, can spark interest and demystify the entrepreneurial process⁷. The cultural context within which an individual is embedded also profoundly influences their level of interest in entrepreneurship. Societies that value and reward entrepreneurial success tend to have higher levels of entrepreneurial activity. Cultural norms and values that celebrate innovation, individualism, and autonomy encourage individuals to pursue entrepreneurial paths. In contrast, cultures that emphasize stability, conformity, and risk aversion may deter entrepreneurial interest. Additionally, societal attitudes towards failure and risk-taking play a crucial role. In cultures where failure is stigmatized, individuals may be less inclined to take the risks associated with entrepreneurship. Conversely, cultures that view failure as a learning opportunity and part of the entrepreneurial journey tend to have higher levels of entrepreneurial interest⁸.

Economic conditions are another critical determinant of interest in entrepreneurship. Favorable economic environments characterized by strong market demand, access to financial resources, and supportive infrastructure enhance entrepreneurial interest. Access to capital, whether through venture capital, angel investors, or government grants, is essential for turning entrepreneurial intentions into reality. On the other hand, economic instability or lack of financial support can dampen entrepreneurial enthusiasm. The level of interest in entrepreneurship also correlates with unemployment rates and job satisfaction. During periods of high unemployment or widespread job

dissatisfaction, individuals may turn to entrepreneurship as an alternative means of employment and self-fulfillment. Social networks and role models play an instrumental role in shaping entrepreneurial interest. Having access to a network of entrepreneurs and business professionals provides aspiring entrepreneurs with valuable resources, including mentorship, advice, and potential funding opportunities. Role models who have successfully navigated the entrepreneurial journey can inspire and motivate individuals to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations. These social influences can provide both emotional support and practical insights, reducing the perceived barriers to entrepreneurship⁹.

While there are numerous factors that positively influence interest in entrepreneurship, barriers and challenges also exist. Fear of failure is a predominant deterrent. The uncertainties and risks associated with starting a new business can be intimidating, leading to reluctance in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures. Financial constraints, such as lack of access to capital and credit, are substantial barriers. Potential entrepreneurs may also face regulatory and bureaucratic hurdles that complicate the business startup process. Additionally, societal and familial expectations can influence career choices, with some individuals feeling pressured to pursue more traditional and stable career paths. Efforts to enhance interest in entrepreneurship should address these barriers through targeted interventions. Education systems need to incorporate comprehensive entrepreneurship education that covers both theoretical and practical aspects. Mentorship programs and networks should be established to provide support and guidance. Policymakers must create an enabling environment through supportive policies and infrastructure development. Furthermore, promoting a culture that values innovation, celebrates entrepreneurial success, and views failure as a learning opportunity is crucial¹⁰.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is fundamental as it shapes students' beliefs in their own abilities to effectively undertake entrepreneurial tasks, innovate, and navigate challenges inherent in business ventures. This belief not only boosts their confidence but

also encourages proactive behaviour in seeking and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities. Students with high entrepreneurial self-efficacy are more likely to persist in their endeavors despite setbacks, contributing to a resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Perceived entrepreneurial opportunity involves students' perceptions and assessments of viable business prospects within their socio-economic context. It encompasses their ability to identify emerging market needs, access necessary resources, and leverage supportive networks to initiate and sustain entrepreneurial ventures. Understanding and capitalizing on these opportunities are crucial for students aiming to launch successful enterprises and contribute positively to economic growth and job creation.

Students Level of commitment to entrepreneurship activities affect their intention of starting a business and students' dedication and steadfastness towards pursuing entrepreneurial goals. It encompasses their willingness to invest time, effort, and resources into developing and scaling their business ideas¹⁰. A high level of commitment fosters perseverance and resilience, essential traits for overcoming challenges and sustaining long-term entrepreneurial endeavors. Students committed to entrepreneurial pursuits are more likely to stay focused on achieving their business objectives despite uncertainties and obstacles, thereby enhancing their prospects for entrepreneurial success and impact¹¹.

College students represent a significant component of mass entrepreneurship. Compared with other groups, such as the new generation of migrant workers, they are generally perceived to possess a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of entrepreneurship. This distinction stems from their exposure to advanced entrepreneurial concepts, stronger theoretical foundations, creative and critical thinking abilities, as well as a greater propensity for risk-taking qualities that are comparatively less evident among other demographic groups¹⁰. These attributes have been fostered through the steady promotion and integration of entrepreneurship education within educational institutions.

As a result, student entrepreneurship has gradually transcended its original educational orientation and has become an area of increasing scholarly interest across diverse academic domains¹¹. Prior research has examined college students' entrepreneurial engagement through multiple lenses, including skill development, the creation of enabling social environments, and the provision of supportive policies and institutional frameworks. However, such studies often overlook critical constraints, such as the lack of self-confidence among many Chinese students and their limited social and practical experience, both of which impede entrepreneurial outcomes. Given these limitations, examining the role of positive psychology and entrepreneurial role models becomes particularly vital in shaping the entrepreneurial journeys of college students. Such interventions not only enhance the capacity of mainland Chinese students to transition into entrepreneurs but also generate insights that hold relevance for Chinese communities worldwide¹².

High psychological capital entrepreneurs are better able to learn from their mistakes, balance the costs of failure, and successfully manage and control their businesses. People with high psychological capital have a pleasant psychological state, the study found. They are more likely to look for ways to solve issues when they are confronted with challenges. They can view failure as a great chance to grow, think back on and summarise their mistakes, and get better in order to accomplish their business objectives¹³. Therefore, entrepreneurs' fear of failure can be alleviated by psychological capital. When facing obstacles or hard labour during the entrepreneurial process, a successful entrepreneur can assist people in developing a positive mindset, lowering their level of frustration, and then regaining their confidence.

The process by which entrepreneurs implement their business vision is known as entrepreneurial behaviour. It is also the process by which business owners use the knowledge, assets, opportunities, or technology they possess to change the world, generate greater wealth and value, and accomplish their objectives in a certain way¹³. When

entrepreneurs use their ingenuity and influence to change and accomplish their aims, this is known as entrepreneurial behaviour. Consciousness and deliberate action go hand in hand with entrepreneurship. It is a subjective state in which entrepreneurs focus their attention, energy, and behaviour towards a particular objective. The choice to launch a new company is regarded as an act of deliberate thought and strategic action by entrepreneurs¹⁴.

Entrepreneurial intention, a key concept in entrepreneurship, was found to be the most accurate indicator of intended behaviour. It includes a person's desire and dedication to start a new business in a creative manner. It is a cognitive representation of the steps an individual must take in order to establish one or more new businesses, and as such, it entails evaluating the viability and desirability of a business idea as well as determining the key factor that leads to business formation¹⁵. It may also refer to the degree of interest or focus a person has in traditional entrepreneurial pursuits or the time frame in which he is dedicated to launching his own company. A focused state of mind that directs attention, experience, and behaviour towards a certain object (goal) or the means of reaching it is another way to conceptualise business intention. On the other hand, it is the desire to launch a new company. Understanding the elements that influence students' aspirations to launch their own companies is crucial to creating the workable programs and regulations required to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour¹⁶.

Normal entrepreneurial endeavours, or during a time when an individual is dedicated to launching his own company. Emotional intelligence (EI) can alternatively be defined as a thoughtful state of mind that directs experience, attention, and behaviour towards a specific goal or the means to reach it. On the other hand, it is the desire to launch a new company. Understanding the elements that influence students' aspirations to launch their own companies is crucial to creating the workable programs and regulations required to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour¹⁷.

The primary aim of embedding entrepreneurship education within the university curriculum is to equip students with the requisite entrepreneurial skills to establish and manage successful enterprises, while also strengthening their overall entrepreneurial aptitude. Exposure to entrepreneurship learning allows individuals to perceive self-employment as a viable career pathway. Beyond theoretical knowledge, entrepreneurial education empowers learners with analytical and practical competencies necessary to recognize viable business opportunities, mobilize and organize resources, and design strategies for successful venture creation. Recent empirical evidence demonstrates a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention¹⁹. Education plays a pivotal role in broadening students' knowledge and skills while simultaneously increasing their employability after graduation. Within this framework, entrepreneurial education has been widely recognized as a critical determinant of an individual's intention to engage in entrepreneurship. It is often described as a strategic "weapon" for navigating the challenges of the modern economy. For this reason, scholars and policymakers have consistently prioritized entrepreneurship education and related programmes in higher education systems¹⁸.

Entrepreneurship education also seeks to cultivate young people who possess both passion and a diverse set of entrepreneurial skills. Its purpose extends beyond knowledge transfer; it is designed to mitigate the risks associated with entrepreneurial decision-making while enabling new ventures to progress from inception through maturity. More specifically, entrepreneurship education emphasizes the inculcation of competencies, skills, and values required to identify opportunities, initiate new enterprises, and sustain business operations²⁰.

The development of entrepreneurship education as a distinct academic field has undergone several stages of evolution across different countries²¹. Four major lines of inquiry have emerged: (i) the assessment of the impact of entrepreneurship education at the

university level; (ii) the evaluation of pedagogical methods and instruments used in delivering entrepreneurship education; (iii) the analysis of contemporary and innovative practices in the field; and (iv) documentation of practical experiences at various educational levels. Scholars have also identified the essential components of a comprehensive entrepreneurship education programme, with particular emphasis on skill-building and experiential learning²². Such components include leadership development, negotiation skills, technological literacy, creativity and innovation, opportunity identification, resilience and tolerance for uncertainty, problem-solving across entrepreneurial stages, and business plan development. Additional aspects highlighted are venture capital and financing, idea generation and protection, personality development, new venture creation, performance diagnosis, networking and mentorship, computer and simulation-based learning, case studies, environmental analysis, films and multimedia resources, fieldwork, and company-based projects. Collectively, these elements illustrate the holistic and multi-dimensional nature of entrepreneurship education as a driver of entrepreneurial intention and venture creation.

Attitude can therefore be understood as the assessment of a thought or object, expressed through mental reactions that shape behaviour. Scholars have asserted that “attitudes and intentions are precursors of entrepreneurial action,” and thus, examining the determinants of entrepreneurial attitudes is critical for fostering entrepreneurial engagement²³. Within this framework, an entrepreneurial attitude reflects the degree to which an individual holds a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of entrepreneurial behaviour and self-employment as a career path. This attitude, often framed as an entrepreneurial mindset, encompasses a set of psychological attributes that enhance entrepreneurial intention. Key elements include achievement orientation, creativity, self-control, self-esteem, and opportunity recognition. Collectively, these dimensions influence

how students perceive entrepreneurship and their willingness to engage in entrepreneurial initiatives.

Attitude has been described as a psychological disposition that reflects an individual's degree of favourability or unfavourability towards a particular object, behaviour, or phenomenon. It constitutes an evaluative judgment shaped by cognitive and affective dimensions, ultimately influencing behavioural responses²³. In the context of entrepreneurship, the more positively individuals perceive entrepreneurial activities, the more motivated they are to pursue self-employment and venture creation.

2.1.2 Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) is widely recognized as a critical determinant of entrepreneurial intention, particularly among tertiary institution students. It reflects the individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform the roles and responsibilities required in entrepreneurial activities²⁵. This confidence significantly influences students' motivation, resilience, and decision to translate entrepreneurial intentions into real ventures. ESE also depends on the willingness to learn and adopt new strategies, plans, and techniques necessary to establish a viable entrepreneurial platform²⁶. Students with high levels of ESE tend to engage more actively in entrepreneurship because they believe in their capacity to overcome obstacles, pursue opportunities, and achieve business success. This self-belief nurtures a proactive mindset, encouraging opportunity recognition, resource mobilization, and strategic planning. Moreover, individuals with strong self-efficacy are better equipped to persist through setbacks, which are inevitable in the entrepreneurial journey^{27, 28, 29}. In this sense, ESE is not only an indicator of motivation but also a vital predictor of resilience and persistence.

Beyond personal motivation, ESE shapes how students perceive the feasibility and desirability of entrepreneurship as a career path. High ESE increases students' participation in entrepreneurship education (EE) programs, enhances their skills, and boosts the

likelihood of sustaining entrepreneurial ventures. Conversely, low ESE often stemming from inadequate exposure to practical experiences or limited institutional support reduces entrepreneurial intention and engagement^{30, 31, 32, 33, 34}. Scholars, however, hold differing perspectives on the origins of ESE. One school of thought argues that ESE is an intrinsic trait, inherent in entrepreneurs and resistant to external influence³⁵. Another suggests that ESE develops progressively through education, mentorship, and practical exposure, significantly shaping ambition, decision-making, and entrepreneurial success³⁶. In practice, fostering ESE among tertiary students can yield substantial benefits. Those with higher ESE are more likely to launch startups that generate employment, drive innovation, and contribute to sustainable economic growth^{37, 38, 39}. Moreover, ESE is strongly associated with strategic risk-taking, perseverance, and long-term entrepreneurial success^{40, 41, 42}. To strengthen ESE, educational institutions can adopt experiential learning strategies, such as internships, business simulations, incubator programs, and mentorship opportunities. These initiatives not only expose students to real-world challenges but also provide role models who reinforce their entrepreneurial confidence.

Entrepreneurship education thus serves as a pivotal platform for cultivating ESE. It equips learners with analytical skills, opportunity recognition abilities, and knowledge of venture creation processes^{42,43,44}. By developing these competencies, entrepreneurship education enhances students' belief in their entrepreneurial capacity, thereby increasing entrepreneurial intention. Nonetheless, existing scholarship highlights debate regarding the direct impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention: some studies report a positive relationship, while others suggest a weaker or even negative effect. This inconsistency underscores the mediating role of ESE⁴⁵. Self-efficacy and risk-taking propensity remain the most reliable psychological predictors of entrepreneurial intention, suggesting that entrepreneurship education is most effective when it simultaneously strengthens students' confidence in their own entrepreneurial abilities.

In conclusion, entrepreneurial self-efficacy stands as a pivotal psychological construct that bridges entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. Its influence on motivation, resilience, and risk-taking underscores the importance of designing educational strategies that cultivate self-efficacy, thereby fostering a vibrant entrepreneurial culture capable of driving economic growth and innovation.

2.1.3 Perceived Entrepreneurial Opportunity

Perceived Entrepreneurial Opportunity (PEO) is a crucial determinant of entrepreneurial intention among tertiary institution students. It refers to an individual's recognition, evaluation, and interpretation of potential business ventures within their environment. The perception of opportunity plays a pivotal role in shaping entrepreneurial behaviour because individuals are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship when they believe viable and accessible opportunities exist. In this sense, PEO functions as both a cognitive and motivational driver of entrepreneurial intention.

Scholars emphasize that the recognition and pursuit of opportunities constitute core entrepreneurial tasks^{46, 47, 48}. Entrepreneurs are often distinguished by their unique ability to identify and act upon opportunities that others overlook. The field of entrepreneurship research therefore seeks to explain why, when, and how opportunities for new products and services emerge in the economy, and why only certain individuals are able to recognize and exploit them⁵⁰. This line of inquiry has become one of the most dynamic areas in entrepreneurship studies, highlighting the centrality of opportunity perception to entrepreneurial activity.

Although terms such as “opportunity recognition,” “opportunity identification,” and “opportunity discovery” are frequently used interchangeably, scholars increasingly adopt the term “opportunity perception” to capture the cognitive and evaluative processes by which individuals assess entrepreneurial potential^{51, 52, 53}. This term provides a unifying conceptual framework that bridges different theoretical perspectives, reducing some of the

definitional ambiguities that have long challenged entrepreneurship research. Nonetheless, the literature on entrepreneurial opportunity is often criticized for fragmentation, contradictions, and inconsistent definitions⁵⁴. Addressing these gaps remains essential for advancing the theoretical foundation of the field. From the perspective of Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), PEO is most closely aligned with the attitudinal component of intention formation⁴⁶. Students who perceive abundant opportunities are more likely to form positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship, increasing their likelihood of developing entrepreneurial intentions. Conversely, when students perceive limited or unattainable opportunities, their attitudes toward entrepreneurship may be less favorable, thereby reducing their entrepreneurial drive.

In practical terms, enhancing students' ability to perceive opportunities requires both exposure and education. Experiential learning initiatives such as market analysis projects, innovation challenges, and entrepreneurial ecosystems can help students sharpen their ability to recognize and evaluate opportunities. By cultivating a strong sense of PEO, institutions can encourage entrepreneurial intentions, laying the groundwork for venture creation, job generation, and broader economic development. According to some academics, opportunity is a distinct phenomena that occurs outside of the entrepreneur's control and is brought about by outside factors like social change or new technology^{51,53,55}. Others see opportunity as originating from the entrepreneur's thinking and being closely related to it^{56,57}. Opportunity has been used interchangeably with ideas, business concepts, and even genuine entrepreneurial endeavours at different points in time^{58,59}. Frequently, there is no definition of opportunity given, thus the reader must deduce what the experts mean.

PEO is important since it can influence students' entrepreneurial goals and behaviour. Students are more inclined to investigate and take advantage of business prospects when they acknowledge and believe in their existence, which increases their

entrepreneurial intention. PEO also affects students' self-efficacy as entrepreneurs by increasing their confidence in their capacity to succeed in entrepreneurial endeavours. Nonetheless, a number of problems may influence how students view entrepreneurial potential⁵⁴. PEO is significantly shaped by market conditions, resource accessibility, and the existence of infrastructure and supportive networks. For example, students' perceptions of entrepreneurial potential may be lower in areas with few market opportunities or inadequate support networks, which could have a detrimental effect on their inclinations to pursue entrepreneurship.

PEO's practical effects on students at postsecondary institutions include their capacity to recognise and seize market gaps, innovate, and launch new businesses. Pupils are more inclined to take the initiative, come up with creative ideas, and support job development and economic progress if they believe there are plenty of entrepreneurial chances. Furthermore, by motivating students to generate their own job prospects through entrepreneurship, cultivating a positive impression of entrepreneurial potential can aid in reducing problems associated with youth unemployment and underemployment.

Perception of opportunity is the driving force for entrepreneurship. Various scholars describe business opportunities. Using non-linear creative thinking, opportunity is a viable and worthwhile route of action. An opportunity is when an entrepreneur understands and recognises the business value of goods or services that can be profitably sold in new markets⁶⁰. Opportunity, on the other hand, is a detailed plan to turn the company idea into reality. According to these definitions, business opportunities are the innovative strategies used by entrepreneurs to turn their concepts into profitable ventures. When defining company potential, the researchers also place a strong emphasis on satisfying client needs⁶⁰.

A business opportunity is the potential to profitably address an unmet demand. It involves meeting a market need, interest, or desire by providing higher value through an

innovative combination of resources. When it comes to company innovations, entrepreneurs look for shifts in the needs of their clients, identify these shifts, and turn them into opportunities. Consequently, opportunity recognition is the process of identifying a business opportunity to satisfy unmet customer demands and making plans to take advantage of it in order to achieve financial success through the sale of goods and services⁶¹.

It seems that the final step in identifying an opportunity is determining whether a business idea can be turned into a commercial reality. This is accomplished by a process that begins with insight, moves through several evaluation stages, and ends with developing a strategy for launching a successful business. Various steps for identifying opportunities were highlighted by the researchers. They consist of a creative process of planning and nurturing that results in the realisation of business concepts, which are then assessed and developed for business opportunities⁶². There are three separate steps: (1) Identifying market and resource needs; (2) Finding a fit between the market demands and designated resources; and (3) Developing a new fit in the form of a business concept by aligning the resources and market needs. Perception, discovery, and invention are the three steps of the opportunity recognition process that are used in this study. According to some research, the process of identifying opportunities begins either internally, when entrepreneurs first identify the needs or problems of their customers to be addressed, or externally, when entrepreneurs search for opportunities by filtering and rubbing ideas together before developing them to launch a business⁶³.

While the perception of entrepreneurial opportunity is critical, it is not sufficient on its own to generate a viable business venture. Opportunity recognition must be followed by opportunity development, which involves actively testing, refining, and validating entrepreneurial ideas in the marketplace. Simply perceiving opportunities, without subsequent development, often fails to translate into sustainable or profitable ventures⁶⁴.

Entrepreneurs engage in an iterative process of experimentation, where strategies are repeatedly adjusted and redefined until a viable opportunity emerges. This perspective highlights that opportunities are not merely “discovered” as fixed entities but are instead constructed through a dynamic process of adaptation and refinement⁶⁴. In this sense, entrepreneurs are not passive finders of opportunities but active creators, shaping business concepts in response to environmental feedback, available resources, and team dynamics. This iterative approach requires entrepreneurs to balance speculation, analysis, and action, allowing them to test assumptions, validate ideas, and reconfigure strategies⁶⁵. By doing so, they enhance their capacity to align opportunities with resources and capabilities, ultimately increasing the probability of entrepreneurial success. In practical terms, opportunity development transforms entrepreneurial intention into actionable strategies, bridging the gap between recognition and implementation.

Identifying entrepreneurial opportunities is an ongoing process that requires both study and practical action, occurring before and after the establishment of a firm⁶⁴. This process entails understanding what motivates entrepreneurs to pursue specific ideas or industries, facilitating the alignment of opportunities with team members and resources, and ultimately translating these insights into the creation of a business venture. An entrepreneurial opportunity can be described as the potential to meet a market’s needs, interests, or desires through the creative integration of resources in ways that deliver greater value to customers. Scholars have further defined opportunity recognition as circumstances in which new products, services, raw materials, and organizational methods can be introduced and sold at a price higher than their cost of production⁶⁶. Opportunities may also exist as unformed phenomena, such as inventions or technologies that initially lack a defined market, but eventually evolve into viable ventures through systematic development.

From the consumer's perspective, opportunities are based on the value customers perceive upon the introduction of new products or services⁶⁵. Even when customers cannot explicitly articulate their needs, problems, or preferences, they are likely to recognize value when innovative solutions are presented. Such opportunities for value creation often emerge from underutilized or underexplored resources, advancements in technology, new knowledge, or novel skill sets. As these elements are combined, markets become clearer, and fragmented "pieces of opportunity" are gradually refined into concrete business concepts, eventually forming the basis of a new venture⁶⁷. This transformation process gives rise to core entrepreneurial decisions about products or services to be offered, target markets, supply chains, and operational systems. As ventures take shape, more complex challenges emerge, such as determining what to sell, to whom, and how goods or services will be delivered. A thorough opportunity development process helps entrepreneurs address these challenges by scheduling key activities, identifying resource requirements, and analyzing cash flows critical steps in converting an opportunity into a comprehensive business strategy. Ultimately, it is the entrepreneur's creativity that makes opportunity development more important than opportunity recognition. Even when resources are identified, they cannot lead to the establishment of a viable venture until an opportunity is fully developed⁶⁸.

Successfully developing an opportunity involves not only its recognition and assessment, but also its systematic refinement and development into a viable venture. This iterative process ultimately leads to the creation of a successful new business. The cyclical nature of opportunity development underscores the importance of continuously identifying new possibilities or modifying previously recognized ones to adapt to dynamic market conditions³². Several elements influence an entrepreneur's ability to both identify and nurture opportunities that may result in the establishment of a new business. These include:

Information asymmetry and prior knowledge – differences in access to information and accumulated expertise provide entrepreneurs with unique insights that others may overlook.

Entrepreneurial networks – connections with peers, mentors, and stakeholders expand access to resources, knowledge, and support systems.

Opportunity awareness – the entrepreneur's perceptiveness in noticing gaps, needs, or emerging market trends.

Personal qualities of innovation and creativity – traits that enable entrepreneurs to generate original ideas and novel solutions.

The nature of the opportunity itself – whether it arises from technological change, market shifts, or resource recombination.

The development process often begins when an entrepreneur's attentiveness aligns with the highest levels of creativity, experience, knowledge, and social networks⁶⁹. At this stage, entrepreneurs are best positioned to evaluate market demands, identify the resources required, and strategically align them with the opportunity. Consequently, both market understanding and resource mobilization play pivotal roles in shaping the success of opportunity development.

2.1.4 Level of Commitment to Entrepreneurship Activities

The level of commitment to entrepreneurship activities is a crucial indicator of entrepreneurial intention among tertiary institution students. This commitment refers to the degree to which students are dedicated to pursuing entrepreneurial activities and achieving entrepreneurial goals. A high level of commitment indicates a strong determination, willingness to invest time and effort, and persistence in the face of setbacks, all of which are essential for successful entrepreneurship. Time, energy, and resources including relational, financial, intellectual, and emotional elements constitute the initial steps in an entrepreneurial engagement⁷⁰. In organisational behaviour, involvement, attachment,

willingness to exert effort, and a robust aspiration for advancement and innovation are indicative of commitment⁷¹.

The significance of entrepreneurial commitment is reflected in its impact on students' engagement in entrepreneurial pursuits, which drives economic development and job creation. A study analyzing 400 startups found that affective commitment, shaped by the entrepreneur's spirit, values, and personality, and normative commitment, influenced by norms and responsibilities internalized by entrepreneurs, synergistically affect the desire to commit to entrepreneurship⁷². These commitments are crucial for fostering the emotional attachment and sense of responsibility that drive entrepreneurial success.

Entrepreneurial commitment is influenced by various factors, including self-efficacy and perceived entrepreneurial opportunities. Students who believe in their ability to succeed (entrepreneurial self-efficacy) and perceive ample business opportunities are more likely to demonstrate a high level of commitment. This interrelationship underscores the importance of fostering a comprehensive entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports students at multiple levels. The entrepreneurial intention literature supports this view, highlighting that entrepreneurial commitment complements entrepreneurial intentions, enhancing the likelihood of business success⁷³.

Additionally, the goal of entrepreneurial education is to develop the appropriate set of tactics for starting independent firms; nevertheless, the effectiveness of entrepreneurial learning strategies depends on a number of variables, one of which is people's self-efficacy^{71,74}. People who are highly motivated to plan their activities and resources are more likely to be interested in learning new entrepreneurship models. Diverse viewpoints on the development of entrepreneurial self-efficacy are revealed by the literature on entrepreneurship⁷⁵. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy, according to one school of thinking, is an innate trait of entrepreneurs that cannot be learnt or developed via education⁷⁶. Another

maintains that people's ambitions, goals, and decisions are significantly increased by entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which is progressively gained through education⁷⁷.

2.1.5 Business Opportunities

Technological change, driven by knowledge, provides significant opportunities for entrepreneurial ventures, ranging from start-ups to organisational expansion. Such knowledge may emerge from diverse sources, including large corporations, academic institutions, and research and development initiatives. By fostering networks and clusters of innovators, local communities can stimulate the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and new ventures, thereby enhancing regional economies. These knowledge-driven ecosystems encourage invention and innovation, forming innovative clusters that strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems⁷⁸.

Entrepreneurial ecosystems consist of six interrelated domains: policy, finance, culture, support, human capital, and markets that collectively sustain entrepreneurial activity. Clusters, in contrast, represent firms located within the same geographic area and engaged in related economic activities. When entrepreneurial firms thrive under favourable market and policy conditions, they generate pathways of innovation that inspire future entrepreneurs. This has fueled scholarly inquiry into knowledge-based economies, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and innovation clusters. Such research highlights the role of universities and research centres in linking regional high-tech economies to broader national funding programs, enabling creative collaborations that serve as incubators for SMEs. However, these dynamics may also create strong regional determinism, reinforcing the importance of participation in global and digital knowledge networks⁷⁹.

The rapid expansion of digital technology has transformed communication, transportation, and human interaction, creating unprecedented opportunities for economic and entrepreneurial development. New ventures and industries are emerging to capture untapped markets, often accompanied by novel business models that disrupt consumer

behaviour and reshape human capital. Digital transformation, therefore, generates powerful avenues for innovation and regional growth⁸¹. This technological disruption is also reshaping established industries and global business environments. The digitalisation of entrepreneurial activity allows for the creation of new assets, competitive strategies, and business models. It also enables development initiatives in underserved regions, positioning the digital economy as a field defined by tension between traditional and emerging ecosystems. Consequently, entrepreneurship research now increasingly focuses on how digital technologies affect business models, innovation, and market transformation⁸².

Entrepreneurship, therefore, can be understood as the “science of the artificial,” in which opportunities and outcomes are intentionally created rather than discovered. Digital entrepreneurship, in particular, transcends geographic, cultural, and institutional boundaries, emerging even where resources are scarce. For firms to sustain regional advantages, they must identify critical resources, design effective digital strategies, and understand performance variations across individuals, organisations, and economies⁸³. Unlike past eras of technological change, geographic proximity has become less important, as virtual spaces now foster innovation and collaboration. For regional development, this highlights the importance of knowledge-based strategies that enable local start-ups to compete in an increasingly global market. Policymakers, therefore, must design entrepreneurial ecosystems that integrate local opportunities with digital capabilities⁸⁴.

As entrepreneurship scholarship has expanded, it has also become fragmented. In its early stages, the field was more coherent, allowing researchers to easily situate their contributions. Today, however, the sheer diversity of topics, methods, and scholars makes it challenging to synthesise knowledge into a unified body of work. Sub-communities generate important insights but often fail to integrate their findings into broader theoretical frameworks, leading to duplication, theoretical gaps, and reduced relevance for practitioners^{85, 86}. This underscores the importance of systematic knowledge accumulation.

Just as knowledge creation drives innovation, knowledge accumulation sustains the field by identifying research gaps, consolidating theories, and guiding future inquiry. In the Nigerian context, entrepreneurship research must extend beyond existing frameworks to address pressing developmental challenges. Knowledge accumulation, therefore, is as essential as value creation in shaping the discipline's relevance and impact⁸⁷.

The process of knowledge accumulation involves making new knowledge visible, evaluating its implications, and integrating it into established frameworks. According to the selection–organization–integration model, individuals synthesise new and existing information into cohesive structures that foster novel insights. This recombination often opens new research pathways, advancing both theory and practice⁸⁸. However, the rapid creation of knowledge also poses challenges, as it disrupts established paradigms and raises questions about long-term value. Scholars debate whether research should prioritise small family enterprises or high-tech firms, but both are necessary for a balanced understanding of entrepreneurship. Excessive emphasis on either can stifle progress, while cross-disciplinary collaboration helps mitigate fragmentation and enrich the accumulation of knowledge. Conferences such as the Theories of Family Enterprise Conference illustrate how bridging disciplines can produce deeper insights and opportunities for innovation⁹⁰.

One major limitation in entrepreneurship scholarship is the absence of a comprehensive classification system for entrepreneurs, ventures, and contexts. Classification, as part of taxonomy, enhances knowledge storage and retrieval by capturing distinctions across populations. While economics benefits from the Journal of Economic Literature (JEL) classification system, entrepreneurship lacks a comparable framework. Literature reviews thus serve as a critical substitute, preserving and organising knowledge for future research. Developing a general classification system could further strengthen the field⁹².

Despite this gap, literature reviews including meta-analyses, systematic reviews, bibliometric analyses, and qualitative syntheses remain valuable for consolidating insights. Systematic reviews, in particular, allow for generalisations and contextual analysis. Yet scholars caution against overreliance on frequency counts or rigid algorithms, which may overlook significant contributions. New technologies, including machine learning and semantic analysis, offer potential tools for structuring vast knowledge bases. However, they cannot replace the interpretive and integrative role of scholars, who must synthesise insights into meaningful contributions to theory and practice^{93, 94}.

2.1.5.1 Awareness of Market Trends

Knowledge of market trends awareness is a key indicator of business opportunities among tertiary institution students. This awareness refers to the ability of students to recognize and understand current market dynamics, consumer preferences, and emerging business trends⁹¹. By staying on top of the latest trends, students can make better decisions about their intention and mindset. Knowledge of market trends also helps in raising funds from investors and partnering with the right companies, thereby significantly influencing startup success. The significance of market trends awareness lies in its impact on students' entrepreneurial decision-making processes. Understanding market trends helps students identify gaps in the market, anticipate consumer needs, and innovate accordingly⁹¹. It enables them to assess the feasibility of their business ideas and develop competitive advantages. For instance, students aware of the latest technological trends can leverage digital tools and platforms to enhance their business operations and reach a wider audience. Despite the importance of market trends awareness, many students lack sufficient knowledge in this area. Studies have shown that while entrepreneurship education often emphasizes general business skills and theoretical concepts, it may not provide adequate training on market analysis and trend identification^{92,93,94}. This gap in education can hinder students' ability to recognize and exploit business opportunities effectively.

Addressing this issue requires embedding market trend awareness into entrepreneurship education curricula. By incorporating practical training in market analysis, data interpretation, and trend forecasting, educational institutions can better equip students with the skills necessary to navigate dynamic business environments. In addition, fostering partnerships with industry professionals and granting access to real-time market data further enhances students' awareness of market dynamics and their entrepreneurial readiness. In principle, economics distinguishes knowledge as either an object or a process. While information and knowledge are closely related, they are not identical. Information refers to data that can be easily codified, transmitted, and stored, whereas knowledge consists of structured information that is far more difficult to codify and interpret due to its indivisible and context-dependent nature. Part of knowledge will always remain tacit, non-codifiable, and reliant on individual cognition and social interaction^{95, 96}. Knowledge is also cumulative in nature—the more developed a field is, the easier it becomes to integrate new knowledge into it. Tacit, sticky, or complex knowledge is often transferred most effectively through face-to-face interactions, since knowledge assets are inherently challenging to imitate⁹³.

Entrepreneurial knowledge specifically includes business-relevant understanding of products, organizations, markets, and customers. Such knowledge is fundamental for fostering innovation, whether through new products, processes, markets, sources of supply, or organizational structures⁹⁴. Closely tied to innovation, entrepreneurial knowledge is also regarded as a production factor commonly referred to as entrepreneurship capital which reflects the legal, institutional, and social conditions that enable entrepreneurial activity. Importantly, awareness of market trends is a vital determinant of business opportunities among students in tertiary institutions⁹⁵. It empowers them to identify and seize opportunities, adapt to shifting business environments, and build sustainable competitive advantages. Thus, integrating market trend awareness into entrepreneurship education and

coupling it with practical training can enhance students' entrepreneurial intentions and contribute significantly to their overall entrepreneurial success.

2.1.5.2 Access to Resources

Access to resources is a fundamental indicator of knowledge of business opportunities among tertiary institution students. This indicator encompasses the ability to identify, secure, and effectively utilize various resources essential for launching and sustaining a business. These resources include capital, networks, mentorship, and technological tools, all of which play a pivotal role in the entrepreneurial journey. Access to capital is perhaps the most critical aspect of this indicator. Capital provides the necessary financial foundation for business startups and expansions. It allows entrepreneurs to invest in essential components such as inventory, equipment, and marketing. Students who are knowledgeable about different funding sources, including venture capital, angel investors, crowdfunding, and government grants, are better positioned to secure the financial backing needed to transform their business ideas into reality.

Access to essential resources is crucial for entrepreneurial success⁹⁵. For startup founders, avoiding the negative emotions associated with business failure hinges on securing these resources⁹⁶. Critical resources typically include human capital, such as relevant experience and education, social capital in the form of valuable networks, and financial capital⁹⁷. While existing research on resource access and entrepreneur well-being remains limited, some studies suggest that entrepreneurs lacking social support from friends and family may experience loneliness⁹⁸, though they do not explore how social networks contribute to acquiring essential resources. Similarly, other research indicates that entrepreneurs facing deficits in entrepreneurial skills may experience stress^{91,98}, and recent studies highlight increased stress levels among entrepreneurs upon receiving funding^{94,99}. However, these studies primarily focus on stress throughout the entrepreneurial journey rather than overall well-being and happiness, potentially yielding different outcomes.

Furthermore, many of these studies lack a theoretical framework explaining the relationships between resources and well-being. Addressing these gaps, this study aims to conceptually and empirically link entrepreneurs' access to critical resources with their individual well-being.

Networks are another crucial resource. Networks provide entrepreneurs with valuable connections to potential clients, partners, investors, and mentors. These connections can offer guidance, open doors to new opportunities, and provide support during challenging times⁹⁸. Knowledge of how to build and leverage networks can significantly enhance a student's ability to identify and exploit business opportunities. Networking skills are often developed through participation in entrepreneurship clubs, industry conferences, and social media platforms.

Mentorship is a resource that offers experiential knowledge and advice from seasoned entrepreneurs and business professionals⁹⁷. Mentors can provide insights into industry trends, business strategies, and problem-solving techniques that are not typically covered in academic settings. Students who actively seek and engage with mentors gain practical wisdom and are better equipped to navigate the complexities of starting and running a business.

Technological resources also play a vital role in modern entrepreneurship. Knowledge of digital tools and platforms can enhance business operations, marketing strategies, and customer engagement. For instance, familiarity with e-commerce platforms, social media marketing tools, and data analytics software can give students a competitive edge in the digital marketplace. Access to these technological resources enables students to innovate and streamline their business processes, making them more efficient and scalable.

Despite the importance of resource access, many students face significant barriers in this area. Financial constraints, limited networks, and lack of exposure to mentorship opportunities are common challenges. Educational institutions often provide theoretical

knowledge but may fall short in offering practical guidance on how to access these critical resources. Moreover, socio-economic factors can influence a student's ability to access resources. Students from underprivileged backgrounds may have fewer opportunities to connect with influential networks or secure initial funding. Addressing these disparities requires targeted interventions, such as scholarship programs, incubators, and accelerator programs that provide both funding and mentorship.

To enhance students' access to resources, educational institutions can play a proactive role⁹⁶. Integrating resource access training into entrepreneurship curricula can equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the resource landscape effectively. This training can include workshops on funding strategies, networking events with industry professionals, and mentorship programs that connect students with experienced entrepreneurs. Furthermore, partnerships with local businesses, financial institutions, and technology providers can create pathways for students to access necessary resources. These partnerships can offer internships, sponsorships, and access to industry-specific tools and platforms. By fostering a collaborative ecosystem, educational institutions can bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical resource access.

Access to resources is a crucial indicator of knowledge of business opportunities among tertiary institution students. It encompasses the ability to secure capital, build networks, engage with mentors, and utilize technological tools. Enhancing students' access to these resources requires targeted educational interventions and strategic partnerships. The importance of networking in the entrepreneurial process is becoming more widely recognised, and it has become a hot issue in entrepreneurial studies⁹⁹. The cognitive process of acquiring and integrating knowledge, creating meaningful learning experiences, and coming up with creative solutions based on preexisting knowledge is what makes networks a promising source of knowledge. In the literature on entrepreneurial networks, it is commonly accepted that an entrepreneurial network is essential to the entrepreneurial

process. Being a part of an entrepreneurial network is linked to a person's capacity to launch a business successfully. For this reason, when making decisions, entrepreneurs need to take networks into account. Numerous studies have found that entrepreneurial social networking plays a significant positive role in assessing entrepreneurial intention.

Thus, having access to entrepreneurial social networks and, consequently, to the necessary tools and abilities for starting a new business may encourage moving forward with the start-up process and attaining higher success. With major ramifications for modifications and adjustments in the teaching and learning sector, both expressly for academic as well as research objectives, entrepreneurial social networking is progressively becoming more well-known in relation to education. Initially, it was primarily focused on social relationships⁹⁹. Furthermore, social networks are becoming more and more significant in shaping college students' learning habits in the post-COVID era, which is essential to attaining sustainable education. Students can have a better understanding of social entrepreneurship by using social media and networking technologies more widely, since their use has increased with a high rate of acceptance at universities. Students served as a source for assessing the efficacy of the entrepreneurial social network because their opinions on the value of a network varied¹⁰¹.

2.1.5.3 Entrepreneurial Skills

Entrepreneurial skills encompass a diverse range of competencies crucial for identifying and exploiting business opportunities effectively. These skills typically include innovative thinking, risk assessment and management, decision-making under uncertainty, strategic planning, financial management, marketing proficiency, and leadership abilities¹⁰². Mastery of these skills not only enhances an entrepreneur's ability to recognize viable business prospects but also equips them with the capacity to navigate challenges and sustain business growth¹⁰³. Research underscores the importance of entrepreneurial skills in fostering entrepreneurial success and economic development¹⁰⁴. Entrepreneurs

proficient in these skills are better equipped to innovate and adapt to changing market conditions, thereby increasing their competitiveness and resilience¹⁰⁵. Furthermore, the acquisition and application of entrepreneurial skills are pivotal in fostering entrepreneurial intentions among individuals, influencing their readiness to embark on entrepreneurial ventures^{95,104}.

Understanding how entrepreneurial skills contribute to the recognition and pursuit of business opportunities is crucial for advancing both theoretical understanding and practical applications in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial skills empower individuals to effectively identify, evaluate, and exploit potential business opportunities in dynamic market environments¹⁰⁴. These skills include but are not limited to innovative thinking, problem-solving, risk assessment and management, strategic planning, financial literacy, and leadership capabilities. Academically, studying the role of entrepreneurial skills enriches our understanding of how entrepreneurs navigate challenges and capitalize on emerging trends and market gaps¹⁰⁶. This knowledge informs the development of robust theoretical frameworks that explain entrepreneurial behaviour and decision-making processes.

On a practical level, insights into entrepreneurial skills guide the design and implementation of effective entrepreneurship education programs. By integrating these skills into curricula and training modules, educational institutions can better prepare students and aspiring entrepreneurs for the complexities of business ownership and management^{98,102,104}. Moreover, policymakers can leverage this understanding to formulate strategies that promote entrepreneurial development and foster innovation-driven economic growth. Ultimately, a comprehensive understanding of how entrepreneurial skills contribute to opportunity recognition and pursuit not only enhances the efficacy of entrepreneurship initiatives but also nurtures an entrepreneurial mindset among individuals, encouraging them to embark on ventures that drive economic prosperity and societal

advancement. This holistic approach ensures that aspiring entrepreneurs are equipped with the requisite capabilities to thrive in competitive business landscapes.

2.1.6 Career Awareness

Career awareness is a crucial aspect of education, as it helps learners focus on what they would like to pursue in the future. For many students, career aspirations can be confusing due to the variety of subjects offered in school, parental influence, and the lack of effective career guidance. This process becomes particularly critical when students are required to choose subjects in secondary school or majors in higher education. While certain careers demand specific subjects and majors, many others do not, making it important for students to have accurate information. With growing competition in the job market, students also need to understand that career success often requires more than academic achievement. Additional skills, experiences, internships, and participation in co-curricular activities are increasingly valued for developing competencies and employability¹⁰⁷.

The career development process, therefore, involves gathering and analyzing information about job market trends. Awareness of opportunities available in society helps students to make informed choices regarding subjects, majors, courses, and supplementary activities. School counselling departments play a vital role in facilitating this process by giving students access to information through books, bulletins, websites, journals, and the mass media. Beyond formal coursework, employers today seek versatile individuals who can thrive in diverse environments, engage with multiple cultures, and demonstrate creativity. Counsellors should therefore encourage students to cultivate these attributes through active participation in co-curricular activities¹⁰⁸. Since career decisions are largely social, they can be studied from a social constructionist perspective, which suggests that knowledge and social action are interdependent. Career choice, therefore, represents both an intellectual and social act, often tied to one's attempt to form, change, or maintain social

status. Factors such as social class and cultural worldview strongly influence career decisions by shaping individuals' perceptions of opportunity, success, legitimacy, and failure¹⁰⁹.

Career is also understood as a lifelong process, encompassing both paid and unpaid roles over an individual's lifespan. It represents the sequence of major positions a person occupies throughout life, including occupational roles, family responsibilities, and civic engagements. The development of career interest typically involves four stages: (1) knowing about available opportunities, (2) identifying reliable sources of information, (3) understanding the facts about different jobs, and (4) making informed choices through guidance and stimulation. Strategies such as introducing stimulating ideas, inspiring goal setting, and emphasizing the importance of subject matter can help students develop sustained interest in particular careers¹¹⁰. From this perspective, career awareness involves learning about available career pathways, understanding the resources required to pursue them, and recognizing how personal knowledge, attitudes, and experiences influence career decisions. It is the process of connecting school expectations with the realities of the workplace¹¹¹. Within this framework, entrepreneurship as a career choice is analyzed in comparison to traditional employment options in terms of wages, skills, and mobility. Research shows that entrepreneurs are often drawn from both extremes of the ability spectrum. Some individuals pursue entrepreneurship out of necessity—due to limited wage employment options—while others are driven by perceived opportunities and higher expected rewards¹¹².

A career perspective also emphasizes the role of human capital accumulation before, during, and after entrepreneurial activity. Entrepreneurship research frequently applies human capital theory to examine how prior knowledge and experiences shape entrepreneurial outcomes¹¹³. Given the importance of entrepreneurship for national development, researchers have increasingly focused on entrepreneurial intention defined as

the deliberate plan of an individual to become self-reliant through entrepreneurial activity⁹⁴.¹¹⁴. Entrepreneurship is considered a planned behaviour, meaning that intention is a more reliable predictor of entrepreneurial engagement than demographic or personality variables. Intention arises from cognitive processes, where individuals assess their resources and abilities before acting. Thus, students who believe they possess the skills, zeal, and confidence to pursue entrepreneurship as a career are more likely to develop genuine entrepreneurial intentions, which in turn shape their future entrepreneurial behaviour⁴³.

In summary, career awareness equips learners with the knowledge and tools necessary to make informed choices in dynamic labour markets. By linking academic pursuits with real-world expectations, it fosters adaptability, encourages entrepreneurial thinking, and prepares students to pursue careers including entrepreneurship that align with their skills, interests, and aspirations.

2.1.6.1 Exposure to Career Options

Career options and entrepreneurship education are fundamental pillars of this research. Career options encompass a wide array of occupations and life roles, representing an individual's journey through work, leisure, education, and personal development over a lifetime¹¹⁵. This dynamic concept of career development emphasizes the evolving nature of work in today's world, characterized by diverse pathways and opportunities¹¹⁵. It is viewed not as a linear progression but as an unpredictable journey where individuals navigate various highways and byways to shape their professional identities and personal fulfillment¹¹⁶. Entrepreneurship education, on the other hand, is a distinct field within entrepreneurship research focused on equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to identify and pursue entrepreneurial opportunities^{105,115}. It involves educational initiatives aimed at fostering entrepreneurial thinking, creativity, and initiative among students, preparing them to navigate the challenges and opportunities of starting and managing businesses¹¹⁷.

Internationally, both career development and entrepreneurship education have garnered significant attention due to their impact on individuals' career choices, economic development, and societal innovation¹¹⁵. Understanding how exposure to diverse career options influences career awareness and how entrepreneurship education enhances entrepreneurial intentions are critical for shaping effective educational and policy interventions that promote personal and economic success in today's globalized economy. In educational contexts, exposure to career options forms a crucial component of career development programs designed to facilitate comprehensive career exploration and readiness among students. These initiatives are structured to expand students' awareness of diverse career paths, fostering informed decision-making and proactive engagement with their career aspirations. By exposing students to various professions, industries, and vocational opportunities, these programs aim to equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and motivation to navigate their career trajectories effectively. This approach not only broadens students' perspectives but also enhances their preparedness to pursue and achieve their professional goals in a competitive and evolving job market.

2.1.6.2 Skills Development Opportunities

Skill development opportunities are fundamental to career awareness, serving as a pivotal component in preparing individuals for the complexities of the modern workforce. In educational and vocational contexts, these opportunities encompass structured programs and initiatives designed to enhance individuals' competencies, capabilities, and proficiencies relevant to their career pursuits. Such initiatives often include vocational training, workshops, internships, and experiential learning activities aimed at equipping participants with practical skills and knowledge aligned with industry demands.

Entrepreneurial skills encompass both soft skills such as persistence, networking, and self-confidence and enabling hard skills, including foundational start-up knowledge, business planning, financial literacy, and managerial expertise. Successful entrepreneurship

education policies and programs prioritize the cultivation of these competencies, which are versatile and valuable across diverse professional environments. The goal extends beyond enhancing individuals' readiness and motivation to launch businesses; it also aims to foster an entrepreneurial ethos within society, promoting innovation and economic dynamism. The emphasis on skill development within career awareness programs underscores the importance of addressing evolving job market requirements and enhancing employability. These initiatives not only cultivate technical skills but also promote critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, communication skills, and adaptability attributes increasingly valued by employers across various sectors. By providing exposure to real-world challenges and professional environments, skill development opportunities enable individuals to gain hands-on experience and insights, thereby empowering them to make informed career decisions and pursue meaningful pathways aligned with their interests and aspirations.

Moreover, integrating skill development into career awareness initiatives enhances participants' confidence and readiness to navigate career transitions, fostering a proactive approach to personal and professional growth. Ultimately, these efforts contribute to building a skilled workforce capable of contributing effectively to organizational success and broader economic development goals.

2.1.6.3 Career Counseling

Professional guidance and support provided to individuals to help them explore, plan, and manage their career development. Career counseling involves assessing individuals' interests, strengths, and goals, providing information about career options, and offering strategies to achieve career objectives effectively. Career counseling encompasses various forms, including vocational, marital, personal-social, and educational counseling, among others. It is a fundamental service that supports individuals throughout different stages of their lives and educational journeys. For many students in Nigerian institutions of

learning, this period often aligns with Donald Super's career development theory, specifically the exploration stage, typically occurring between ages 15 and 24¹¹⁸. During this critical phase, adolescents and young adults explore various career paths, matching their acquired knowledge with occupational alternatives.

Career counseling plays a pivotal role during this developmental stage by assisting individuals in navigating their career trajectories and understanding their roles in both professional and personal spheres¹¹⁹. Counselors provide guidance on current global trends in the job market, helping students gain orientation and insight into the world of work. Additionally, counseling emphasizes the importance of traits essential for entrepreneurship, such as determination, initiative, risk-taking ability, creativity, innovativeness, and leadership. These attributes are crucial for students as they prepare to enter the workforce and pursue their career aspirations. Career counseling serves as a pivotal indicator within career awareness, playing a crucial role in guiding individuals through informed decision-making regarding their professional trajectories. It encompasses a structured process where trained counselors assist individuals in exploring career options, setting career goals, and developing action plans to achieve them. This guidance is tailored to match individuals' interests, skills, values, and personal circumstances, thereby enhancing their understanding of various career paths and opportunities.

Within educational settings and beyond, career counseling programs are designed to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate the complexities of the job market effectively. These programs often integrate assessments, workshops, and one-on-one counseling sessions to facilitate self-assessment, career exploration, and decision-making. By providing insights into different industries, job roles, and educational pathways, career counseling helps individuals make informed choices about their academic pursuits and career aspirations. Moreover, career counseling fosters the development of career-related competencies such as resume writing, interviewing skills, networking

strategies, and job search techniques. It empowers individuals to articulate their career goals, identify potential challenges, and devise strategies to overcome them. Through ongoing support and mentorship, career counselors play a critical role in enhancing individuals' confidence, resilience, and adaptability in pursuing their chosen career paths.

An entrepreneur is “someone who demonstrates initiative and creative thinking, is able to organize social and economic mechanisms to turn resources and situations to practical account, and accepts risk and failure”¹²¹.b Entrepreneurship is widely understood as the practice of initiating new organizations or revitalizing existing ones, particularly through the creation of businesses in response to identified opportunities. Entrepreneurs are often defined as individuals who exploit market prospects through technical and/or organizational innovations¹²⁰.

The term *entrepreneurship* originates from the French word *entreprendre* meaning “to undertake.” Richard Cantillon first used it in the 17th century to describe ownership of business ventures. In this sense, an entrepreneur is not only someone who conceives ideas and identifies opportunities but also one who mobilizes the factors of production land, labor, capital, and time to achieve productive goals^{68, 83}. By introducing innovation into production processes, entrepreneurs contribute to the creation of new enterprises or the revitalization of existing ones, thereby providing the economic foundation for balancing production factors, generating employment, and driving national development⁸¹.

Entrepreneurship is therefore both a process and a behaviour, reflecting an individual's willingness and capacity to recognize environmental changes and transform them into goods and services for societal benefit. Broadly, entrepreneurship involves: (1) being proactive, (2) organizing and reorganizing resources, and (3) accepting failure and risk¹²¹. Economists view entrepreneurs as innovators who introduce new orders, while psychologists emphasize their inner motivations—such as achievement, creativity, or

independence. From a business perspective, entrepreneurs are wealth creators, competitors, and problem-solvers who improve efficiency and generate jobs¹²⁰.

Although entrepreneurship yields independence, satisfaction, and financial success, it also involves challenges such as poor sales, competition, funding shortages, and managerial deficiencies factors that contribute to the high rate of failure¹²². Nevertheless, the potential rewards, both monetary and non-monetary, encourage individuals to pursue entrepreneurial ventures, despite the social, financial, and emotional risks¹²³. Ultimately, entrepreneurship may be summarized as the process of creating something new and valuable by dedicating significant time, energy, and resources, while assuming the risks and pursuing the rewards of independence, satisfaction, and wealth^{44, 45}.

Entrepreneurship education refers to structured teaching and learning processes designed to develop entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and attitudes in students. It is more than simply learning how to start a business; it encompasses developing creativity, problem-solving abilities, resilience, and innovative thinking that prepare individuals for a dynamic global economy. Entrepreneurship education equips learners to recognize opportunities, assess risks, and transform ideas into viable business ventures. The incorporation of entrepreneurship into educational curricula stems from the recognition that entrepreneurial competencies can be taught and nurtured. By exposing students to entrepreneurial theories, case studies, simulations, and practical training, institutions empower them to develop both technical and soft skills that are necessary for business creation and management. This aligns with the argument that entrepreneurship education should go beyond theoretical classroom learning to include experiential learning methods such as internships, mentorships, and business incubation programs¹²⁰.

Furthermore, entrepreneurship education serves a dual role: (1) fostering self-employment and innovation among students, and (2) developing employability skills such as adaptability, creativity, leadership, and teamwork. By preparing students to navigate

uncertainty, entrepreneurship education enhances their ability to not only start businesses but also to contribute innovatively within existing organizations. Entrepreneurship development extends beyond education; it involves systematic and institutional efforts aimed at fostering an enabling environment where entrepreneurial activities can thrive. It includes the establishment of policies, infrastructures, training programs, funding mechanisms, and support networks that promote entrepreneurial ventures at both individual and societal levels. Entrepreneurship development emphasizes creating ecosystems where entrepreneurs can access knowledge, skills, finance, mentorship, and markets. It recognizes that entrepreneurial success depends not only on personal qualities and education but also on broader social, legal, and institutional frameworks^{81, 120}. Development initiatives may include government-sponsored enterprise support schemes, microfinance institutions, innovation hubs, technology parks, and policy frameworks that reduce barriers to business formation and growth.

At its core, entrepreneurship development seeks to:

1. Increase the supply of entrepreneurs by training and motivating individuals.
2. Enhance entrepreneurial competencies such as innovation, risk-taking, and leadership.
3. Support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as vehicles of economic growth.
4. Promote national economic development by generating employment, wealth, and social value¹²².

Thus, while entrepreneurship represents the practice, and entrepreneurship education represents the preparation, entrepreneurship development represents the institutional and systemic reinforcement of entrepreneurial ecosystems. Collectively, the three dimensions ensure that individuals are equipped, motivated, and supported to create businesses that contribute to economic growth and societal well-being.

Unlike entrepreneurship as a general concept, which focuses on the practice of initiating and managing business ventures, entrepreneurship education emphasizes how individuals acquire entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and competencies. It is essentially the process of preparing learners to establish, manage, and sustain business operations using limited resources available to them. In practical terms, entrepreneurship education is a structured programme that equips individuals with the capacity to form, operate, and manage small or medium-scale enterprises profitably, thereby contributing to national development^{32, 104}.

Entrepreneurship education involves specialized training designed to enable students particularly those in vocational and technical disciplines to develop ideas, managerial abilities, and practical skills necessary for self-employment, rather than relying solely on wage employment. Conceptually, it promotes essential entrepreneurial traits such as risk-taking, innovation, resource coordination, and opportunity recognition for the creation of new products or services that meet the needs of both new and existing markets. The ultimate goal is to prepare individuals, especially youths, to become responsible, enterprising, and innovative citizens who drive economic growth and sustainable community development. Thus, entrepreneurship education has been rightly identified as a vital instrument for self-fulfilment, job creation, poverty reduction, and sustainable development^{35, 43}.

Historically, the term *entrepreneurship* emerged in the 16th century from the French word *entreprendre*, meaning "to undertake." Initially, it referred to organizers of entertainment activities, but by the 18th century, French economist Richard Cantillon extended its meaning to economic ventures. Since then, entrepreneurship has been studied extensively, though no universally accepted definition exists. Broadly, an entrepreneur is an individual who transforms ideas into action through creativity, innovation, and risk-taking, while also demonstrating the ability to plan and manage projects to achieve set

objectives¹²⁴. Entrepreneurship can therefore be described as the motivation and willingness to take risks, innovate, and create sustainable, growth-oriented, profit-making enterprises. An entrepreneur is not satisfied with the status quo but continuously seeks to transform new ideas or inventions into successful innovations. Such individuals are able to perceive business opportunities, assess risks, and strategically mobilize resources to generate profit^{82, 83}.

In the Nigerian context, entrepreneurship is increasingly recognized as a critical tool for addressing unemployment, underemployment, and poverty, particularly among educated youths who struggle to secure formal employment. While there has been longstanding debate over whether entrepreneurs are "born or made," there is growing recognition that entrepreneurial traits and skills can indeed be taught and learned. This reinforces the argument that entrepreneurship education is a teachable and learnable concept, and when effectively delivered, it becomes a powerful antidote to youth unemployment and a catalyst for wealth creation and economic progress³².

An indication that entrepreneurship may be taught is the increasing number of postsecondary educational institutions providing courses in the subject. The term "entrepreneurship education" has no universally accepted definition. The term "entrepreneurship education" is used in this study to refer specifically to students' plans to launch their own company. Additionally, entrepreneurship education can be applied broadly. No matter what their course of study, the primary goal of entrepreneurship education in postsecondary institutions is to equip graduates with the skills necessary to start a profitable business, regardless of their ability to find paid work in the public or private sector. A graduate who receives entrepreneurship education becomes a job creator instead of a job seeker. In 2006, entrepreneurship education was included to Nigerian universities' undergraduate curricula³⁷.

The foundation of national progress is education. One crucial instrument for sustainability is education. In general, it has been established that education promotes entrepreneurship. Worldwide, postsecondary institutions have seen a sharp increase in the teaching of entrepreneurship⁸². Creating graduates with the entrepreneurial abilities required in the private sector is the primary goal of introducing them to postsecondary schools. These graduates can launch their own enterprises and subsequently hire others. The foundation of entrepreneurship education is the idea that entrepreneurship is something that can be taught, that students may purposefully improve their entrepreneurial skills, and that this can ultimately result in the launch of a business.

However, there is disagreement among studies regarding the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. The question of whether entrepreneurship can be taught and learnt has been hotly disputed by academics¹²⁵. Higher education institutions must provide aspiring entrepreneurs with high-quality instruction in order to prepare them for starting their own firms in the future. Entrepreneurs can be found worldwide in a wide range of fields, including medicine, architecture, law, research, education, engineering, and more. They come in a variety of sizes, shapes, colours, and backgrounds. Intentions to start a business are probably strengthened by taking part in entrepreneurship courses. Additionally, a more positive outlook on entrepreneurship is probably going to boost plans to launch a company. Additionally, students who study subjects other than business and economics after graduation are probably more interested in launching their own company. The goal of entrepreneurship education is to give young people practical knowledge and skills to improve their vision, attitude, and character¹²⁵.

Activities aimed at developing entrepreneurial mindsets, attitudes, and abilities in a variety of domains, including idea generation, startup, growth, and innovation, are together referred to as entrepreneurship education. Since entrepreneurship is primarily about personality and psychological traits—talent and temperament cannot be taught—it

cannot be taught. Finding the most effective approach to teachable skills and the ideal fit between teaching methods and student demands are essential to a successful entrepreneurship education. Students' entrepreneurial ambitions and behaviours are influenced by their education in entrepreneurship. When establishing a firm, entrepreneurial education is crucial^{124,125}. The deliberate action (including a coordinated series of choices) performed by an individual or group of related individuals to establish, grow, or expand a profit-oriented business unit for the manufacturing or distribution of economic goods and services is known as entrepreneurship. In all non-authoritarian societies, at least, entrepreneurship serves as a link between the general public, particularly its non-economic elements, and the profit-driven organisations set up to spur economic growth and, to the best of their abilities, meet its material needs. The capacity to recognise and seize economic possibilities while utilising limited resources is known as entrepreneurship. In its most basic definition, entrepreneurship is the readiness and capacity to look for investment possibilities and manage a business for financial gain.

Entrepreneurship takes precedence over capital in this latter sense. Since capital formation is the outcome of entrepreneurial action, it is just as fundamental as capital⁸². For this reason, entrepreneurs are seen as key players in economic growth. Their labour activities, the transportation of capital goods, the transformation of raw materials into completed items, and, finally, the efficient delivery of the goods to end users are all ways that they contribute. Therefore, entrepreneurs are people who look for and find business opportunities, gather the money and other resources needed to develop the opportunities, assess the alternatives in the environment and direct resources towards the most lucrative ones, and ultimately assume responsibility for the management and/or successful implementation of opportunities. An entrepreneur feels somewhat at ease taking risks and adopting those risks because they are passionate about the goal they are pursuing. He or she is aware of when and where to seek assistance, and they are always prepared to adapt

to changes in the business environment⁶⁸. Universities should therefore start producing high-level personnel, who typically possess obsessive, focused, eloquent, and resourceful traits. Graduates will so typically become charismatic leaders with a propensity for self-reflection in their ability to create jobs, generate income, and use innovative abilities.

One of the main tenets of the strategic macroeconomic framework is empowering the Nigerian people to create wealth, jobs, reduce poverty, and reorient their values⁶⁸. This is also seen in the recent rise in demand for entrepreneurial education programs in the nation's parastatals, non-governmental organisations, and postsecondary educational institutions. If these new principles and vision are fully realised, small and medium-sized business operations in Nigeria will be highlighted. Increased instruction in entrepreneurial skills would therefore provide the ideal setting for promoting economic expansion⁸². Therefore, it is the responsibility of institutions to adequately develop people who will have the resources needed to launch and expand profitable firms with a lower chance of failure⁸⁹. Due to the fact that entrepreneurs fill gaps and complete inputs—two extremely rare skills—entrepreneurship is typically a scarce resource. In his "Need Theory of Entrepreneurship," David C. McClelland of Harvard University in the United States emphasised the critical role that entrepreneurship plays. By distinguishing three categories of fundamental motivational needs—need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power (n/PWR) McClelland made a significant contribution to the conceptualisation of motivators to entrepreneurship growth¹²⁶.

The rising rate of unemployment, coupled with the dwindling pace of economic and national development, prompted the Nigerian government to introduce entrepreneurship education as a strategic response to these challenges. As a result, entrepreneurship education was incorporated into the curricula of tertiary institutions across all disciplines, with the aim of accelerating economic growth, promoting national development, and tackling unemployment. It is widely recognized that entrepreneurship education serves as

a catalyst for job creation, poverty reduction, decreased dependence on imported goods, and the mitigation of trade deficits arising from excessive importation^{61, 127}.

For Nigeria to achieve sustainable development, adequate attention must be given to strengthening entrepreneurship as a driver of economic transformation. This requires the adoption of vibrant and functional entrepreneurship education and policy frameworks that stimulate innovation, empower indigenous entrepreneurs, and diversify economic activities. By recognizing the role of local entrepreneurs and supporting their growth, Nigeria can enhance wealth creation, expand employment opportunities, and stimulate even socio-economic development⁸³. In the past, the curricula of Nigerian tertiary institutions were largely oriented toward producing graduates suitable for white-collar jobs. Consequently, many graduates lacked the practical knowledge and skills necessary to transform their ideas into viable business ventures. With growing competition for limited job opportunities, there is now an urgent need for qualitative and functional entrepreneurship education that equips students with relevant entrepreneurial competencies. Entrepreneurs, by nature, contribute significantly to job creation and serve as key facilitators of economic and social development in every society⁸¹.

A functional entrepreneurship framework in Nigeria can contribute to job creation and sustainable economic development through the following mechanisms:

1. **Opportunity Identification** – Entrepreneurship education equips learners with the ability to recognize and evaluate viable business opportunities, which can stimulate new ventures and employment generation.
2. **Financial Support and Linkages** – Established entrepreneurs can empower smaller enterprises, such as suppliers and service providers, by offering financial assistance, advance payments, or strategic partnerships. This strengthens the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

3. **Creativity and Innovation** – Continuous job creation and economic development require entrepreneurs to apply creativity and innovation in business processes, products, and services.
4. **Business Expansion** – Large-scale entrepreneurs who expand their businesses across states and countries (e.g., Dangote Group) create additional jobs and contribute to regional and national development⁸³.
5. **Mentorship** – Government policies should promote mentorship opportunities where experienced entrepreneurs guide upcoming ones. Incentives such as tax relief or holidays can encourage established business leaders to support and mentor new entrepreneurs.
6. **Team Building and Collaboration** – Successful entrepreneurs are skilled in building and managing teams, thereby complementing government efforts in nation building. They harness and judiciously allocate resources, which enhances efficiency and productivity.

In sum, entrepreneurship development in Nigeria is pivotal for tackling unemployment, reducing poverty, and diversifying the economy. With effective policies, mentorship structures, and a strong emphasis on entrepreneurship education, Nigeria can leverage its entrepreneurial capital to drive sustainable economic and social development.

Career development and the formation of a vocational identity are critical not only for an individual's long-term well-being but also for their immediate success in higher education. A clear sense of career direction enhances students' motivation, persistence, and commitment to completing their studies, thereby reducing the likelihood of academic disengagement and dropout. This is particularly important in Nigeria and across Africa, where student retention and the school-to-work transition remain pressing challenges. For example, in Nigeria, completion rates in higher education fell from 65% in 2011 to 59% in 2020, with nearly half of students unable to graduate within the expected timeframe.

Similarly, in the UK, 20,295 students who began their first degree in 2016 did not progress beyond the first year. These figures illustrate that career indecision and dropout are global challenges with far-reaching consequences for both individuals and society¹²⁸.

Substantial investments are being made in higher education globally, with increasing tertiary qualification rates a central policy objective. However, rising dropout rates undermine these efforts, representing a significant cost burden to both governments and institutions. Research indicates that having clear career goals and commitment to a vocational path strongly influences students' decisions to persist in their studies. When students understand the relevance of their education to future career opportunities, they are more likely to remain motivated and dedicated. Conversely, a lack of career clarity often results in disengagement, indecision, and eventual withdrawal^{10, 43}.

Career development initiatives in higher education also play a pivotal role in preparing students for the school-to-work transition. This transition is a decisive stage in graduates' lives, shaping their early career trajectories and overall professional development. However, it is often challenging, as many graduates enter the labor market with limited prior work experience. As a result, they face risks of unemployment or underemployment, both of which can negatively impact career prospects, financial security, and long-term well-being¹²⁸.

To address these challenges, career development programs such as structured career counseling, internships, mentorship, and reflective learning opportunities are essential. Such initiatives help students build vocational identities, develop employability skills, and cultivate realistic career aspirations. Ultimately, career development during higher education not only supports students in graduating and securing meaningful employment but also lays the foundation for sustained personal and professional fulfillment.

Despite the importance of career development in higher education, it has received limited attention in the entrepreneurship education (EE) literature. EE has often been

treated as distinct from career development studies, with its predominant focus placed on encouraging the career choice of becoming an entrepreneur. While fostering entrepreneurial intentions is indeed a key objective, this perspective is rather narrow. Entrepreneurship education should not be perceived solely as a mechanism for ‘producing’ entrepreneurs but also as a broader framework for preparing students to thrive in the 21st-century workplace. The African Union (AU) identifies entrepreneurship competence as one of eight essential competences for lifelong learning and emphasizes its role in “personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social cohesion, and employability in a knowledge society”³⁷,
43.

The entrepreneurial competencies outlined in EE frameworks extend beyond venture creation and are equally applicable to other domains of work and life. From the AU perspective, EE should serve dual purposes: increasing entrepreneurship through the creation of new ventures, and cultivating change agents who generate societal value in diverse contexts by applying entrepreneurial mindsets and skills. This broader conceptualization explains why EE has become a policy priority across universities worldwide and continues to attract the attention of policymakers. The AU recommends the inclusion of entrepreneurship education at all levels of the education system, and policy analyses indicate that many African countries are aligning with this recommendation. Although cross-country comparisons of EE implementation are limited, several national-level studies provide evidence of its growing diffusion¹²⁹.

Globally, there are few comprehensive estimates of the resources devoted to EE. However, national examples highlight significant investments. In Nigeria, for instance, entrepreneurship education at the undergraduate level receives substantial public funding, amounting to approximately 15 million euros annually to support entrepreneurship programs across higher education institutions. Given the scale of such investments, it is crucial for stakeholders to critically examine the outcomes and effectiveness of EE

initiatives to ensure value for money. Consequently, entrepreneurship education has emerged as a growing field of academic research over recent decades, with increasing focus on its pedagogical approaches, policy implications, and long-term societal impact^{32, 68}.

The focus of this thesis is on the outcomes of entrepreneurship education. Research in this area has evolved into a distinct sub-field commonly referred to as entrepreneurship education impact research, which investigates the effects of EE on various outcome measures. Existing studies have examined outcomes such as knowledge and skills, attitudes toward entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial intention, venture nascency, and new venture creation. However, the findings remain mixed, conflicting, and at times inconclusive, with critiques directed at both the methodological rigor and the narrow scope of existing research designs⁴⁵.

This situation highlights the need for more robust empirical evidence on the impact of EE to better inform policymakers, higher education institutions, and stakeholders responsible for its design and implementation. As previously discussed, career development is central to higher education, influencing not only study completion rates and school-to-work transitions but also long-term well-being. Yet, this dimension is underexplored within EE impact research. Much of the literature has framed career development narrowly, focusing primarily on the binary decision of whether to pursue entrepreneurship or salaried employment, with entrepreneurial intention serving as the dominant outcome variable¹³⁰.

By contrast, the broader career impact of EE beyond the decision to become an entrepreneur has received limited attention. This thesis addresses that gap by introducing a career development perspective. Specifically, it focuses on the construct of career reflection: the ability to critically examine one's own capacities, motivations, and aspirations in relation to future career paths. The point of departure is that the impact of EE should not be confined to stimulating entrepreneurial start-ups but should also be

considered as an arena for personal and professional reflection. Within such a space, students can learn more about themselves, about the entrepreneurial process, and about their broader career preferences. By integrating the career development perspective with established research on entrepreneurship as a career choice, this thesis investigates how EE influences students' capacity for career reflection^{35, 131}.

This perspective represents a novel extension of EE impact research, which until now has only partially addressed similar ideas for instance, through studies on entrepreneurial identity work in EE and the alignment effects of EE on entrepreneurial intention. Nevertheless, it is a critical area of inquiry. Educators require insights into the broader career impacts of EE in order to design effective courses and programs. Likewise, higher education institutions, governments, and policymakers need evidence of EE's wider benefits to make informed decisions about its continued implementation. Given that EE competes with other academic subjects for limited resources, a deeper understanding of its contributions to students' overall career development is essential.

Ultimately, incorporating a career development perspective into EE research not only helps clarify previous inconclusive findings but also introduces a new rationale for sustaining and expanding EE in higher education¹³².

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has observed that several poverty reduction initiatives by governments in developing countries, including Nigeria, have failed largely because graduates lack the practical skills required to thrive in the labour market. This reality underscores the urgent need for entrepreneurship education (EE) in higher institutions. Stakeholders, policymakers, and political leaders increasingly agree that embedding EE within the education system can cultivate a robust entrepreneurial culture that maximizes individual and collective economic and social success at the local, national, and global levels¹³².

Entrepreneurship education is not solely about creating business owners; it is equally about instilling entrepreneurial competencies such as creativity, initiative, resilience, innovation, and problem-solving. These competencies are transferable across multiple life contexts, equipping graduates to adapt to the fast-changing world of work and society. As such, EE does not only empower students to launch ventures but also to develop critical thinking and leadership capacities that make them valuable in any workplace or community. By engaging business education students in structured learning experiences including business simulations, project-based learning, and mentorship EE provides practical insights and opportunities to translate knowledge into action. Thus, EE positions graduates as agents of economic growth, social change, and sustainable development¹³³.

The Colleges of Education (CoEs) in Nigeria occupy a particularly strategic position in this process. These institutions are primarily responsible for training teachers who will serve at basic and secondary school levels across the nation. Integrating EE into the CoE curriculum therefore has a multiplier effect: it not only equips prospective teachers with entrepreneurial competencies but also enables them to transfer these skills to the next generation of learners. In this way, CoEs become incubators of entrepreneurship knowledge that cascades down through the entire education system.

Moreover, teacher-trainees exposed to EE acquire both pedagogical and practical business knowledge. This dual capacity empowers them to:

1. Serve as role models for innovation and creativity among their students.
2. Inspire secondary and basic education learners to develop entrepreneurial mindsets early.
3. Reduce overdependence on government employment after graduation by starting small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
4. Contribute to solving Nigeria's unemployment crisis, given that CoE graduates are among the largest groups entering the labour market each year.

Thus, embedding EE into CoEs addresses two challenges simultaneously: (i) preparing graduates for self-reliance in an economy where formal employment opportunities are scarce, and (ii) ensuring that entrepreneurial thinking becomes embedded within Nigeria's wider educational culture.

Entrepreneurship education also serves as a driver of innovation and industrial growth. Graduates trained in EE are better positioned to identify market opportunities, mobilize resources for production, explore new markets, and establish enterprises that stimulate industrialization. Even small ventures initiated by CoE graduates can evolve into larger industries when supported with proper managerial skills. Importantly, entrepreneurship extends beyond profit-making; it is equally about community development. Entrepreneurs frequently utilize their businesses to improve community welfare, thereby elevating the dignity of labour and fostering social cohesion¹³⁴.

Another significant advantage of EE is its encouragement of local resource utilization. Entrepreneurs trained through CoEs can establish SMEs that creatively use local raw materials often discarded by large firms thus strengthening local economies and reducing waste. By supplying larger firms with inputs, these SMEs also stimulate industrial linkages that expand production and create jobs for unemployed youth. This makes EE not only a personal empowerment tool but also a catalyst for grassroots economic development. One of the greatest barriers to entrepreneurship among Nigerian graduates is limited access to capital. Entrepreneurship education addresses this by exposing students to different financing models, including microfinance, cooperative societies, venture capital, and government intervention programmes. CoEs that effectively integrate EE can therefore help future teachers and entrepreneurs understand how to access funding and sustain their ventures. This ensures that business start-ups do not collapse prematurely, but instead grow into sustainable enterprises capable of generating wealth and employment opportunities.

Through well-structured entrepreneurship education in Nigeria's Colleges of Education, the country can produce a new generation of teacher-entrepreneurs. These graduates will not only establish and manage businesses themselves but will also transfer entrepreneurial mindsets to younger learners, thereby fostering a culture of innovation and self-reliance across generations. Ultimately, entrepreneurship education in CoEs is both a strategy for reducing unemployment and poverty and a foundation for building a creative, innovative, and economically resilient society⁸⁵.

Entrepreneurship Education is characterized by a passion for teaching, inspiration, open-mindedness, confidence, flexibility, and responsibility. While generally adhering to rules, it occasionally embraces a more unconventional approach. Entrepreneurship Education actively listens, can effectively harness and market ideas, and fosters a student-centric and action-oriented learning environment⁴². It values teamwork and maintains a strong professional network. By bridging the gap between education and the economy, Entrepreneurship Education incorporates external experts into its teaching, emphasizing real-world experiences. This approach extends to the economic dimension of various topics, with business-related subjects playing a significant role across different disciplines^{43,132}.

For entrepreneurship education (EE) to be effective, its delivery must adopt flexible and adaptable study plans that encourage creativity, innovation, and self-discovery among learners. Rather than relying on rigid textbooks and theory-heavy instruction, EE benefits from interdisciplinary and project-based learning supported by practical training materials, business simulations, and real-life case studies. Such an approach emphasizes collaborative learning through group processes and interactions, while also appreciating diversity of opinions and solutions. In fact, entrepreneurship classrooms are sometimes understood as "clash rooms," where diverse ideas are debated, tested, and refined, and where students reflect on both the learning process and their own entrepreneurial growth.

Hands-On, Real-Life Experiences: Entrepreneurial skills and competencies are most effectively developed through hands-on, real-life experiences. Activities such as starting a small venture within the school, developing prototypes, pitching business ideas, or conducting market surveys give students first-hand exposure to risk-taking, resource management, and problem-solving. In the Nigerian context, Colleges of Education can embed these practices by encouraging students to develop micro-enterprises within their local communities, thereby integrating learning with local economic realities.

Integration across the Curriculum: Another key feature of the entrepreneurship education approach is its cross-disciplinary nature. Entrepreneurial skills can be taught across multiple subjects—such as business, science, technology, and even the arts—rather than being restricted to a single standalone course. This allows students from diverse fields to acquire entrepreneurial competencies relevant to their disciplines while also appreciating the universal value of entrepreneurship in addressing social, economic, and professional challenges.

Entrepreneurs and “Intrapreneurs”: Importantly, EE should not only prepare individuals to become entrepreneurs (venture creators) but also intrapreneurs innovators within existing organizations. Since most students may end up working in companies, schools, or public institutions, they should be trained to apply entrepreneurial skills such as creativity, problem-solving, and initiative in these environments. This dual focus expands the relevance of EE beyond start-up creation to include innovation within organizations, thereby aligning with national goals for economic growth and institutional efficiency.

Learning Outcomes, Assessment, and Quality Assurance: For EE to gain traction and credibility within higher education, especially in Colleges of Education, it must establish clear learning outcomes, assessment strategies, and quality assurance procedures. These outcomes should capture the three dimensions of entrepreneurship: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers themselves must also receive continuous professional development that equips them to guide students in acquiring and demonstrating entrepreneurial competence. Without measurable standards, EE risks being undervalued compared to traditional academic subjects.

Partnerships with Businesses and Communities: Finally, entrepreneurship education cannot thrive in isolation within educational institutions. It requires collaboration with businesses, industries, and local communities. Such partnerships provide students with mentorship, internships, funding opportunities, and exposure to real market conditions. In Nigeria, building strong linkages between Colleges of Education, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), government agencies, and private sector organizations will enhance the practical impact of EE. Teachers and schools will thus be empowered to realize their ambitions of preparing students for meaningful participation in both the economy and society at large¹³⁵.

Entrepreneurship education (EE) in higher education institutions (HEIs) is designed to build students' understanding, skills, and capacity for entrepreneurial thinking, behaviours, and competencies across diverse contexts. It emphasizes the development of attributes such as initiative, innovation, problem-solving, and risk-taking, which can be learned, practiced, and refined. Entrepreneurship, by its very nature, is about managing and initiating change. Scholars have identified five key types of change that entrepreneurs typically drive: initial expansion, subsequent expansion, factor innovation, production innovation, and market innovation. For Nigeria, where the poverty rate remains alarmingly high, these forms of change are essential to achieving sustainable economic transformation.

Higher education institutions must therefore rise to the challenge of embedding entrepreneurship education more deeply into their curricula to equip graduates with the practical competencies needed for national development^{35, 132}.

Despite numerous Federal Government initiatives aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment, many of these programmes have failed largely because graduates lack practical and marketable skills. This gap highlights the urgent need for entrepreneurship education programmes that move beyond theoretical classroom instruction to include hands-on experiences and applied learning. By equipping students with entrepreneurial competencies, HEIs can foster a generation of graduates who are not merely job seekers but creators of wealth, innovators, and employers of labour.

Globally, entrepreneurship education has gained wide acceptance and integration into HEIs. For instance, in the United Kingdom, many universities have developed impressive and sophisticated entrepreneurship programmes. Empirical evidence shows that 25% of English students had developed a business idea during their studies, while 41% aspired to self-employment upon graduation. Similarly, studies reveal that 92.2% of students in UK universities were aware of entrepreneurship programmes available to them and expressed readiness to establish their own businesses. These findings suggest that when effectively structured, EE has the potential to not only build entrepreneurial intention but also to cultivate confidence and readiness among students to engage in entrepreneurial ventures.

Nigeria's higher education landscape, however, presents a different reality. While entrepreneurship education has been introduced into many HEIs, students often report several limitations that hinder their entrepreneurial drive. The most commonly cited challenge is funding. Approximately 85% of respondents in relevant studies complained that the Federal Government does not adequately finance tertiary institutions to fully integrate EE into their programmes. Without adequate funding, universities cannot provide

the infrastructure, facilities, or experiential learning opportunities that entrepreneurship education demands.

Another barrier is the shortage of qualified instructors with both academic knowledge and practical entrepreneurial experience. Many lecturers are trained as academics rather than as entrepreneurs, making it difficult to instill the entrepreneurial mindset and practical skills that students require. Furthermore, inadequate preparation of youths in terms of hands-on, practical training remains a critical shortfall. In many cases, entrepreneurship education is taught theoretically, with little exposure to market realities, business incubation, or mentorship opportunities.

These gaps limit the transformative potential of EE in Nigeria's HEIs. Unless these structural and pedagogical deficiencies are addressed, the programme will not produce graduates who can establish sustainable businesses or make significant contributions to poverty reduction and economic growth.

Graduates of higher education in Nigeria cannot afford to "sit on the fence" in the face of rising unemployment and limited formal job opportunities. With robust and properly implemented entrepreneurship education, they can acquire the capacity to become employers of labour rather than job seekers. Their entrepreneurial skills will promote business expansion, foster industrial growth, and ultimately contribute to poverty alleviation and national development^{133, 134}.

Therefore, the extent of EE in HEIs must not only be measured by its inclusion in curricula but also by the quality of delivery, resources provided, and outcomes achieved in terms of graduates' entrepreneurial intention, ability, and success in launching ventures. Nigeria can learn from global best practices, particularly in Europe and Asia, by investing in incubation centres, strengthening partnerships between HEIs and industry, and ensuring that EE is given both financial and institutional support. Only then can entrepreneurship education in Nigeria truly achieve its intended impact.

Entrepreneurship education (EE) has been widely recognized as a critical tool for driving socio-economic transformation across nations. A variety of specific areas of impact have been identified, reflecting the expectations of different stakeholders such as students, government, business, practicing entrepreneurs, and educational institutions. At the level of learners, entrepreneurship education has significantly increased awareness and understanding of the processes involved in initiating, managing, and sustaining new ventures. It exposes students to the realities of small business ownership as a viable career option, thereby positioning entrepreneurship as an alternative to traditional salaried employment. EE also helps to identify, nurture, and stimulate entrepreneurial drive, talent, and creativity among learners. Importantly, it assists students in overcoming the risk-averse tendencies often reinforced by conventional academic approaches, and instead fosters positive attitudes toward innovation, change, and opportunity recognition¹³⁶.

For governments, the expectation is that entrepreneurship education will contribute to national goals such as job creation, poverty reduction, skill enhancement, and overall economic growth. By embedding entrepreneurship in higher education systems, governments seek to cultivate a broad entrepreneurial culture that equips graduates to become not just job seekers but also job creators. In countries like Nigeria, where unemployment among graduates remains high, entrepreneurship education is particularly critical as a strategic response to unemployment and underemployment. From the business community's perspective, entrepreneurship education is valued for its ability to instill in graduates an understanding of basic business principles, creative work attitudes, and an entrepreneurial approach to problem-solving. Employers increasingly seek graduates who can demonstrate initiative, innovation, and adaptability—skills that are nurtured through effective entrepreneurship education.

Practicing entrepreneurs also benefit from entrepreneurship education. While they may already possess some business experience, structured entrepreneurship programmes

provide insights that help them solve unique problems, adapt to market changes, and refine their managerial and strategic approaches. This makes entrepreneurship education not only relevant to students but also to individuals who are already engaged in business activities. For educational institutions, such as universities, colleges, and vocational training centres, offering entrepreneurship education enhances their status and strengthens their role as key drivers of community and economic development. Institutions gain higher visibility and credibility by aligning their programmes with national development priorities and by demonstrating a tangible commitment to producing graduates who can contribute meaningfully to the economy. Moreover, the integration of entrepreneurship education into curricula enhances institutional innovation, prompting universities and colleges to explore partnerships with industries, government agencies, and international organizations.

In summary, the current impact of entrepreneurship education extends beyond preparing students to start businesses. It contributes to shaping entrepreneurial mindsets, building relevant skills, and fostering a culture of innovation that benefits individuals, organizations, and societies at large. The diverse expectations of governments, businesses, entrepreneurs, learners, and institutions highlight the multifaceted value of entrepreneurship education and underscore its role as a central pillar for sustainable economic and social development¹³⁶.

The process of entrepreneurship education is complex and requires the integration of both formal and informal approaches. While formal education provides structured programmes, curricula, and institutionalized training, informal education emphasizes experiential, practical, and less conventional modes of learning. Together, these approaches contribute to equipping learners with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for entrepreneurial success.

Formal entrepreneurship education is delivered within structured institutional settings such as universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. A key issue in formal

programme structuring lies in the design of course content and methods of delivery. Tertiary institutions often employ a variety of teaching methods such as lectures, classroom presentations, handouts, video-based instruction, case studies, group discussions, and role-plays. These methods expose students to theoretical frameworks and practical scenarios necessary for entrepreneurial learning.

In Nigeria, the introduction of a mandatory entrepreneurship development course for all business education students represents a bold step toward awakening entrepreneurial consciousness among youths. The rationale behind this initiative is to redirect students' focus from seeking scarce white-collar jobs toward becoming employers of labour by creating and growing their own enterprises. This policy shift reflects a recognition of the inadequacy of previous schemes in stimulating entrepreneurial orientation among graduates¹³⁷.

The objectives of formal entrepreneurship courses are broad. They include:

- Developing students' knowledge of the basic concepts and historical perspectives of entrepreneurship.
- Equipping them with the ability to prepare and present viable business plans.
- Exposing them to different financing options available to entrepreneurs.
- Providing insights into critical management issues necessary for starting and sustaining business ventures.

In contrast, informal entrepreneurship education involves flexible and innovative methods that extend beyond traditional classroom instruction. This mode of education emphasizes interdisciplinary learning, teamwork, experiential activities, activity-based and goal-oriented methods, and mentorship opportunities. Informal approaches encourage students to engage in real-life entrepreneurial practices, such as launching small ventures, participating in entrepreneurial clubs, engaging with community projects, or learning directly from practicing entrepreneurs.

Informal education provides learners with hands-on, practical exposure, allowing them to translate theoretical knowledge into actionable skills. For example, mentorship programmes and start-up incubation centres create platforms for students to receive guidance, experiment with business ideas, and learn from failure. These approaches are critical for developing the resilience, creativity, and problem-solving abilities required for entrepreneurial success.

Both formal and informal education complement each other in building entrepreneurial capacity. While formal education lays the foundational knowledge and theoretical underpinnings of entrepreneurship, informal education offers the practical, interactive, and adaptive experiences that bridge the gap between theory and practice. In this way, entrepreneurship education becomes holistic, equipping graduates with not only the competence to design business strategies but also the confidence and adaptability to implement them in dynamic real-world contexts.

In summary, combining formal and informal methods ensures that entrepreneurship education produces graduates who are not only well-informed but also practically prepared to seize opportunities, establish enterprises, and contribute meaningfully to national economic growth¹³⁷.

Although entrepreneurship education has long been integrated into academic programmes in many advanced nations, its formal implementation in Nigerian tertiary institutions is relatively recent. Consequently, its introduction has been fraught with numerous challenges that limit its effectiveness and undermine its potential impact. The major obstacles can be discussed under the following themes:

1. Financial Constraints and Limited Access to Start-Up Capital

A recurring challenge faced by graduates of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is the lack of access to adequate funding for establishing their own businesses. Wealth distribution in the country is heavily skewed, and opportunities for raising start-up capital

are limited. Bank loans, though theoretically available, are often inaccessible due to stringent collateral requirements, high interest rates, and bureaucratic bottlenecks. As a result, many graduates find it difficult to translate their entrepreneurial training into viable business ventures¹³⁸.

2. Curriculum Development and Breadth of Coverage

Another major issue is the difficulty of developing comprehensive and dynamic curricula that reflect the diversity of entrepreneurial opportunities available in Nigeria. Educators often struggle to design content that goes beyond small business management to include innovation-driven ventures, technology entrepreneurship, and socially oriented enterprises. Without such breadth, entrepreneurship education risks becoming narrow and repetitive, failing to equip students with the wide-ranging skills required to thrive in a globalized economy¹³⁸.

3. Lack of Qualified and Competent Educators

One of the greatest obstacles to effective entrepreneurship education is the shortage of qualified instructors. Many of the lecturers tasked with teaching entrepreneurship courses are drawn from existing faculties without sufficient entrepreneurial exposure or professional training in active learning pedagogy. This results in a reliance on conventional lecture-based methods rather than interactive, student-centred approaches that foster creativity and critical thinking. The effectiveness of entrepreneurship education depends heavily on the competence of instructors; however, as the adage goes, “one cannot give what one does not have”^{139, 140}.

4. Weak Link between Theory and Practice

A related challenge is the inability of current pedagogical approaches to bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and entrepreneurial practice. While students may gain theoretical insights, there is often a lack of practical exposure through internships, simulations, or business incubation programmes. This disconnect hampers their ability to

apply concepts in real-life contexts, undermining the goal of producing practice-ready entrepreneurs¹⁴⁰.

5. Inadequate Infrastructure and Learning Facilities

The already poor state of infrastructure in Nigerian higher institutions poses another barrier. Inadequate classrooms, lack of ICT facilities, unreliable power supply, and insufficient funding for entrepreneurship laboratories or incubation hubs weaken the quality of learning. Introducing entrepreneurship education into this fragile system risks further straining resources and limiting its effectiveness^{43, 132}.

6. Weak Educational Foundation for Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship education in Nigeria has largely been introduced at the tertiary level without a corresponding foundation at the primary and secondary levels. This late introduction creates a weak base for learning, as students enter higher institutions without prior exposure to entrepreneurial concepts, creativity development, or problem-solving mindsets. As a lifelong learning process, entrepreneurship education ought to be introduced early in the school system to ensure continuity and gradual development of entrepreneurial skills^{43, 132}.

7. Policy and Strategic Gaps

Finally, there is limited integration of entrepreneurship education into Nigeria's broader development and economic strategies. Without comprehensive planning and alignment with national policies on job creation, poverty alleviation, and industrial growth, entrepreneurship education risks existing as an isolated programme with little systemic impact. Strategic documents and quality assurance mechanisms are needed to ensure sustainability and alignment with national development goals¹³⁸.

In sum, the challenges facing entrepreneurship education in Nigerian tertiary institutions include financial constraints, weak curricula, lack of qualified educators, inadequate infrastructure, poor foundational preparation, and weak policy integration.

Unless these issues are systematically addressed, the potential of entrepreneurship education to produce job creators, reduce poverty, and stimulate economic growth may not be fully realized^{138,139,140, 43,132}.

Even though policymakers and researchers are starting to pay more attention to entrepreneurship and the role that small and startup businesses play in the economy, there are still a lot of unanswered questions regarding how social and personal factors influence academics' decisions to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours. In 1947, the Harvard Business School introduced the first entrepreneurship course. Since then, a lot of colleges have added courses on entrepreneurship to their curricula. Additionally, it has been proposed that studying entrepreneurship will help students immediately conceptualise the connection between entrepreneurship, job markets, and career options¹⁴¹.

Theoretically important questions regarding how entrepreneurs acquire competences and the degree to which entrepreneurial competencies are the consequence of contextual or individual elements are advanced by an understanding of the dynamics influencing the development of entrepreneurial competencies. Few empirical studies have looked at university students' entrepreneurial propensity as a source of future entrepreneurs, but many studies have concentrated on the potential impact of education on the characteristics and goals of young people. Giving people the information, abilities, and mindsets to behave in an entrepreneurial manner is the aim of entrepreneurship education. At the moment, the curriculums of higher education institutions do not adequately incorporate the teaching of entrepreneurship¹⁴². The majority of entrepreneurship courses are taught in business and economic studies, according to the data that is currently available. However, since technical, scientific, and creative subjects are more likely to produce new and valuable company concepts, the African Commission is wondering whether business schools are the best places to teach entrepreneurship. The primary component of entrepreneurship is entrepreneurial education, which aims to equip students

with the mindset, information, and abilities necessary to behave in an entrepreneurial way while encouraging originality and creativity⁷¹.

Since students' knowledge is applied in the workplace, academic institutions ought to support courses that provide proactive, optimistic, and future-focused information that is extremely beneficial to business owners in their day-to-day endeavours. Teaching entrepreneurship is essential, but it won't always make entrepreneurs' problems go away; in fact, it may make them worse. A highly educated entrepreneur will always be looking to expand their company, which will present new challenges. The policies of entrepreneurial colleges continue to have a significant impact on students' enthusiasm in entrepreneurial activity, making their position essential. Given that today's students will become tomorrow's prosperous business owners, it is imperative that entrepreneurship education have a greater influence on students' lives^{37,143}.

Given the changes and difficulties they confront today, universities find it difficult, but they have the power and responsibility to bring about the change. Universities can employ a variety of strategies to inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs. On the one hand, by holding conferences, holding competitions on entrepreneurial subjects, and rewarding the best idea plan, they may guarantee the development of students' entrepreneurial-specific competencies within the institution. However, the most significant factor is the teaching methods employed during the educational process. It is commonly known that the learning process is more comprehensive when a wider range of teaching and learning approaches are employed. Thus, putting the students at the centre and integrating information and communication technology with in-person interaction teaching methods will result in increased efficiency¹⁴⁴.

Numerous research have shown that student-centered teaching encourages students' entrepreneurial spirit. The development of entrepreneurial abilities and the learning experience are positively impacted by the learning-by-doing pedagogical approach.

Students will gain confidence, be able to make decisions in uncertain situations, manage risk better, find the best solutions quickly, and overcome obstacles through creativity-based learning, challenge-based learning, discovery-based learning, and business simulation games. The utilisation of instructional materials and approaches pertaining to the growth and development of prospective creative thinkers and responsible business owners must thus be reconsidered by business schools^{71,83}. Conversely, universities could take action by forming alliances with economic agents both domestically and abroad. Protocols with the training businesses, whose significance in entrepreneurial education is well known, and the invitation of business experts or entrepreneurs to share their experiences and be viewed as potential role models are how the connection to the outside world is built. Through the planning, arranging, and coordinating of intricate and varied activities, student organisations are also significantly contributing to the development of students' entrepreneurial competencies. Additionally, several colleges are depending on student associations' efforts to encourage social change. Alumni involvement, in addition to these student organisations, is frequently helpful in inspiring students¹⁴⁵.

It is necessary to teach entrepreneurship, but doing so won't always make entrepreneurs' problems go away; in fact, it may make them worse. They said that a highly educated entrepreneur will always be looking to expand their company, which will present new challenges that must be overcome⁶¹. The policies of entrepreneurial colleges continue to have a significant impact on students' enthusiasm in entrepreneurial activity, making their position essential. Given that today's students will become tomorrow's prosperous business owners, it is imperative that entrepreneurship education have a greater influence on students' lives. Given the changes and difficulties they confront today, universities find it difficult, but they have the power and responsibility to bring about the change. Universities can utilise a variety of strategies to encourage the next generation of entrepreneurs¹⁴⁶.

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The Potential Benefits of Entrepreneurship Education for Job Creation Any nation's social, political, and economic development is greatly influenced by high-quality entrepreneurship education. This is made feasible by the establishment of numerous enterprises that would provide employment for Nigeria's unemployed young. A certified graduate of an entrepreneurship program would have gained sufficient knowledge and abilities to run a small business centre. -The development of independent work. An entrepreneur creates a small business centre to support himself. Nigeria's unemployment issue and other societal ills. The business owner not only creates jobs and employment for himself, but also for others. As a result, the individual's standard of living is raised and their per capita income rises¹³⁴.

The entrepreneur ascertains or identifies the particular needs of the populace and the kinds of products and services that will most comfortably satisfy those needs. Assisting men, materials, money, and machines to explore the opportunity, the entrepreneur not only identifies but also mobilises and organises the resources to tap it. - Production of goods and services that are important to the comfort, happiness, and well-being of individuals in the larger society. Entrepreneurship promotes economic, industrial, and rural growth. They aid in the growth of rural communities. They accomplish this by deterring rural migration and locating their small to medium-sized business in these locations. They give rural

residents plenty of employment options. In addition, they offer services and products that are available in cities, and occasionally they also supply infrastructure. Entrepreneurs are typically driven by both the desire to turn a profit and the urge to make tangible contributions to the well-being of their communities¹⁴⁴. This enhances the honour of labour. Utilising local resources is made possible through entrepreneurial education. In order to make use of the local resources in their area, the graduates of this specialised course establish a small to medium-sized business¹⁴⁷.

Products from huge companies that employ local raw resources as their main input in their production processes are wasted. It might be argued that small businesses outperform their giant counterparts in terms of maximising local resources. The supply of raw materials enables large corporations to boost their output, hire more workers, and create jobs for the nation's unemployed youth. A pool of prospective business owners with the technical know-how and abilities to oversee small and medium-sized enterprises is created through entrepreneurship education. This will also contribute to the generation of jobs. Nigeria may generate a large number of entrepreneurs capable of starting and running their own companies with high-quality entrepreneurship education. Given the aforementioned benefits, it is clear that entrepreneurship education has the potential to be a key tool in accomplishing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by enabling each member of society to become self-sufficient. This will contribute to Nigeria's poverty reduction¹⁴⁸.

Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

Superior Entrepreneurship Education may be essential in providing people with the knowledge, abilities, and appropriate work habits and attitudes they need to generate jobs and support the expansion of the Nigerian economy¹⁴⁹. The degree to which the entrepreneurial education program can be implemented to achieve these objectives, however, is crucial. The initiative faces numerous obstacles that have resulted in a setback in achieving its goals. Nigerians have not been able to reap the benefits of this program as

anticipated due to these obstacles. This restricts Nigeria's ability to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)¹⁴⁹. Poor funding from the government and non-governmental organisations has been identified as one of the difficulties. Inadequate or inefficient planning, oversight, data, and program evaluation in general. Insufficient instructional resources, apparatus, and facilities. Globalisation and information and communication technology (ICT) present problems that impact people, equipment, facilities, curriculum, and technique. Insufficiently competent instructors and teachers, along with low-quality support personnel at every level¹⁵⁰. Staff efficiency, retention, originality, and initiative are all impacted by the lack of enthusiasm among available teaching and non-teaching staff. Because there isn't an entrepreneurship education facility, there is more emphasis on theoretical understanding than on practical expertise. The system has a very poor maintenance culture and a high amount of corruption. The following factors hinder economic and business activities: a poor business environment, difficulty obtaining credit or loans, deteriorating infrastructure, widespread poverty, inflation, technology violations, political instability, and the insecurity of people's lives and property^{82,148}.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), developed by Ajzen in 1985, provides a widely recognized framework for predicting and explaining human behaviour in specific contexts. According to the model, an individual's intention to perform a particular behaviour is the most immediate determinant of actual behaviour. Intentions themselves are influenced by three key antecedents: attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control¹⁴⁹.

1. Attitude toward the Behaviour

Attitude refers to the degree to which an individual evaluates the behaviour positively or negatively. In entrepreneurship, this relates to whether one perceives entrepreneurial

activity as desirable and feasible. Perceived desirability reflects the individual's attraction to entrepreneurship, shaped by personal values, perceived rewards (e.g., financial independence), and risk tolerance. Perceived feasibility, on the other hand, refers to self-assessed ability to establish and manage a business successfully. Together, these dimensions form an individual's overall evaluation of entrepreneurship as a career option¹⁴⁹.

2. Perceived Behavioural Control

Perceived behavioural control refers to an individual's belief in their capability to perform the behaviour and the extent to which they feel in control of the process. It captures both self-efficacy (confidence in one's ability to start a venture) and controllability (belief that external conditions permit such behaviour). In entrepreneurship, this factor is crucial since launching and sustaining a business requires knowledge, skills, and resilience in the face of constraints. Educational programmes such as entrepreneurship education (EE) can play a pivotal role in enhancing knowledge and skills, thereby raising perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial feasibility¹⁴⁹.

3. Subjective Norms

Subjective norms represent perceived social pressures to perform or not perform a behaviour. They reflect the influence of family, friends, peers, and society at large on entrepreneurial intentions. In many contexts, supportive families and peer networks encourage individuals to pursue business ventures, while in others, cultural or social expectations may discourage such choices. In the Nigerian context, for instance, the strong preference for stable white-collar jobs among parents may weaken entrepreneurial intentions despite personal interest or ability^{149, 150}.

Application to Entrepreneurship

TPB has been widely applied in entrepreneurship research because the decision to start a business is typically deliberate, planned, and effortful. Empirical studies have shown

that entrepreneurial intentions, as explained by TPB, account for up to 30% of the variance in actual entrepreneurial behaviour¹⁴⁹. This indicates that while not perfect, TPB offers a robust model for predicting entrepreneurial outcomes.

- **Attitudes** toward entrepreneurship influence how positively individuals perceive self-employment as compared to traditional employment.
- **Perceived behavioural control** determines whether they believe they possess the knowledge, skills, and resources to start and grow a business.
- **Subjective norms** capture the extent of support or discouragement from significant others.

Exogenous Influences and Mediators

TPB also acknowledges that attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms are shaped by exogenous factors such as personality traits, demographic characteristics, or situational variables like access to finance and regulatory frameworks. In the context of this study, mediators such as inspiration and alertness align with the attitudinal dimension, while social networks and knowledge and skills are closely related to perceived behavioural control¹⁵⁰. These mediators provide deeper insights into how entrepreneurship education and exposure shape entrepreneurial intention.

In sum, TPB suggests that entrepreneurial behaviour can be best predicted through entrepreneurial intentions, which are themselves influenced by attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms. The model has become a cornerstone of entrepreneurship research, providing both theoretical clarity and empirical validity in understanding why individuals particularly students and young graduates choose to engage or refrain from entrepreneurial activities^{149, 150}.

Critiques of Theory of Planned Behaviour

This research area is highly pertinent; yet, it is essential to consider various objections and issues that may influence the study's results and interpretations. Initially,

overgeneralization is a significant issue. Extrapolating results from a particular cohort, such as education college business education students, to the whole undergraduate demographic may result in unwarranted generalizations¹⁴⁹. The distinctive setting and experiences of these individuals may not fully reflect those of business education students from diverse fields or schools, therefore constraining the generalizability of the findings.

Measurement problems may potentially pose a significant concern. Definitions and measurements of concepts such as "knowledge of business opportunities," "career awareness," and "entrepreneurial intention" can be challenging to establish consistently. Diverse researchers may employ varying definitions and techniques to evaluate these ideas, leading to inconsistencies between studies that hinder comparisons and generalizations¹⁵⁰. Moreover, proving causation between these factors might be difficult without a robust experimental design. Correlation does not necessarily indicate causality, as entrepreneurial ambition may be affected by various additional factors not addressed in the study, including personal motivation, familial history, or external economic conditions.

Furthermore, contextual elements including societal, economic, and cultural impacts may not be adequately addressed in the study, despite their substantial impact on entrepreneurial goals. These parameters may fluctuate among geographical and temporal settings, and neglecting to consider them could constrain the study's precision and applicability in various scenarios.

Relevance of Theory of Planned Behaviour

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the research remains very pertinent and valuable for various reasons. Economic progress fundamentally depends on entrepreneurship, which fosters job creation and innovation. Comprehending the determinants of entrepreneurial intents helps guide governments and educational institutions in promoting entrepreneurship, especially among youth, thereby facilitating economic growth¹⁵¹. Secondly, career trajectories are diversifying as the employment market grows more

competitive. Graduates are progressively urged to consider alternate job paths. This research may elucidate techniques to enhance career awareness and motivate students to regard entrepreneurship as a feasible and fulfilling career option. The results may facilitate educational transformation, especially inside colleges of education. This study's insights may guide the creation of curriculum that include entrepreneurship education, thereby enhancing students' preparedness for the challenges of the contemporary workforce and equipping them with essential entrepreneurial skills.

Finally, tackling unemployment is an urgent concern, particularly among the youth worldwide. Advocating for entrepreneurship as a substitute for conventional employment might create new options and diminish dependence on a contracting work market, potentially mitigating youth unemployment in Nigeria and other areas.

The adoption of a stringent technique is necessary. A mixed-methods strategy that combines quantitative and qualitative data offers a comprehensive picture of the research topic, encompassing numerical trends and profound contextual insights. Also, a contextual study must be integrated to consider broader aspects such as economic situations, cultural norms, and governmental policies. This will provide a more sophisticated analysis of the findings, highlighting the distinct factors that influence entrepreneurial inclinations across various circumstances. Anchoring the research in a theoretical framework will establish a robust foundation for the investigation. Established theories of entrepreneurship, career development, and educational psychology can inform the research design, ensuring theoretical soundness and methodological rigour.

2.2.2 Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), developed by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994), is a vocational psychology framework widely applied to explain how individuals develop academic and career interests, make career choices, and achieve success in career performance. The theory is grounded in Bandura's social cognitive framework, particularly

the concepts of self-efficacy (SE), outcome expectations, and personal goals¹⁵¹. These cognitive-personal variables interact with contextual and social factors to shape career-related decision-making.

Core Constructs of SCCT in Entrepreneurial Contexts

Self-efficacy (SE): Refers to individuals' confidence in their ability to successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks, such as opportunity recognition, business planning, financial management, and venture growth. High SE increases the likelihood that individuals will consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path¹⁵¹.

Outcome Expectations: Denote individuals' beliefs about the consequences of engaging in entrepreneurial activities. These expectations may include both anticipated outcomes (e.g., income generation, autonomy, social status, impact) and actual experienced outcomes from prior ventures or exposure to entrepreneurship education. In this sense, SCCT aligns with the definition of attitude in behavioural theories where individuals weigh the attractiveness of outcomes and the probability of occurrence before forming intentions¹⁵¹.

Goals or Intentions: Goals represent the determination to engage in specific behaviours or activities that lead toward entrepreneurship. In SCCT, intentions serve as motivational drivers that channel self-efficacy and outcome expectations into concrete action, such as starting a business or participating in entrepreneurial training.

Social and Educational Influences

SCCT explicitly highlights the role of social-contextual factors, such as family support, mentors, peers, and educational opportunities, in shaping entrepreneurial career choices. Educational exposure through entrepreneurship courses, simulations, mentorship, and internships provides mastery experiences that enhance self-efficacy, clarify realistic outcome expectations, and strengthen intentions to pursue entrepreneurship¹⁵¹. This makes SCCT particularly useful in the study of entrepreneurship education, as it demonstrates how structured learning environments influence both beliefs and behaviours.

Conceptual Overlaps with TPB

SCCT shares significant conceptual territory with the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB):

Outcome expectations in SCCT parallel attitudes toward entrepreneurship in TPB, as both concern the evaluation of expected results from entrepreneurial engagement¹⁵¹.

Social influences in SCCT (mentors, family, peers, cultural norms) overlap with **subjective norms (SNs)** in TPB. Both highlight the role of perceived social pressure or support in career/venture decisions.

Self-efficacy in SCCT is functionally similar to perceived behavioural control (PBC) in TPB, as both measure individuals' confidence and perceived ability to execute entrepreneurial tasks.

Because of these overlaps, SCCT offers a broader organising framework that integrates cognitive, behavioural, and social determinants of entrepreneurial intentions. This reduces theoretical fragmentation in the entrepreneurship literature and provides a more holistic lens for examining how education and context shape entrepreneurial pathways¹⁵¹.

Empirical studies validate SCCT's predictive efficacy in entrepreneurship research. Research demonstrates that individuals with higher entrepreneurial self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations show stronger entrepreneurial intentions and, over time, are more likely to engage in actual venture creation¹⁵¹. Furthermore, mastery experiences such as participation in business competitions, incubator programs, or venture internships are strong predictors of entrepreneurial persistence and success. These findings parallel results from entrepreneurial intention (EI) models, suggesting that SCCT is not only predictive of intention but also of longer-term entrepreneurial achievement and mastery.

Relevance to This Study

This study adopts SCCT as an organising framework because it enables a systematic mapping of how entrepreneurial knowledge and education influence entrepreneurial

intention. By focusing on the routes of influence self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and social-contextual factors SCCT explains both why individuals form entrepreneurial intentions and how these intentions may lead to action. Moreover, by recognising the conceptual overlap with TPB, this study leverages SCCT to integrate multiple explanatory variables into a single, coherent framework, thereby addressing theoretical redundancies in entrepreneurship research¹⁵¹.

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

2.3.1 Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Entrepreneurial Intention

A study show that governments play a critical role in promoting entrepreneurship by creating awareness of business opportunities and fostering an enabling environment for enterprise development. According to research, public authorities can launch information programs to highlight opportunities available in entrepreneurship and introduce individuals to existing economic incentives designed to stimulate new venture creation¹⁵⁴. Such initiatives not only inform but also motivate individuals to take advantage of entrepreneurial prospects. A recurring theme in the literature is that the recognition of opportunities significantly increases the likelihood of entrepreneurial action, as opportunity recognition constitutes the first step toward entrepreneurial intention and subsequent venture creation.

Another study emphasized that the promotion of entrepreneurship rests upon two interrelated pillars: the strengthening of entrepreneurial skills and the improvement of entrepreneurial framework conditions¹⁵⁵. On one hand, entrepreneurs do not operate in isolation; their ability to transform ideas into profitable opportunities is shaped by the prevailing economic, institutional, and policy framework. On the other hand, entrepreneurial behaviour is ultimately rooted in individuals' attitudes, skills, and motivations. Importantly, empirical evidence suggests that even when structural conditions are unfavourable, strong entrepreneurial attitudes and competencies can enable individuals

to adapt and devise creative ways to pursue opportunities. This underscores the resilience of entrepreneurial intention when anchored in knowledge, skills, and opportunity awareness.

A study emphasis that in recent year increasing attention has been given to students' entrepreneurial intentions, as entrepreneurship is increasingly viewed as both a viable career alternative for graduates and a pathway to sustainable economic development. The global emphasis on entrepreneurship among youth arises from the dual challenges of graduate unemployment and the need for inclusive economic growth. Research shows that entrepreneurial intention is a crucial antecedent to entrepreneurial action, significantly influencing the decision to start a new venture (156). Stimulating entrepreneurial intentions among students is therefore recognized as an effective solution to unemployment crises, particularly in developing economies where job opportunities in the formal sector are limited.

As a study has shown, when entrepreneurial education and exposure to opportunity are combined, students are more likely to develop stronger intentions to pursue self-employment and business creation¹⁵⁶. This finding reinforces the importance of integrating entrepreneurship education, opportunity awareness, and supportive policies in order to cultivate a generation of entrepreneurs capable of creating wealth and jobs. Moreover, another study shows that translation of entrepreneurial intention into actual business start-ups contributes directly to employment generation, innovation, and economic transformation.

A study amongst Nigerian science and technology students demonstrates positive correlations between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial initiatives. This finding supports the proposition that higher education participation provides individuals with resource advantages that may facilitate successful entrepreneurial careers. The incorporation of entrepreneurship training into institutional strategic frameworks and

academic curricula has emerged as a deliberate response to fostering entrepreneurial aspirations amongst students. This integration operates on the fundamental premise that entrepreneurial competencies and knowledge domains are teachable and learnable constructs. The primary objective of entrepreneurship education programmes centres on presenting business ownership as a viable career pathway for students¹⁵⁷. Conversely, contradictory evidence suggests that higher education credentials enhance employment attractiveness, potentially making salaried positions more appealing than entrepreneurial pursuits. Studies involving South African students reveal no direct relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions¹⁵⁸.

A study on cross-national comparative research across Visegrád countries indicates that entrepreneurship education's direct positive impact was statistically significant only in Poland. These findings align with scholarly arguments suggesting that increased educational attainment may inversely correlate with entrepreneurial career selection. The empirical evidence supporting these conclusions remains substantial yet puzzling within the literature, necessitating further investigation¹⁵⁹. Research examining achievement-related motivation amongst tribal student populations reveals significantly higher achievement motivation levels compared to non-tribal counterparts. The elevated achievement motivation amongst tribal students is attributed to their socio-economic and cultural disadvantages, coupled with expanding expectations within contemporary India's changing landscape. This heightened achievement motivation represents an inherent drive to improve living conditions¹⁶⁰.

A study on socio-cultural factors demonstrate considerable influence on entrepreneurial behaviour patterns. However, empirical observations indicate that with appropriate structural interventions, these factors can be repositioned to favour entrepreneurship development within Indian society. Comprehensive research conducted across four Indian states, focusing on small-scale industrial units, explored relationships

between socio-economic variables and enterprise success levels. Findings established associations between enterprise success and factors including technical education, parental occupational background, entrepreneurial experience, and working capital arrangement capabilities¹⁶¹. Analytical research examining spatial determinants of entrepreneurship across India's manufacturing and services sectors identifies physical infrastructure quality and workforce education as primary entry predictors. Labour legislation and household banking quality emerge as additional influential factors. District-industry level analysis reveals extensive evidence of agglomeration economies within manufacturing industries, with supportive incumbent industrial structures for input-output markets strongly correlating with higher establishment entry rates¹⁶².

A study on entrepreneurship education impact on various entrepreneurial intention dimensions has received extensive scholarly attention, particularly regarding university undergraduate populations. Contemporary challenging business environments necessitate significant institutional roles in promoting entrepreneurship education. Such programmes effectively facilitate entrepreneurship knowledge, values, and skills acquisition¹⁷⁰. Previous empirical studies confirm the positive relationship between knowledge, skills, and entrepreneurial performance. Research examining entrepreneurship knowledge and skills as SME performance determinants in Kwara State, Nigeria, utilised a cross-sectional survey of 336 SMEs. Multiple regression analyses and descriptive statistics revealed positive significant effects of knowledge and skills factors on SME performance¹⁷¹.

A study from Malaysian shows corroborate that appropriate entrepreneurship education and exposure significantly influence students' entrepreneurial intentions¹⁷². Relational dimensions serve as critical determinants for entrepreneurial intention development. Relational support encompasses approval and assistance from family, friends, and significant others for entrepreneurial activity engagement. Such support systems significantly influence individual career choices and entrepreneurial decisions,

functioning as funding sources and role models. Multiple research studies demonstrate that entrepreneurial intentions stem from one or more motivational factors encouraging individual business initiation¹⁷³.

A study on individual traits and characteristics constitute important determinants of entrepreneurial intention amongst populations. Comparative research between German-speaking universities and leading US management institutes reveals higher entrepreneurial intentions amongst American students. US students demonstrate greater risk-taking willingness and internal locus of control, contributing to enhanced business start-up intentions. Individual personality traits emerge as crucial business start-up intention determinants, with tolerance of ambiguity and risk-taking propensity identified as influential factors¹⁷⁴. Individuals with positive entrepreneurship perceptions also maintain positive perceptions towards internal factors such as confidence and creativity. Research identifies independence desire and risk-taking propensity as optimal self-employment predictors. Entrepreneurial intentions and business outcomes correlate with individual personal traits, with empirical research identifying autonomy, achievement, control, creativity, and risk as defining characteristics for business initiation and successful operation¹⁷⁵.

A study on graduate student perception research towards entrepreneurial intention identifies eight defining factors: innovation and creativity, attitude and social skills, self-management, success desire, problem-solving capabilities, leadership skills, financial competencies, and marketing abilities. Risk-taking emerges as a fundamental entrepreneurial characteristic, with personality traits demonstrating associations with entrepreneurial intentions in existing literature¹⁷⁶. Entrepreneurial intention research examining gender-based differences identifies self-efficacy in marketing and networking skills as entrepreneurial intention predictors. Studies reveal that entrepreneurial intentions are predicted through three primary factors: need for power, institutional environment, and

individual self-efficacy. These factors relate to venture desirability intentions and perceived venture feasibility¹⁷⁷.

Another study demonstrates that self-efficacy mediates relationships between individual traits including emotional intelligence, risk propensity, and proactivity and entrepreneurial intentions. Role model perspectives highlight essential benefits for entrepreneurial intention development, as role models provide necessary information, guidance, exemplary behaviour, and support systems¹⁷⁸. The Nigerian educational system's major deficiency, particularly at tertiary levels, lies in its theoretical orientation without adequate entrepreneurial education. This approach prepares business education students primarily for white-collar employment whilst lacking essential vocational skills, contributing to high unemployment rates amongst university graduates. Graduate unemployment stems from misalignment between labour market expectations and graduate skill sets, with deficiencies in oral communication, information technology, entrepreneurial, analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making capabilities¹⁷⁹.

A study shows that Additional efforts involve entrepreneurship education integration through the National Universities Commission (NUC)¹⁸⁰. Entrepreneurship Education has experienced exponential growth over recent decades. Federal Government initiatives towards entrepreneurship development include establishment of skills-specific enterprises such as the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Industrial Attachment or Student Industrial Working Experience Scheme (SIWES), vocational and technical training programmes, agricultural training, and information communication technology training. From initial entrepreneurship courses in mid-twentieth century United States, Entrepreneurship Education has become a global phenomenon across all educational levels. As entrepreneurship research has evolved, Entrepreneurship Education research has emerged as a distinct sub-field, developing in parallel with broader entrepreneurship research debates¹⁸¹.

However, A study on the recognising entrepreneurs as products of contextual environments and learning experiences has opened new Entrepreneurship Education avenues¹⁸². Entrepreneurship Education development has reached a critical juncture where practice advancement outpaces understanding of teaching content, methodologies, and expected outcomes. Scholars express concerns about this developmental pace, emphasising the need for comprehensive knowledge base construction to support educator teaching development¹⁸³. Research in entrepreneurship education (EE) represents a relatively young but rapidly expanding field that requires legitimation through strong theoretical, conceptual, and methodological foundations. The field seeks to establish its relevance not only as an academic discipline but also as a practical tool for addressing socio-economic challenges in developing countries, including unemployment, poverty, and underutilization of human potential. Theoretical discussions regarding whether entrepreneurs are born or made have influenced Entrepreneurship Education research debates about entrepreneurship teachability. If entrepreneurs are primarily born with inherited personality traits, Entrepreneurship Education would focus on providing business-specific knowledge for venture initiation.

A study In Nigeria, where youth unemployment and poverty remain pressing challenges, examined the entrepreneurship education needs of self-employed artisans and craftsmen, particularly in urban centres such as Enugu State. Evidence from a survey involving 600 artisans and craftsmen analysed using mean scores and two-way ANOVA indicated that entrepreneurial skills such as management, accounting, public relations, marketing, communication, and record-keeping are significant predictors of entrepreneurial success¹⁸⁵. These findings highlight that beyond technical expertise, business-oriented skills are crucial for sustaining and expanding small-scale enterprises.

Another research further suggests that entrepreneurship is primarily learned through experience and discovery, rather than being restricted to formal classroom instruction.

Entrepreneurial learning is thus conceived as a lifelong process, where knowledge continuously evolves through exposure to new situations, challenges, and opportunities¹⁸⁶. Empirical evidence from studies involving Nigerian university graduates demonstrates that exposure to entrepreneurship education enhances employability skills, equipping graduates not only with technical competencies but also with creativity, resilience, and problem-solving abilities required for navigating an increasingly competitive labour market¹⁸⁶. Beyond employability, entrepreneurship education has also been shown to function as a tool for national development goals. Econometric analyses using secondary quantitative data indicate that well-developed entrepreneurship contributes to poverty reduction, employment generation, universal primary education, and gender equality¹⁸⁷. This aligns entrepreneurship education with broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reinforcing its policy relevance. For instance, research in Cross River State, Nigeria, involving 60 beneficiaries of the Central Bank of Nigeria's Entrepreneurial Development Centre, revealed significant relationships between entrepreneurial education, employment creation, and poverty alleviation¹⁸⁷. To make entrepreneurship education more impactful, scholars and policymakers have proposed several interventions. These include: Training well-prepared tutors capable of delivering entrepreneurship education effectively; Providing supportive workplace environments for practical entrepreneurial training; Strengthening political will to prioritize entrepreneurship within the national education system; Enlightening parents and students on the long-term benefits of entrepreneurship education; Supporting youth-led enterprises through financial aid, mentorship, and incubation; and Continuous education and retraining, ensuring business ventures remain viable in changing market conditions¹⁸⁸.

A study from on the growing recognition of EE, highlight persistent challenges in curriculum delivery and pedagogy. For instance, research in South-Eastern Nigerian universities, using a descriptive survey design, found that while entrepreneurship education

curricula significantly improved undergraduate entrepreneurial skills, the pedagogical methods employed were often outdated and poorly utilized¹⁸⁹. Similarly, a study of 200 final-year students at Ebonyi State University revealed that entrepreneurship education was highly relevant in equipping students with job creation capabilities, preparing them to become self-reliant entrepreneurs rather than dependent job seekers¹⁹⁰.

These studies suggest that entrepreneurship education in Nigeria holds transformative potential for fostering economic growth, reducing unemployment, and alleviating poverty. However, realizing this potential requires addressing critical gaps in pedagogy, tutor preparation, and systemic support.

2.3.2 Career awareness and Entrepreneurial Intention

A study on Entrepreneurship education demonstrate that both positive and negative relationships with entrepreneurial intentions. Some research explains that entrepreneurship education reveals physical and mental challenges resulting from limited resources, unsupportive environments, environmental changes, and early career failures. These revelations highlight entrepreneurial struggles and associated risks, potentially leading students towards lower-risk salaried employment. Research amongst 209 Management and Business students in Indonesian universities confirms negative relationships between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention¹⁹¹.

Another study demonstrates that final-year students completing business courses express lower entrepreneurial intentions compared to first-year students. According to planned behaviour theory, individual attitudes towards behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influence behavioural intentions. Individual beliefs and attitudes inform self-employment mindset development, with confirmed positive relationships between behavioural attitudes and entrepreneurial intentions¹⁹². The Theory of Planned Behaviour provides comprehensive frameworks for understanding entrepreneurial intention formation. Subjective norms refer to individual perceptions of

social pressures influencing behavioural patterns. Family, friends, and significant others substantially impact intention formation, though subjective norms may not represent the strongest positive entrepreneurial intention influencers. Perceived behavioural control relates to individual self-esteem and confidence in task performance, with entrepreneurs utilising past experiences to evaluate task feasibility¹⁹³.

Another research demonstrates positive significant relationships between perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention. Various entrepreneurship education research yields different impacts on student behaviour, attitudes, subjective norms, and entrepreneurial intentions. Despite entrepreneurship studies' popularity as positive entrepreneurial intention development factors, limited empirical evidence exists amongst Kathmandu management students¹⁹⁴. Entrepreneurial attitudes research advocates that entrepreneurship process success can be highly attributed to process attitudes. Attitudes critically shape individual innovation and behaviour patterns. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor identifies entrepreneurial attitudes as perspectives towards entrepreneurship, measuring perceived business opportunity recognition. Attitudes play crucial roles in establishing entrepreneurial activity within populations¹⁹⁵.

A study on entrepreneurial attitudes is widely recognised as crucial antecedents of entrepreneurial activity, while also being shaped by engagement in entrepreneurial practices themselves. At the societal level, positive national attitudes toward entrepreneurship provide cultural legitimacy, fostering support systems, financial resources, and networking opportunities that benefit both existing entrepreneurs and potential business starters. At the individual level, entrepreneurial attitudes encompass two particularly important elements: the ability to recognise opportunities and the capability to assess and take calculated risks. Individuals with strong entrepreneurial attitudes are therefore more inclined to initiate new ventures, with risk-takers disproportionately

represented among entrepreneurs due to their greater willingness to confront uncertainty and accept responsibility for outcomes¹⁹⁶.

A study claimed that entrepreneurial attitudes can be analysed through cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions¹⁹⁷. The cognitive component encompasses beliefs, knowledge, and thought patterns that shape perceptions about entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. For example, students' understanding of business start-up processes influences how they approach risk and opportunity. The affective component refers to feelings and emotions toward entrepreneurship, such as excitement, fear, or enthusiasm, which strongly determine whether individuals perceive entrepreneurship as desirable. The behavioural component captures observable actions, willingness to respond, and readiness to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Thus, entrepreneurship education is designed to foster entrepreneurial knowledge, behaviours, skills, and attitudes. Evidence suggests that while formal learning does not directly predict entrepreneurial intentions, it exerts a strong indirect effect through the development of entrepreneurial self-efficacy¹⁹⁸. Self-efficacy enhances students' confidence in their ability to successfully launch ventures, thereby translating attitudes into intention and eventual behaviour.

Importantly, study on the influence of entrepreneurship education appears stronger in entrepreneurship-hostile environments contexts where institutional or cultural barriers exist than in supportive environments. In such settings, educational interventions provide the necessary compensatory mechanisms (knowledge, motivation, and networks) that encourage venture creation¹⁹⁹. Furthermore, educational support consistently shows greater predictive power than structural or policy support, possibly because students perceive it as an immediate and tangible resource²⁰⁰. Despite substantial evidence linking EE with entrepreneurial intentions, findings are not always straightforward. Some studies suggest that curricular and extracurricular exposure may paradoxically dampen entrepreneurial

intention by overburdening students or making them more aware of entrepreneurship's challenges²⁰¹. Similarly, research on Chinese university students indicates that while EE positively influences entrepreneurial intention, this relationship is moderated by factors such as gender, academic major, and institutional type²⁰². For instance, female students often report lower self-efficacy and weaker entrepreneurial intentions, yet they may derive greater benefit from entrepreneurship education compared to male counterparts²⁰³.

A study on entrepreneurship courses was shown to increase technical students' learning efficacy and satisfaction, but not their start-up intentions²⁰⁴. This suggests that while EE equips students with transferrable skills, it may also help them conclude that entrepreneurship is not a desirable career path, leading them to apply learned skills in alternative contexts. Alongside educational factors, personality traits play a central role in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. Risk propensity is consistently linked with higher entrepreneurial self-efficacy and stronger entrepreneurial intentions²⁰⁵. Self-efficacy serves as a mediator, translating personal traits such as innovativeness, proactivity, and locus of control into entrepreneurial outcomes²⁰⁶. Conversely, risk aversion does not exert a direct effect but influences intentions indirectly through Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) antecedents such as attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control²⁰⁷.

Studies from Malaysia and Iran reinforce these findings, showing that proactive personalities and achievement need exert stronger influence on entrepreneurial intentions than environmental supports such as capital access or institutional infrastructure^{208,209}. Moreover, intrinsic motivations, such as autonomy and competence, foster persistence and dynamic entrepreneurial behaviour, whereas extrinsic motivations often lead to fragile intentions and early withdrawal when faced with challenges. Taken together, the literature reveals a multi-layered interaction between entrepreneurship education, attitudes, self-efficacy, and personality factors.

Thus, education matters most when it builds self-efficacy, helping students transform attitudes into intentions. Attitudes are multidimensional, shaped by cognitive beliefs, affective evaluations, and behavioural readiness. Personality traits amplify or dampen intentions, with risk propensity and proactive personality being particularly influential. Contextual factors such as culture, gender, and institutional environment moderate these relationships, sometimes producing counterintuitive outcomes (e.g., reduced entrepreneurial intentions after EE exposure).

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2.4 Conceptual Model

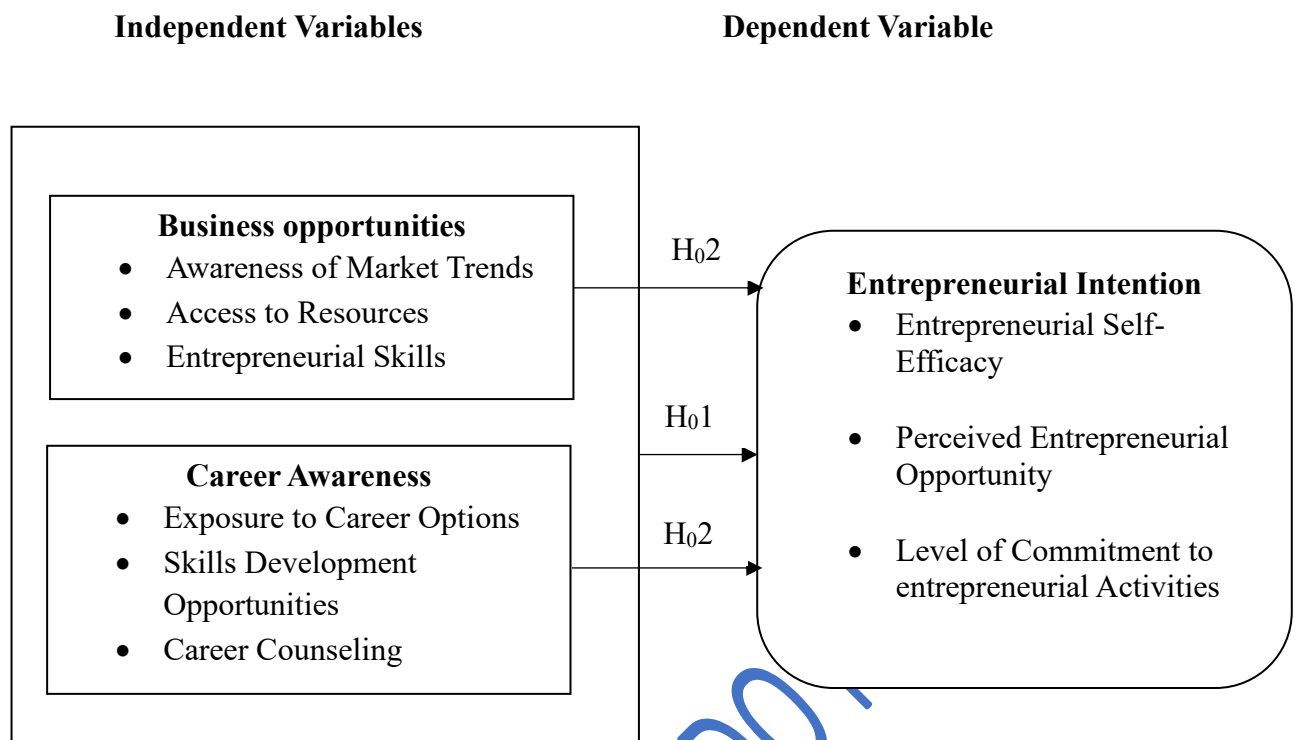


Fig 2.1: Conceptual Model of Knowledge of Business Opportunities, Career Awareness and Entrepreneurial Intention

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

The relationship between Business Opportunities and Career awareness forms a critical synergy that underpins Entrepreneurial Intention among business education students in colleges of education Southwest, Nigeria. Knowledge of Business Opportunities encompasses students' understanding of market trends, their access to essential resources, and the development of entrepreneurial skills, equipping them to identify and seize viable business ventures. Meanwhile, Career awareness involves exposing students to diverse career options, offering opportunities for skill development, and providing access to career counselling, collectively preparing them for entrepreneurial pathways. Together, these constructs address the cognitive and practical dimensions needed to transform intention into action, particularly in a context marked by economic challenges and limited entrepreneurial ecosystems.

This dynamic interaction is modelled through the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which explains entrepreneurial intention as a function of attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Knowledge of Business Opportunities shapes students' positive attitudes by enhancing their awareness of market trends and confidence in resource availability and skill acquisition, making entrepreneurship appear desirable and feasible. Simultaneously, it bolsters perceived behavioural control by reducing perceived barriers to starting a business, enabling students to navigate the uncertainties of the Nigerian business environment with greater assurance.

Career awareness complements this process by reinforcing subjective norms and perceived control, aligning students' entrepreneurial aspirations with societal and institutional expectations. Through exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, and career counselling, students gain a clearer understanding of entrepreneurship as a viable and rewarding career path, fostering social support and self-efficacy. This synergy ensures that students are motivated and equipped with the knowledge and skills to pursue entrepreneurial ventures, addressing local challenges like youth unemployment and resource scarcity.

Together, Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Career awareness drive Entrepreneurial Intention through the mediating pathways of TPB, creating a robust conceptual model for this study. Enhancing attitudes, norms, and control, these constructs cultivate a proactive entrepreneurial mindset among business education students, offering a strategic approach to fostering innovation and economic growth in Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria. This integrated framework highlights the transformative potential of education in overcoming structural barriers and nurturing future entrepreneurs.

2.5 Summary of the Gap in the Literature Reviewed

Several gaps have been identified in the literature on business opportunities, career awareness, and entrepreneurial intention among business education students. While the existing research offers valuable insights, it is evident that certain areas remain underexplored or inadequately addressed. Firstly, most studies focus on isolated factors influencing entrepreneurial intention, such as individual attitudes, subjective norms, or perceived behavioural control. However, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that integrate these factors to provide a holistic understanding of how they collectively influence entrepreneurial intention among business education students. This fragmented approach limits our understanding of the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial intention. Secondly, much of the existing literature is based on studies conducted in Western contexts, with limited research focusing on Nigeria's unique socio-economic and cultural conditions, particularly among students of colleges of education. This geographical bias limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts, such as Southwest Nigeria, highlighting the need for context-specific research that considers local nuances.

Thirdly, although the importance of career awareness in shaping career intentions is acknowledged, there is a scarcity of empirical studies examining how career awareness impacts entrepreneurial intentions. The mechanisms through which exposure to career options and career counselling translate into entrepreneurial actions remain insufficiently explored, leaving a gap in our understanding of the direct influence of career awareness on entrepreneurship. Fourthly, the literature highlights the significance of entrepreneurial skills, yet there is a limited understanding of how specific skills development opportunities provided within educational settings influence students' entrepreneurial intentions. Studies often overlook the practical aspects of skill acquisition and its direct impact on entrepreneurial activities, necessitating further exploration into how these skills are developed and applied. Fifthly, while access to resources such as capital, networks, and

support systems is recognized as critical for entrepreneurial success, there is a gap in research that empirically links these resources to entrepreneurial intentions among business education students. Additionally, the role of educational institutions in facilitating access to these resources is not adequately addressed, leaving a significant area of potential impact unexplored.

Sixthly, existing studies on entrepreneurship education often lack a focus on the long-term impact of these programs on students' entrepreneurial intentions and actual entrepreneurial behaviour. There is a need for longitudinal studies that assess the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education and its sustained influence over time, providing a clearer picture of the lasting benefits of such programs.

Lastly, although various theoretical frameworks have been employed to study entrepreneurial intentions, the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) has limited application in the context of Nigerian business education students. Applying TPB could provide a more structured approach to understanding the interplay between attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in shaping entrepreneurial intentions. Addressing these gaps is crucial for developing a more nuanced understanding of how knowledge of business opportunities, career awareness, and skill development opportunities influence entrepreneurial intentions.

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Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter describes the procedures that were used in this study. It is discussed based on the following sub-headings, research design, population, sample and sampling technique, description of the research instrument, data collection, method of data analysis, which ensures that the study achieves validity, reliability and relevance.

3.1 Research Design

The descriptive survey research design was employed to carry out this study. This research design employs the use of questionnaire to collect the data needed from the respondents. A descriptive survey research design may also try to generalise the findings from a representative sample to a larger target population.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this study consists of one thousand, one hundred and sixty-six (1,166) 200-level Business Education students enrolled in Colleges of Education across Southwest Nigeria. The 200 level students were considered appropriate because they were at the middle of their course duration of three years. Those in 100 levels were considered relatively new in the college while those in 300 level (third-year) were in their final year and not always available in school because of their teaching practice or project work. The total population for the study was 1,166 students, distributed across the states and institutions as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Population of the Study

S/N	States	Colleges of Education	No of Students	Total
1	Oyo	Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo	197	380
		Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate	150	
		Muftau Lanihun College of Education, Ibadan	33	
2	Osun	Federal College of Education, Iwo	149	168
		Grace College of Education, Osogbo	19	
3	Ondo	Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo	256	288
		Private College of Education, Akure	32	
4	Ogun	Federal College of Education, Abeokuta	201	330
		Tai Solarin College of Education, Ijebu-Ode	111	
		Piaget College of Education, Ibara, Abeokuta	18	
		Total		1,166

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

This study adopted the total enumeration technique also referred to as the census method, as the entire population was deemed both manageable and accessible for data collection. The population comprised 1,166 200-level Business Education students in Colleges of Education across Southwest, Nigeria.

The adoption of the total enumeration approach ensures the inclusion of every member of the population, thereby enhancing the validity and generalizability of the study findings within the specified group. Furthermore, this method eliminates potential sampling errors and biases that may arise from using probabilistic or non-probabilistic sampling techniques.

The distribution of the population across the selected institutions is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Sample Size of the Study

S/N	State	Colleges of Education	No of Students	Total
1	Oyo	Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo	197	380
		Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate	150	
		Muftau Lanihun College of Education, Ibadan	33	
2	Osun	Federal College of Education, Iwo	149	168
		Grace College of Education, Osogbo	19	
3	Ondo	Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo	256	288
		Private College of Education, Akure	32	
4	Ogun	Federal College of Education, Abeokuta	201	330
		Tai Solarin College of Education, Ijebu-Ode	111	
		Piaget College of Education, Ibara, Abeokuta	18	
		Total	1,166	1,166

Sources Field Survey 2025

3.4 Description of the Research Instrument

The research instrument for this study was an adopted self-structured questionnaire titled “Knowledge of Business Opportunities, Career Awareness, and Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (KBAE)”. It was specifically designed to assess factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions among college students. The questionnaire is divided into three main sections:

Section A: This section gathers demographic information about the respondents, including gender, age, and level educational qualification, and department.

Section B: This section examines the extent of entrepreneurial intentions among college students, focusing on three key areas: entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived entrepreneurial opportunities, and the level of commitment to entrepreneurship. Respondents evaluate statements using a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, allowing for quantitative measurement of their entrepreneurial dispositions.

Section C: This section explores knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness in relation to entrepreneurial intentions. It investigates factors such as awareness of market

trends, access to resources, entrepreneurial skills, exposure to career options, skill development opportunities, and career counseling. Respondents indicate how these factors influence their motivation to pursue entrepreneurship.

The structured design of the KBAE questionnaire enables a detailed analysis of the multifaceted factors shaping entrepreneurial intentions among college students. To ensure confidentiality and integrity in data collection, respondents' identities were anonymized, thereby providing valid and reliable insights into entrepreneurship within Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria.

3.5 Validity of the Research Instrument

The validity of the KBAE questionnaire was established through face and content validity. The instrument was submitted to the researcher's supervisors for critical review, as well as faculty members including experts in the field of test and measurement. Their corrections, critiques, and suggestions were thoroughly examined and incorporated into the final draft of the questionnaire. This process ensured that the instrument accurately measures the intended variables and is appropriate for the target population, prior to conducting the pilot study.

3.6 Reliability of the Research Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using the test-retest method over a two-week interval. A pilot study was conducted with fifty respondents drawn from the College of Education, Lanlate (Oyo State), and Assanusiya College of Education, Odeomu (Osun State), who were not part of the main study. Responses from the test and retest were analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha formula to evaluate the internal consistency of the 50 items within the questionnaire.

Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater reliability. The instrument yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.893, demonstrating a high level

of coherence and consistency among responses. This confirms that the questionnaire is reliable for measuring the objectives it was designed to assess.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The researcher obtained letter of introduction from the department of Arts and Social Science Education before conducting the research. Four research assistants were recruited and trained on questionnaire administration. Courtesy visits were made to the schools to inform the authorities of the study's aim and the need for student cooperation with the research assistants. Over a one-month period, the researcher, aided by the assistants, explained all aspects of the instrument to the respondents and assured them of the confidentiality of the information provided. All administered questionnaires were collected and collated within the timeframe for data analysis.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The study employed descriptive statistics, including simple frequency count and percentage, to analyze demographic data and mean decision to address all three research questions. The following thresholds were established for interpreting the data: Very High (3.50-4.00), High (2.50-3.49), Low (1.80-2.49), and Very Low (1.00-1.49). the stated hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of Multiple regression analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 was employed to ensure the accuracy of the data analysis.

Endnotes

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Chapter Four

Results and Discussion of Findings

The Results and Discussion of Findings of the investigation are presented in this chapter. The findings were based on the research questions and hypotheses raised in accordance with the study objective.

4.1 Demographic Data Analysis

Table 4.1: Demographics Distribution of Respondents who Participated in the Study (N=1109)

Variable	Categories	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Male	525	47.3
	Female	584	52.7
	Total	1109	100.0
Level	NCE1	565	50.9
	NCE2	544	49.1
	Total	1109	100.0
Age	15-20	198	17.9
	21-25	793	71.5
	26-30	118	10.6
	Total	1109	100.0

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

The data presented in Table 4.10 provides a demographic overview of the 1,109 respondents who participated in the study. In terms of gender distribution, female respondents slightly outnumbered their male counterparts. A total of 584 females participated in the study, representing 52.7% of the sample, while 525 males accounted for 47.3%. With respect to academic /educational level, the respondents were almost evenly split between two categories. A slight majority, 565 respondents (50.9%), fell at NCE1 academic /educational level, while 544 respondents (49.1%) fell at NCE2 academic /educational level. Looking at the age distribution, the majority of respondents fell within the 21–25 years age bracket, making up 793 individuals or 71.5% of the total sample. This was followed by the 15–20 years age group, which comprised 198 respondents (17.9%), and the 26–30 years group with 118 respondents, representing 10.6% of the sample.

Overall, the demographic data reveals a relatively balanced representation in terms of gender and education, with a notable concentration of respondents in the 21–25 age range.

4.2 Presentation of Data

4.2.1 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the level of entrepreneurial intention among Business Education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria?

Table 4.2: Mean Rating and Standard Deviation of Response of Level of Entrepreneurial Intention among Business Education Students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria

SN	Statement	SA F (%)	A F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1.	I am confident in my ability to start and run a successful business.	683 (61.6)	398 (35.9)	9 (0.8)	19 (1.7)	3.58	.57	V. High
2.	I believe I have the skills and knowledge to be an entrepreneur.	864 (77.9)	198 (17.9)	0 (0.0)	47 (4.2)	3.74	.53	V. High
3.	I feel prepared to handle the challenges of entrepreneurship.	835 (75.3)	172 (15.5)	19 (1.7)	83 (7.5)	3.64	.69	V. High
4.	I am capable of identifying business opportunities and acting on them.	476 (42.9)	416 (37.5)	27 (2.4)	190 (17.1)	3.21	.81	High
5.	I frequently see opportunities for starting a new business.	515 (46.4)	415 (37.4)	0 (0.0)	179 (16.1)	3.30	.73	High
6.	I believe there are many unmet needs in the market that I can address.	763 (68.8)	308 (27.8)	9 (0.8)	29 (2.6)	3.65	.57	V. High
7.	I can identify gaps in the market that could be filled by a new business.	880 (79.4)	135 (12.2)	19 (1.7)	75 (6.8)	3.69	.67	V. High
8.	I am aware of various resources and support systems available for new entrepreneurs.	755 (68.1)	257 (23.2)	0 (0.0)	97 (8.7)	3.59	.65	V. High
9.	I am committed to pursuing entrepreneurship as a career path.	802 (72.3)	260 (23.4)	19 (1.7)	28 (2.5)	3.66	.61	V. High
10.	I am willing to invest significant time and effort into starting my own business.	632 (57.0)	412 (37.2)	28 (2.5)	37 (3.3)	3.49	.68	High
11.	I am dedicated to overcoming obstacles to achieve my entrepreneurial goals.	641 (57.8)	241 (21.7)	200 (18.0)	27 (2.4)	3.19	1.13	High
12.	I am prepared to make personal sacrifices to ensure the success of my business.	693 (62.5)	351 (31.7)	0 (0.0)	65 (5.9)	3.57	.60	V. High
Weighted Mean						3.53	.69	V. High

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Criterion: Very high (3.50 – 4.00), High (2.50 – 3.49), Low (1.80 – 2.49), Very Low (1.00 – 1.49)

Table 4.2 provides insight into the level of entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria. The data reveals a generally high level of entrepreneurial intention among the respondents, as evidenced by the consistently strong agreement across all the items and the high mean scores, all above the cut-off mean of 2.50. Specifically, a significant majority of the students (61.6%) strongly agreed and 35.9% agreed that they are confident in their ability to start and run a successful business, with a mean score of 3.58 ± 0.57 . Similarly, 77.9% of the students strongly agreed and 17.9% agreed that they believe they possess the skills and knowledge necessary to become entrepreneurs, recording the highest mean score of 3.74 ± 0.53 . In addition, 75.3% of the respondents strongly agreed and 15.5% agreed that they feel prepared to handle the challenges associated with entrepreneurship ($\bar{x} = 3.64 \pm 0.69$).

Students also demonstrated strong belief in their ability to identify market needs, with 68.8% strongly agreeing and 27.8% agreeing that there are many unmet needs in the market that they could address, yielding a mean of 3.65 ± 0.57 . Likewise, 79.4% strongly agreed and 12.2% agreed that they can identify gaps in the market that could be filled by a new business ($\bar{x} = 3.69 \pm 0.67$). The students' responses further showed that 68.1% strongly agreed and 23.2% agreed that they are aware of various resources and support systems available for new entrepreneurs, with a mean score of 3.59 ± 0.65 . In terms of personal commitment, 72.3% of the students strongly agreed and 23.4% agreed that they are committed to pursuing entrepreneurship as a career path, with a mean of 3.66 ± 0.61 . Additionally, 57.0% strongly agreed and 37.2% agreed that they are willing to invest significant time and effort into starting their own businesses ($\bar{x} = 3.49 \pm 0.68$).

A substantial number (62.5%) also strongly agreed and 31.7% agreed that they are prepared to make personal sacrifices to ensure business success, resulting in a mean score of 3.57 ± 0.60 . Although all items showed positive responses, a few had comparatively lower levels of agreement. For example, only 42.9% strongly agreed and 37.5% agreed that

they are capable of identifying and acting on business opportunities, while 17.1% disagreed ($\bar{x} = 3.21 \pm 0.81$). Additionally, while 57.8% strongly agreed and 21.7% agreed that they are dedicated to overcoming obstacles to achieve their entrepreneurial goals, 18.0% disagreed, and this item recorded the highest variability with a standard deviation of 1.13 ($\bar{x} = 3.19$).

Overall, the weighted mean score of 3.53 ± 0.69 suggests that business education students in Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria exhibit a high level of entrepreneurial intention. This implies that the students are not only inclined toward entrepreneurship but also believe they have the skills, knowledge, and determination to pursue and succeed in entrepreneurial ventures.

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Research Question 2: What is the level of knowledge of business opportunities among Business Education Students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria?

Table 4.3: Mean Rating and Standard Deviation of Response of Students Level of knowledge of Business Opportunities among Business Education Students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria

SN	Statement	SA F (%)	A F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1.	Awareness of current market trends has increased my interest in starting a business.	807 (72.8)	230 (20.7)	18 (1.6)	54 (4.9)	3.65	.65	V. High
2.	Understanding market trends has helped me identify potential business opportunities.	510 (46.0)	519 (46.8)	0 (0.0)	80 (7.2)	3.39	.62	High
3.	Knowledge of market trends has influenced my decision to pursue entrepreneurship.	819 (73.9)	226 (20.4)	10 (0.9)	54 (4.9)	3.67	.61	V. High
4.	Being aware of emerging market trends has strengthened my intention to become an entrepreneur.	775 (69.9)	324 (29.2)	10 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	3.68	.52	V. High
5.	Market trend insights have made me more confident in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures.	618 (55.7)	463 (41.7)	0 (0.0)	28 (2.5)	3.53	.55	V. High
6.	Access to resources such as funding and business networks has enhanced my entrepreneurial ambitions.	658 (59.3)	451 (40.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.59	.49	V. High
7.	Access to resources has made starting a business seem more feasible to me.	602 (54.3)	480 (43.3)	18 (1.6)	9 (0.8)	3.50	.60	V. High
8.	Having access to entrepreneurial resources has positively influenced my intention to start a business.	723 (65.2)	367 (33.1)	0 (0.0)	19 (1.7)	3.63	.52	V. High
9.	Resource availability has increased my confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities.	651 (58.7)	420 (37.9)	0 (0.0)	38 (3.4)	3.55	.56	V. High
10.	Access to essential business resources has strengthened my intention to become an entrepreneur.	721 (65.0)	331 (29.8)	19 (1.7)	38 (3.4)	3.58	.64	V. High
11.	Acquiring entrepreneurial skills has increased my motivation to start my own business.	701 (63.2)	362 (32.6)	18 (1.6)	28 (2.5)	3.57	.63	V. High
12.	Developing entrepreneurial skills has improved my confidence in pursuing business opportunities.	706 (63.7)	375 (33.8)	0 (0.0)	28 (2.5)	3.61	.54	V. High
13.	Skills in entrepreneurship have positively impacted my intention to become an entrepreneur.	558 (50.3)	487 (43.9)	18 (1.6)	46 (4.1)	3.43	.65	High

14.	Training in entrepreneurial skills has made the prospect of starting a business more appealing to me.	821 (74.0)	260 (23.4)	10 (0.9)	18 (1.6)	3.71	.54	V. High
15.	Enhanced entrepreneurial skills have strengthened my commitment to pursuing entrepreneurial ventures.	814 (73.4)	215 (19.4)	0 (0.0)	80 (7.2)	3.66	.61	V. High
16.	Knowledge of business opportunities, including market trends, resources, and entrepreneurial skills, has significantly increased my intention to start a business.	407 (36.7)	348 (31.4)	156 (14.1)	198 (17.9)	2.91	1.05	High
17.	Overall, understanding business opportunities has strengthened my commitment to pursuing entrepreneurship.	808 (72.9)	228 (20.6)	28 (2.5)	45 (4.1)	3.64	.68	V. High
18.	The combined knowledge of market trends, access to resources, and entrepreneurial skills has made me more inclined to start my own business.	715 (64.5)	349 (31.5)	18 (1.6)	27 (2.4)	3.59	.62	V. High
19.	Awareness of business opportunities has positively influenced my motivation to become an entrepreneur.	791 (71.3)	244 (22.0)	30 (2.7)	44 (4.0)	3.62	.69	V. High
20.	The integration of market trend insights, resource availability, and entrepreneurial skill development has enhanced my entrepreneurial intentions.	758 (68.3)	297 (26.8)	36 (3.2)	18 (1.6)	3.60	.68	V. High
Weighted Mean						3.56	.62	V. High

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

Criterion: Very high (3.50 – 4.00), High (2.50 – 3.49), Low (1.80 – 2.49), Very Low (1.00 – 1.49)

Table 4.3 presents data on the level of knowledge of business opportunities among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria. The findings indicate a generally positive perception and awareness among students regarding market trends, access to resources, and entrepreneurial skills, which have collectively influenced their entrepreneurial intentions. For instance, 72.8% of students strongly agree and 20.7% agree that awareness of current market trends has increased their interest in starting a business, with a mean score of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 0.65. Additionally, 46.0% strongly agree and 46.8% agree that understanding market trends has helped them identify

potential business opportunities, reflected by a mean of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 0.62. Moreover, 73.9% of students strongly agree and 20.4% agree that knowledge of market trends has influenced their decision to pursue entrepreneurship, with a mean of 3.67 (SD = 0.61). Furthermore, 69.9% strongly agree and 29.2% agree that being aware of emerging market trends has strengthened their intention to become entrepreneurs (mean = 3.68, SD = 0.52).

Similarly, 55.7% strongly agree and 41.7% agree that market trend insights have made them more confident in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures, with a mean score of 3.53 and a standard deviation of 0.55. Regarding resources, 59.3% strongly agree and 40.7% agree that access to funding and business networks has enhanced their entrepreneurial ambitions (mean = 3.59, SD = 0.49). Similarly, 54.3% strongly agree and 43.3% agree that the access to resources has made starting a business seem more feasible to them (mean = 3.50, SD = 0.60). Also, 65.2% strongly agree and 33.1% agree that having access to entrepreneurial resources has positively influenced their intention to start a business (mean = 3.63, SD = 0.52). Confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities is high, with 58.7% strongly agreeing and 37.9% agreeing that resource availability has increased their confidence (mean = 3.55, SD = 0.56). Similarly, 65.0% strongly agree and 29.8% agree that access to essential business resources has strengthened their intention to become entrepreneurs (mean = 3.58, SD = 0.64). In terms of entrepreneurial skills, 63.2% strongly agree and 32.6% agree that acquiring entrepreneurial skills has increased their motivation to start a business (mean = 3.57, SD = 0.63).

Additionally, 63.7% strongly agree and 33.8% agree that developing entrepreneurial skills has improved their confidence in pursuing business opportunities (mean = 3.61, SD = 0.54). Furthermore, 50.3% strongly agree and 43.9% agree that skills in entrepreneurship have positively impacted their intention to become entrepreneurs (mean = 3.43, SD = 0.65). Training in entrepreneurial skills appears particularly influential, with

74.0% strongly agreeing and 23.4% agreeing that such training has made the prospect of starting a business more appealing (mean = 3.71, SD = 0.54). Similarly, 73.4% strongly agree and 19.4% agree that enhanced entrepreneurial skills have strengthened their commitment to pursuing entrepreneurship (mean = 3.66, SD = 0.61). However, a lower level of agreement is observed for the statement on knowledge of business opportunities significantly increasing their intention to start a business, where 36.7% strongly agree and 31.4% agree, while a notable 32% expressed disagreement (mean = 2.91, SD = 1.05). Despite this, 72.9% strongly agree and 20.6% agree that understanding business opportunities has strengthened their commitment to entrepreneurship (mean = 3.64, SD = 0.68).

Finally, integration of market trends, resources, and skills appears to positively influence motivation and intention, with 64.5% strongly agreeing and 31.5% agreeing that combined knowledge has made them more inclined to start a business (mean = 3.59, SD = 0.62). Likewise, 71.3% strongly agree and 22.0% agree that awareness of business opportunities has positively influenced their motivation to become entrepreneurs (mean = 3.62, SD = 0.69), and 68.3% strongly agree and 26.8% agree that this integration has enhanced their entrepreneurial intentions (mean = 3.60, SD = 0.68). The overall weighted mean score of 3.56 and standard deviation of 0.62 indicate that business education students in Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria generally possess a high level of knowledge about business opportunities, which has positively influenced their entrepreneurial intentions.

Research Question 3: What is the level of career awareness creation among Business Education Students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria?

Table 4.4: Mean rating and Standard Deviation of Response Level of Career Awareness Creation among Business Education Students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria

SN	Statement	SA F (%)	A F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1.	Exposure to various career options has expanded my understanding of entrepreneurship.	731 (65.9)	260 (23.4)	99 (8.9)	19 (1.7)	3.46	.91	High
2.	Learning about diverse career paths has increased my interest in starting my own business.	777 (70.1)	113 (10.2)	18 (1.6)	201 (18.1)	3.49	.84	High
3.	Information about different entrepreneurial fields has motivated me to consider entrepreneurship.	758 (68.3)	332 (29.9)	0 (0.0)	19 (1.7)	3.67	.51	V. High
4.	Seeing successful entrepreneurs has positively influenced my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	745 (67.2)	327 (29.5)	18 (1.6)	19 (1.7)	3.62	.61	V. High
5.	Understanding various career options has helped me envision entrepreneurship as a viable career path.	876 (79.0)	233 (21.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.79	.41	V. High
6.	Skill development workshops have enhanced my entrepreneurial skills and ambitions.	761 (68.6)	321 (28.9)	0 (0.0)	27 (2.4)	3.66	.52	V. High
7.	Training sessions have boosted my confidence in my ability to start a business.	794 (71.6)	243 (21.9)	0 (0.0)	72 (6.5)	3.65	.60	V. High
8.	Practical skill development activities have increased my motivation to become an entrepreneur.	570 (51.4)	495 (44.6)	0 (0.0)	44 (4.0)	3.47	.57	High
9.	Skill-building programs have made entrepreneurship seem more achievable to me.	832 (75.0)	277 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.75	.43	V. High
10.	Opportunities to develop relevant skills have strengthened my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	700 (63.1)	401 (36.2)	0 (0.0)	8 (0.7)	3.62	.50	V. High
11.	Career counseling has clarified the steps needed for an entrepreneurial career.	659 (59.4)	386 (34.8)	0 (0.0)	64 (5.8)	3.54	.60	V. High

12.	Guidance from career counselors has helped me see entrepreneurship as a viable option.	783 (70.6)	298 (26.9)	0 (0.0)	28 (2.5)	3.68	.52	V. High
13.	Career counseling has provided valuable insights into the skills required for entrepreneurship.	792 (71.4)	262 (23.6)	0 (0.0)	55 (5.0)	3.66	.57	V. High
14.	Support from career counselors has positively impacted my intention to pursue entrepreneurial activities.	642 (57.9)	402 (36.2)	19 (1.7)	46 (4.1)	3.50	.66	V. High
15.	Career counseling has assisted me in understanding how to prepare for a successful entrepreneurial journey.	783 (70.6)	270 (24.3)	47 (4.2)	9 (0.8)	3.61	.71	V. High
16.	Career awareness initiatives at my college have made me more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship.	669 (60.3)	384 (34.6)	9 (0.8)	47 (4.2)	3.54	.62	V. High
17.	Exposure to career options, skill development, and career counseling has reinforced my entrepreneurial intentions.	680 (61.3)	392 (35.3)	0 (0.0)	37 (3.3)	3.58	.56	V. High
18.	Career awareness programs have significantly influenced my desire to start a business.	674 (60.8)	379 (34.2)	0 (0.0)	56 (5.0)	3.56	.59	V. High
19.	Overall, career awareness creation efforts have enhanced my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	649 (58.5)	404 (36.4)	19 (1.7)	37 (3.3)	3.52	.65	V. High
20.	The combined impact of career awareness initiatives has strengthened my commitment to becoming an entrepreneur.	740 (66.7)	322 (29.0)	0 (0.0)	47 (4.2)	3.62	.57	V. High
Weighted Mean						3.60	.60	V. High

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

Criterion: Very high (3.50 – 4.00), High (2.50 – 3.49), Low (1.80 – 2.49), Very Low (1.00 – 1.49)

Table 4.4 presents data on the level of career awareness creation among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria, highlighting the positive influence of exposure to career options, skill development, and career counselling on students' entrepreneurial intentions. The data reveals that a majority of students agree that exposure to various career options has expanded their understanding of entrepreneurship, with 65.9% strongly agreeing and 23.4% agreeing ($\bar{x} = 3.46$, $SD = 0.91$). Similarly, 70.1% strongly agree and 10.2% agree that learning about diverse career paths has increased their interest in starting a business ($\bar{x} = 3.49$, $SD = 0.84$). Furthermore, 68.3% strongly agree and

29.9% agree that information about different entrepreneurial fields has motivated them to consider entrepreneurship ($\bar{x} = 3.67$, $SD = 0.51$). The influence of successful entrepreneurs is also significant, with 67.2% strongly agreeing and 29.5% agreeing that seeing such role models has positively affected their entrepreneurial intentions ($\bar{x} = 3.62$, $SD = 0.61$). Understanding career options has helped 79.0% of students strongly agree and 21.0% agree that entrepreneurship is a viable career path ($\bar{x} = 3.79$, $SD = 0.41$). Skill development initiatives are highly regarded; 68.6% strongly agree and 28.9% agree that workshops have enhanced their entrepreneurial skills and ambitions ($\bar{x} = 3.66$, $SD = 0.52$), while 71.6% strongly agree and 21.9% agree that training sessions have boosted their confidence to start a business ($\bar{x} = 3.65$, $SD = 0.60$). Practical skill activities have increased motivation for 51.4% strongly agreeing and 44.6% agreeing ($\bar{x} = 3.47$, $SD = 0.57$), and skill-building programs have made entrepreneurship seem more achievable to 75.0% strongly agreeing and 25.0% agreeing students ($\bar{x} = 3.75$, $SD = 0.43$). Access to development opportunities further strengthened intentions, with 63.1% strongly agreeing and 36.2% agreeing that such opportunities increased their entrepreneurial commitment ($\bar{x} = 3.62$, $SD = 0.50$). Career counselling also played a vital role; 59.4% strongly agree and 34.8% agree it has clarified the steps needed for entrepreneurship ($\bar{x} = 3.54$, $SD = 0.60$), while 70.6% strongly agree and 26.9% agree that guidance helped them see entrepreneurship as viable ($\bar{x} = 3.68$, $SD = 0.52$).

Further, 71.4% strongly agree and 23.6% agree that counselling provided valuable skill insights ($\bar{x} = 3.66$, $SD = 0.57$). Support from career counsellors positively impacted 57.9% strongly agreeing and 36.2% agreeing students ($\bar{x} = 3.50$, $SD = 0.66$), and counselling has assisted 70.6% strongly agreeing and 24.3% agreeing students in preparing for a successful entrepreneurial journey ($\bar{x} = 3.61$, $SD = 0.71$). Career awareness initiatives within colleges have made 60.3% strongly agree and 34.6% agree they are more inclined toward entrepreneurship ($\bar{x} = 3.54$, $SD = 0.62$). Exposure to career options, skill

development, and counselling collectively reinforced entrepreneurial intentions for 61.3% strongly agreeing and 35.3% agreeing students ($\bar{x} = 3.58$, $SD = 0.56$). Similarly, 60.8% strongly agree and 34.2% agree that career awareness programs have influenced their desire to start a business ($\bar{x} = 3.56$, $SD = 0.59$). Overall, 58.5% strongly agree and 36.4% agree that career awareness creation efforts have enhanced their entrepreneurial intentions ($\bar{x} = 3.52$, $SD = 0.65$), while 66.7% strongly agree and 29.0% agree that combined career awareness initiatives have strengthened their commitment to entrepreneurship ($\bar{x} = 3.62$, $SD = 0.57$). The weighted mean score of $\bar{x} = 3.60$, $SD = 0.60$ indicates that career awareness creation among business education students in Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria is generally high and positively influences their entrepreneurial intentions.

4.2.2 Testing of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There will be no significant combined influence of knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness creation on entrepreneurial intention among Business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria.

The following hypotheses will be tested in this study:

Table 4.5a: Model Summary for Test of Hypothesis One

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.753 ^a	.568	.567	.23862

a. Predictors: (Constant), Career Awareness Creation, Knowledge of Business Opportunities

Table 4.5b: ANOVA^a for Test of Hypothesis One

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	82.669	2	41.335	725.911	.000 ^b
	Residual	62.978	1106	.057		
	Total	145.647	1108			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Career Awareness Creation, Knowledge of Business Opportunities

Table 4.5c: Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.262	.088		2.971	.003
	Knowledge of Business Opportunities	.755	.032	.646	23.587	.000
	Career Awareness Creation	.161	.030	.145	5.281	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intention

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.5a presents the results of a regression analysis exploring the relationship between Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Career Awareness Creation on Entrepreneurial Intention. The model 1 summary shows that there is a strong and positive relationship between the predictor variables (Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Career Awareness Creation) and Entrepreneurial Intention, as indicated by a correlation

coefficient (r) of 0.753. Furthermore, the model reveals that 56.8% of the variance in Entrepreneurial Intention is explained by Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Career Awareness Creation, as reflected in the R Square value of 0.568. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.568, shows a positive significant influence of knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness on entrepreneurial intention. The Standard Error of the Estimate is 0.23862, which indicates the average deviation of the observed values from the predicted values of Entrepreneurial Intention. Table 4.5b (ANOVA) shows that the regression model is statistically significant ($F(2, 1106) = 725.911, p < 0.05$), implying that the predictor variables Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Career Awareness Creation significantly contribute to explaining the variance in Entrepreneurial Intention among the respondents. The significance value being less than 0.05 confirms that the model provides a good fit for the data.

Thus, null hypothesis which stated that there will be no significant combined influence of knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness creation on entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria is not accepted. This implies that both Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Career Awareness Creation have significant and positive influence on Entrepreneurial Intention. However, Knowledge of Business Opportunities plays a more influential role in shaping the entrepreneurial intentions of individuals than Career Awareness Creation (knowledge of business opportunities $\beta = 0.646, p < 0.05$; career awareness creation $\beta = 0.145, p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant relative impact of the knowledge of business opportunities indicators (awareness of market trends, access to resources, proficiency in entrepreneurial skills) and career awareness creation indicators (exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, access to career counseling) on entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria.

a. the knowledge of business opportunities indicators (awareness of market trends, access to resources, proficiency in entrepreneurial skills) on entrepreneurial intention

Table 4.6: Coefficients^a for Test of Hypothesis Two

Model		Unstandardized	Standardized		t	Sig. ^b
		Coefficients	Beta	Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	.544	.085		6.389	.000
	Awareness of market trends	.166	.026	.167	6.282	.000
	Access to resources	.170	.023	.173	7.453	.000
	Proficiency in entrepreneurial skills	.495	.026	.526	19.258	.000

a. Dependent Variable: **entrepreneurial intention**

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

The results presented in Table 4.6 demonstrate the relationship between key entrepreneurial factors awareness of market trends, access to resources, and proficiency in entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial intention. All three independent variables show a statistically significant and positive influence on entrepreneurial intention, as indicated by p-values less than .05.

Specifically, awareness of market trends had a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention, with an unstandardised coefficient (B) of 0.166 and a standardised beta (β) value of 0.167 ($t = 6.282, p < .05$). This indicates that individuals who are more informed about current market dynamics tend to show stronger intentions to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Similarly, access to resources was found to be a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intention ($B = 0.170$, $\beta = 0.173$, $t = 7.453$, $p < .05$), suggesting that access to key resources such as finance, infrastructure, or tools enhances the likelihood of entrepreneurial engagement.

Among the three predictors, proficiency in entrepreneurial skills had the strongest influence, with a notably high unstandardised coefficient of 0.495 and a standardised beta value of 0.526 ($t = 19.258$, $p < .05$). This finding implies that individuals who possess higher levels of entrepreneurial competence including planning, innovation, and business management are significantly more likely to exhibit strong entrepreneurial intentions. The constant term ($B = 0.544$, $p < .05$) reflects the baseline level of entrepreneurial intention when all other predictors are held constant. The results show that all three variables contribute meaningfully to predicting entrepreneurial intention, with proficiency in entrepreneurial skills exerting the greatest effect.

b: Relative influence of the career awareness creation indicators (exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, access to career counselling) on entrepreneurial intention

Table 4.7: Relationship between Career Awareness Creation Indicators (Exposure to Diverse Career Options, Opportunities for Skill Development, Access to Career Counselling) and Entrepreneurial Intention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.311	.114		11.459	.000
exposure to diverse career options	.108	.026	.111	4.115	.000
opportunities for skill development	.134	.035	.113	3.836	.000
access to career counselling	.371	.022	.478	16.642	.000

a. Dependent Variable: **entrepreneurial intention**

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

The findings presented in Table 4.7 reveal the relationship between indicators of career awareness creation namely, exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, and access to career counselling and entrepreneurial intention. The regression results show that all three indicators significantly and positively predict entrepreneurial intention, with p-values less than 0.05. Exposure to diverse career options was found to have a statistically significant but modest effect on entrepreneurial intention, with an unstandardised coefficient (B) of 0.108 and a standardised beta (β) of 0.111 ($t = 4.115$, $p < .05$). This shows that individuals who are exposed to a broader range of career possibilities are slightly more inclined to develop entrepreneurial aspirations. Opportunities for skill development also exhibited a positive and significant influence on entrepreneurial intention ($B = 0.134$, $\beta = 0.113$, $t = 3.836$, $p < .05$). This indicates that providing individuals with access to training and development programmes enhances their likelihood of considering entrepreneurship as a viable career path. Access to career counselling emerged as the strongest predictor among the three variables, with an unstandardised coefficient (B) of 0.371 and a standardised beta (β) of 0.478 ($t = 16.642$, $p < .05$).

This finding underscores the critical role that structured career guidance and mentorship play in fostering entrepreneurial intention, as individuals who receive such support are significantly more likely to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. The constant value ($B = 1.311, p < .05$) indicates a baseline level of entrepreneurial intention even when all independent variables are held constant. Overall, the results highlight that career awareness creation strategies, particularly access to career counselling, contribute meaningfully to shaping entrepreneurial intentions.

4.3 Discussion of the Findings

The finding of this current study established that business education students in Colleges of Education Southwest Nigeria exhibit a high level of entrepreneurial intention. This result corroborates research that demonstrated the significant impact of educational environments on developing entrepreneurial mindsets among college students¹. The high entrepreneurial intention observed aligns with findings that emphasised how demographic factors and educational contexts serve as crucial drivers of student entrepreneurial intention². Furthermore, this finding supports theoretical frameworks that highlight the role of entrepreneurship education in enhancing entrepreneurial potential among students³.

The elevated level of entrepreneurial intention among these students resonates with investigations that revealed the importance of entrepreneurial attitudes and psychological capital in predicting self-employment intentions⁴. This finding is consistent with research on sustainable entrepreneurial intentions among college students, which demonstrated that developing world contexts often foster strong entrepreneurial aspirations⁵. The high entrepreneurial intention also aligns with studies that examined the role of social and psychological factors in shaping entrepreneurial behaviour among college students⁶.

The high level of entrepreneurial intention demonstrated by these students supports research on personality traits and demographic factors that significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions⁷. This finding is particularly significant given previous research

that highlighted the importance of entrepreneurial education in developing entrepreneurial mindsets among college students⁸. The result also corroborates findings on factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions among college students in Nigerian educational contexts⁹.

The finding of this current study established that business education students in Colleges of Education Southwest Nigeria generally possess a high level of knowledge about business opportunities. This result supports research that emphasised the critical role of market awareness and business knowledge in shaping entrepreneurial behaviour¹⁰. The comprehensive understanding of business opportunities demonstrated by these students aligns with theoretical frameworks that highlight the importance of opportunity recognition in entrepreneurial intention development¹¹.

This finding corroborates research on the effect of entrepreneurship education on college students, which demonstrated that structured learning programmes significantly enhance students' understanding of business landscapes³. The high level of business opportunity knowledge among students supports findings that emphasised the importance of market knowledge in developing sustainable entrepreneurial intentions⁵. This result also aligns with research that examined the role of environmental factors in entrepreneurial intention formation⁷.

The students' comprehensive knowledge of business opportunities reflects the effectiveness of educational programmes in developing entrepreneurial competencies. This finding supports research that demonstrated how exposure to entrepreneurial concepts and role models enhances students' understanding of business environments². The result also corroborates studies that highlighted the importance of social and psychological factors in developing entrepreneurial awareness⁶.

The finding of this current study established that career awareness creation among business education students in Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria is generally

high. This result provides empirical support for research that demonstrated the significant impact of career exposure programmes on employment opportunities and career development¹. The comprehensive career awareness initiatives appear to be effectively influencing students' career perspectives, which aligns with policy recommendations for youth employment and entrepreneurial development.

This finding strongly supports research on the influence of role models and career guidance on entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour². The high level of career awareness among students corroborates findings that emphasised the importance of exposure to diverse career options in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes. The result also aligns with research that demonstrated the positive effect of entrepreneurship education programmes on career awareness and entrepreneurial intention³.

The effectiveness of career awareness creation programmes among these students supports research on factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students⁹. This finding also corroborates studies that highlighted the importance of institutional support systems in developing entrepreneurial mindsets⁸. The high level of career awareness reflects the success of comprehensive approaches to entrepreneurial education, which aligns with research on sustainable entrepreneurial intentions in developing world contexts⁵.

The finding of this current study established that both Knowledge of Business Opportunities and Career Awareness Creation have significant and positive influence on Entrepreneurial Intention. This result provides robust empirical support for integrated approaches to entrepreneurial intention development that have been advocated by various researchers⁵. The significant combined influence validates theoretical frameworks that emphasise the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial intention formation⁷.

This finding aligns with research that demonstrated the importance of comprehensive entrepreneurial education programmes that address both knowledge

acquisition and career development simultaneously³. The significant positive influence of both factors supports studies that highlighted the role of social and psychological factors in entrepreneurial intention development⁶. The combined effect also corroborates research that examined the moderating role of entrepreneurship education in enhancing entrepreneurial potential⁴.

The significant relationship between these variables and entrepreneurial intention supports research on drivers of student entrepreneurial intention, which emphasised the importance of holistic approaches to entrepreneurial education⁸. This finding also aligns with studies that demonstrated the effectiveness of integrated models in developing sustainable entrepreneurial intentions among college students⁵. The result corroborates research that highlighted the importance of combining theoretical knowledge with practical career guidance in entrepreneurial development².

The finding of this current study established that awareness of market trends, access to resources, and proficiency in entrepreneurial skills significantly and positively impact entrepreneurial intention among respondents. This result strongly supports research that emphasised the critical role of market knowledge in entrepreneurial intention development¹⁰. The significance of market trend awareness aligns with studies that demonstrated how environmental factors influence entrepreneurial behaviour among college students⁷.

The positive influence of resource availability on entrepreneurial intention corroborates research that highlighted the importance of social and psychological factors in entrepreneurial development⁶. This finding supports studies that demonstrated how access to funding opportunities and business networks enhances entrepreneurial aspirations among students⁸. The significance of resource availability also aligns with research on sustainable entrepreneurial intentions, which emphasised the importance of support systems in developing world contexts⁵.

The high level of entrepreneurial skills proficiency on entrepreneurial intention validates research that demonstrated the positive effect of entrepreneurship education on college students³. This finding supports studies that highlighted the importance of practical skills development in translating entrepreneurial potential into actual intention⁴. The significance of skills proficiency also corroborates research that examined factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions among college students in developing countries⁹.

The combined impact of these three factors demonstrates the multidimensional nature of entrepreneurial intention development, which aligns with comprehensive research on entrepreneurial behaviour¹¹. This finding supports theoretical frameworks that emphasise the importance of integrating market knowledge, resource awareness, and skills development in entrepreneurial education programmes².

The finding of this current study established that career awareness creation indicators (exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, access to career counselling) have statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria. This result provides strong empirical validation for research that demonstrated the impact of role models and career guidance on entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour².

The significance of exposure to diverse career options supports research that emphasised the importance of career exploration in entrepreneurial development⁷. This finding aligns with studies that demonstrated how exposure to entrepreneurial role models and success stories enhances entrepreneurial intentions among young people. The positive impact of career exposure also corroborates research on youth employment initiatives that highlighted the importance of career awareness in developing entrepreneurial capacity¹.

The significant influence of skill development opportunities validates research that demonstrated the positive effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention among college students³. This finding supports studies that emphasised the importance of

practical training and workshops in enhancing entrepreneurial competencies⁸. The significance of skill development also aligns with research on sustainable entrepreneurial intentions, which highlighted the critical role of capacity building in developing world contexts⁵.

The high level of access to career counselling on entrepreneurial intention corroborates research that highlighted the importance of guidance systems in entrepreneurial development⁶. This finding supports studies that demonstrated how career counselling and mentorship programmes enhance entrepreneurial aspirations among students⁴. The significance of career counselling also aligns with research that examined the moderating role of institutional support in entrepreneurial intention formation⁹.

The combined significance of these career awareness indicators demonstrates the effectiveness of comprehensive career development programmes in fostering entrepreneurial intentions. This finding supports research that advocated for integrated approaches to entrepreneurial education that combine career guidance, skills development, and exposure to entrepreneurial opportunities¹⁰. The result also corroborates studies that highlighted the importance of institutional support systems in developing entrepreneurial mindsets among college students¹¹.

Endnotes

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Chapter Five

Conclusion

This chapter presents summary of the findings, conclusion, recommendation, contribution to knowledge, and suggestion for further studies.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This study explored entrepreneurial intentions, knowledge of business opportunities, and career awareness creation among business education students in Colleges of Education Southwest Nigeria. The findings, derived from the research objectives and supported by statistical analyses, are summarised below.

The study identified a high level of entrepreneurial intention among business education students, with a weighted mean score of 3.53 ± 0.69 . Notably, 77.9% of students strongly agreed they possess the requisite skills and knowledge for entrepreneurship (mean = 3.74 ± 0.53), and 79.4% strongly agreed they can identify market gaps (mean = 3.69 ± 0.67). Confidence in initiating a business was high (61.6% strongly agreed, mean = 3.58 ± 0.57), although capability to act on opportunities showed lower agreement (42.9% strongly agreed, mean = 3.21 ± 0.81) and greater variability (SD = 1.13).

Business education students demonstrated a high level of knowledge about business opportunities, with an overall weighted mean of 3.56 ± 0.62 . Awareness of market trends significantly influenced entrepreneurial interest (72.8% strongly agreed, mean = 3.65 ± 0.65), as did resource availability (65.2% strongly agreed, mean = 3.63 ± 0.52) and entrepreneurial skills training (74.0% strongly agreed, mean = 3.71 ± 0.54). However, knowledge of business opportunities directly increasing intention showed lower agreement (36.7% strongly agreed, mean = 2.91 ± 1.05), indicating variability in perceived opportunity influence.

Career awareness creation was high, with a weighted mean of 3.60 ± 0.60 . Exposure to diverse career options motivated 68.3% of students (mean = 3.67 ± 0.51), whilst skills

development workshops (68.6% strongly agreed, mean = 3.66 ± 0.52) and career counselling (70.6% strongly agreed, mean = 3.68 ± 0.52) significantly enhanced entrepreneurial intentions. Awareness initiatives collectively reinforced commitment (66.7% strongly agreed, mean = 3.62 ± 0.57), indicating effective career guidance systems.

There was a significant combined influence of knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness creation on entrepreneurial intention ($R = 0.753$, $R^2 = 0.568$, $F(2,1106) = 725.911$, $p < 0.05$). Knowledge of business opportunities had a higher level of influence ($\beta = 0.646$, $p < 0.05$) than career awareness creation ($\beta = 0.145$, $p < 0.05$), explaining 56.8% of the variance in entrepreneurial intention.

The indicators of knowledge of business opportunities awareness of market trends, access to resources, and proficiency in entrepreneurial skills significantly impacted entrepreneurial intention with Proficiency in entrepreneurial skills was the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.526$, $p < 0.05$), followed by resource availability ($\beta = 0.173$, $p < 0.05$) and market trend awareness ($\beta = 0.167$, $p < 0.05$).

Career awareness creation indicators exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skills development, and access to career counselling had a significant impact on entrepreneurial intention. Access to career counselling was the most influential ($\beta = 0.478$, $p < 0.05$), followed by skills development opportunities ($\beta = 0.113$, $p < 0.05$) and career exposure ($\beta = 0.111$, $p < 0.05$).

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that the students demonstrated a high-level knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness which led to high level of entrepreneurial intention for venture creation among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest, Nigeria. The combined and relative influences of the knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness on entrepreneurial intention were all positively significant. Consequently, Colleges of Education and other tertiary institutions should encourage the students to be creative, innovative and business minded by establishing entrepreneurial incubation centers that serve as hubs for nurturing business ideas into viable ventures. These will encourage entrepreneurship development to alleviate unemployment issues among the undergraduates in Nigeria.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Based on the high entrepreneurial intention among students, educational institutions should establish entrepreneurship incubation centers that serve as hubs for nurturing business ideas into viable ventures.
2. The school should develop integrated curriculum that is market responsive. The curriculum should emphasize market research training, financial literacy, and digital marketing skills, while incorporating cross-functional learning approaches that seamlessly blend business knowledge with career awareness initiatives.
3. The school should provide structured career exploration programmes that will expose students to diverse entrepreneurial models, regular career fairs and professional development workshops.

4. The school should recognize the critical impact of entrepreneurial skills proficiency, and established mandatory practical skills development programmes that include both technical and soft skills relevant to entrepreneurship.
5. This is to maximize the combined impact of business knowledge and career awareness, by developing digital platforms that connect student with mentors, funding opportunities and business networks.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

Conceptual Contributions

This study makes significant conceptual contributions by establishing a comprehensive framework that demonstrates the multidimensional nature of entrepreneurial intention formation among business education students in developing educational contexts. For instance, the study conceptually redefines entrepreneurial intention not as a single construct but as an outcome of three interconnected domains: market intelligence (awareness of trends and opportunities), resource cognition (understanding of available support systems), and skills realisation (practical entrepreneurial competencies). The study advances conceptual understanding by empirically validating the interconnected relationships between business opportunity knowledge, career awareness creation, and entrepreneurial intention, thereby providing a deeper perspective on how these constructs operate synergistically rather than in isolation. Practically, this means that institutions can no longer treat business education and career development as separate activities; instead, they must conceptualise them as integrated components of a unified entrepreneurial development ecosystem. The conceptual model developed through this study offers a more holistic understanding of entrepreneurial intention development by integrating market awareness, resource availability, skills proficiency, career exposure, skill development opportunities, and career counselling as critical components of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This conceptual advancement

challenges traditional linear models of entrepreneurial intention by proposing a more complex, integrated framework that recognises the dynamic interplay between knowledge acquisition and career development processes, essentially creating a new paradigm for understanding how educational environments can systematically nurture entrepreneurial mindsets.

Theoretical Contributions

The study provides substantial theoretical contributions by extending and validating key theoretical frameworks within the Nigerian educational context. In relation to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, this research demonstrates how entrepreneurial attitudes are significantly influenced by comprehensive business opportunity knowledge and career awareness initiatives, thereby expanding understanding of how attitudinal components are shaped within educational environments. Specifically, the study shows that when students are exposed to market trend awareness programmes (attitude formation), understand resource availability (perceived behavioural control), and receive career counselling from successful entrepreneurs (subjective norms), their entrepreneurial intentions strengthen significantly. The findings reveal that perceived behavioural control is enhanced through practical skills development and resource awareness, whilst subjective norms are influenced by career counselling and exposure to entrepreneurial role models. For example, students who received structured training in business plan development and financial literacy (enhancing perceived control) showed higher entrepreneurial intention scores than those without such exposure. Regarding Social Cognitive Career Theory, the research validates the critical role of self-efficacy beliefs in entrepreneurial intention formation, demonstrating how skills proficiency and career awareness directly influence students' confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities. The study provides concrete evidence that students who participated in entrepreneurship competitions and skills workshops (building self-efficacy) were more likely to express concrete business plans post-graduation. The

study also extends SCCT by showing how outcome expectations are shaped by market trend awareness and exposure to diverse career options, whilst personal goals are crystallised through integrated career development programmes. These theoretical contributions provide empirical evidence for the applicability and relevance of established career and entrepreneurship theories within African educational contexts, particularly demonstrating how these Western-developed theories require contextual adaptation for effectiveness in developing country settings.

Empirical Contributions

This research makes notable empirical contributions by providing robust quantitative evidence on entrepreneurial intention levels among business education students in Nigerian Colleges of Education, a population that has received limited research attention. The study establishes baseline data demonstrating high levels of entrepreneurial intention, business opportunity knowledge, and career awareness among education students, thereby filling a significant gap in the literature on entrepreneurial behaviour in teacher training institutions. The empirical findings reveal the relative importance of specific indicators within business opportunity knowledge and career awareness creation, providing detailed insights into which components have the strongest predictive power for entrepreneurial intention. The research contributes to the empirical literature by demonstrating that market trend awareness, resource availability understanding, and entrepreneurial skills proficiency are significant predictors of entrepreneurial intention, whilst career counselling, skill development opportunities, and exposure to diverse career options serve as critical career awareness indicators. These empirical contributions provide evidence-based insights that advance understanding of entrepreneurial intention formation in developing country contexts and offer comparative data for future cross-cultural research.

Practical Contributions

The study offers substantial practical contributions by providing actionable insights for educational institutions, policymakers, and career development practitioners seeking to enhance entrepreneurial outcomes among Colleges of Education students. The research demonstrates the effectiveness of integrated approaches that combine business education with comprehensive career development programmes, offering a practical model that institutions can adapt and implement. The identification of specific factors that significantly influence entrepreneurial intention provides practical guidance for curriculum development, resource allocation, and programme design decisions. The findings offer practical evidence for the importance of establishing entrepreneurship incubation centres, developing market-responsive curricula, and implementing comprehensive career counselling systems. Furthermore, the research provides practical insights for policymakers by demonstrating the potential return on investment in entrepreneurial education programmes and the importance of supporting integrated approaches to career development. These practical contributions extend to career counsellors and student development professionals by providing evidence-based strategies for enhancing entrepreneurial outcomes and supporting students' transition from education to entrepreneurial ventures, including specific intervention models that can be replicated across different institutional contexts.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Study

1. Entrepreneurial Intention Formation Among Education Students: A Comparative Analysis of Nigerian, Ghanaian, and Kenyan Colleges of Education
2. Gender Dynamics in Entrepreneurial Intention and Business Opportunity Recognition Among Female Students in Nigerian Colleges of Education
3. The Impact of Digital Literacy and Technology Integration on Entrepreneurial Intention Among Nigerian Education Students in the Post-COVID Era

4. Institutional Factors and Pedagogical Approaches in Entrepreneurial Education: A Multi-Case Study of High-Performing Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria
5. The Impact of National Entrepreneurship Policy Implementation on Entrepreneurial Intention Development in Nigerian Higher Education Institutions
6. Understanding the Entrepreneurial Journey: A Mixed-Methods Investigation of Motivational Factors and Structural Barriers Affecting Business Venture Creation Among Nigerian Education Graduates.

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Appendices
Appendix I
Questionnaire



Dear Sir/Madam

I am Olawale Oladele ADENIJI, a PhD student at the Department of Business Education, Lead City University, Ibadan, under the supervision of Professor Prof. Ewart & Dr. Ayeni. I am currently undertaking a research that considers Business Opportunity, Career awareness as determinants for Acceptability of Entrepreneurship Education among students of colleges of education, Southwest Nigeria.

As a Business Education student, it is important to know your views regarding the implementation of Career awareness as determinants for Acceptability of Entrepreneurship Education among students of colleges of education. Results from this research will yield valuable information to individual organisations like yours and also to researchers.

I am writing to request for your co-operation as I would be grateful if you could complete the short questionnaire and return same to me

I assure you that the data and information provided will remain strictly confidential and will be used only for the purpose of this research.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Oladele Adeniji.

Section A: Bio Data

Questions

1. Gender: a. Male () b. Female ()
2. Level of Educational a . NCE I b. (), NCE II ()
4. Age (a) 15-20 (), (b) 21-25 (), (c) 26-30 (), (d) 31+ ()

Section B: Extent of Entrepreneurial Intentions

Instruction: Please tick (✓) the question items as appropriate

SA (4points) – Strongly Agree **A (3points)** – Agree **D (2points)** – Disagree **SD (1points)**

– Strongly Disagree

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
	Extent of Entrepreneurial Intentions Among College Students				
	Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy				
1	I am confident in my ability to start and run a successful business.				
2	I believe I have the skills and knowledge to be an entrepreneur.				
3	I feel prepared to handle the challenges of entrepreneurship.				
4	I am capable of identifying business opportunities and acting on them.				
	Perceived Entrepreneurial Opportunity				
5	I frequently see opportunities for starting a new business.				
6	I believe there are many unmet needs in the market that I can address.				
7	I can identify gaps in the market that could be filled by a new business.				
8	I am aware of various resources and support systems available for new entrepreneurs.				
	Level of Commitment				
9	I am committed to pursuing entrepreneurship as a career path.				

10	I am willing to invest significant time and effort into starting my own business.				
11	I am dedicated to overcoming obstacles to achieve my entrepreneurial goals.				
12	I am prepared to make personal sacrifices to ensure the success of my business.				

Section C: Business Opportunities

Instruction: Please tick (✓) the question items as appropriate

SA (4points) – Strongly Agree **A (3points)** – Agree **D (2points)** – Disagree **SD (1points)**

– Strongly Disagree

B	Business Opportunities				
	Awareness of Market Trends				
13	Awareness of current market trends has increased my interest in starting a business.				
14	Understanding market trends has helped me identify potential business opportunities.				
15	Knowledge of market trends has influenced my decision to pursue entrepreneurship.				
16	Being aware of emerging market trends has strengthened my intention to become an entrepreneur.				
17	Market trend insights have made me more confident in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures.				
	Access to Resources				
18	Access to resources such as funding and business networks has enhanced my entrepreneurial ambitions.				

19	Access to resources has made starting a business seem more feasible to me.				
20	Having access to entrepreneurial resources has positively influenced my intention to start a business.				
21	Resource availability has increased my confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities.				
22	Access to essential business resources has strengthened my intention to become an entrepreneur.				
	Entrepreneurial Skills				
23	Acquiring entrepreneurial skills has increased my motivation to start my own business.				
24	Developing entrepreneurial skills has improved my confidence in pursuing business opportunities.				
25	Skills in entrepreneurship have positively impacted my intention to become an entrepreneur.				
26	Training in entrepreneurial skills has made the prospect of starting a business more appealing to me.				
27	Enhanced entrepreneurial skills have strengthened my commitment to pursuing entrepreneurial ventures.				
	Overall Impact of Knowledge of Business Opportunities				
28	Knowledge of business opportunities, including market trends, resources, and entrepreneurial skills, has significantly increased my intention to start a business.				
29	Overall, understanding business opportunities has strengthened my commitment to pursuing entrepreneurship.				

30	The combined knowledge of market trends, access to resources, and entrepreneurial skills has made me more inclined to start my own business.				
31	Awareness of business opportunities has positively influenced my motivation to become an entrepreneur.				
32	The integration of market trend insights, resource availability, and entrepreneurial skill development has enhanced my entrepreneurial intentions.				

Section D: Career awareness

Instruction: Please tick (✓) the question items as appropriate

SA (4points) – Strongly Agree **A (3points)** – Agree **D (2points)** – Disagree **SD (1points)**

– Strongly Disagree

C	Career awareness				
	Exposure to Career Options				
33	Exposure to various career options has expanded my understanding of entrepreneurship.				
34	Learning about diverse career paths has increased my interest in starting my own business.				
35	Information about different entrepreneurial fields has motivated me to consider entrepreneurship.				
36	Seeing successful entrepreneurs has positively influenced my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.				
37	Understanding various career options has helped me envision entrepreneurship as a viable career path.				

	Skill Development Opportunities				
38	Skill development workshops have enhanced my entrepreneurial skills and ambitions.				
39	Training sessions have boosted my confidence in my ability to start a business.				
40	Practical skill development activities have increased my motivation to become an entrepreneur.				
41	Skill-building programs have made entrepreneurship seem more achievable to me.				
42	Opportunities to develop relevant skills have strengthened my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.				
	Career Counseling				
43	Career counseling has clarified the steps needed for an entrepreneurial career.				
44	Guidance from career counselors has helped me see entrepreneurship as a viable option.				
45	Career counseling has provided valuable insights into the skills required for entrepreneurship.				
46	Support from career counselors has positively impacted my intention to pursue entrepreneurial activities.				
47	Career counseling has assisted me in understanding how to prepare for a successful entrepreneurial journey.				
	Overall Impact of Career Awareness				
48	Career awareness initiatives at my college have made me more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship.				

49	Exposure to career options, skill development, and career counseling has reinforced my entrepreneurial intentions.				
50	Career awareness programs have significantly influenced my desire to start a business.				
51	Overall, career awareness efforts have enhanced my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.				
52	The combined impact of career awareness initiatives has strengthened my commitment to becoming an entrepreneur.				

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Appendix II

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	525	36.2	47.3	47.3
	Female	584	40.2	52.7	100.0
	Total	1109	76.4	100.0	
Missing	System	342	23.6		
Total		1451	100.0		

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-20	198	13.6	17.9	17.9
	21-25	793	54.7	71.5	89.4
	26-30	118	8.1	10.6	100.0
	Total	1109	76.4	100.0	
Missing	System	342	23.6		
Total		1451	100.0		

Educational Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NCE1	565	38.9	50.9	50.9
	NCE2	544	37.5	49.1	100.0
	Total	1109	76.4	100.0	
Missing	System	342	23.6		
Total		1451	100.0		

1. What is the level of entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria?

	Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %
I am confident in my ability to start and run a successful business.	9	0.8%	19	1.7%	398	35.9%	683	61.6%
I believe I have the skills and knowledge to be an entrepreneur.	0	0.0%	47	4.2%	198	17.9%	864	77.9%
I feel prepared to handle the challenges of entrepreneurship.	19	1.7%	83	7.5%	172	15.5%	835	75.3%
I am capable of identifying business opportunities and acting on them.	27	2.4%	190	17.1%	416	37.5%	476	42.9%
I frequently see opportunities for starting a new business.	0	0.0%	179	16.1%	415	37.4%	515	46.4%
I believe there are many unmet needs in the market that I can address.	9	0.8%	29	2.6%	308	27.8%	763	68.8%
I can identify gaps in the market that could be filled by a new business.	19	1.7%	75	6.8%	135	12.2%	880	79.4%
I am aware of various resources and support systems available for new entrepreneurs.	0	0.0%	97	8.7%	257	23.2%	755	68.1%
I am committed to pursuing entrepreneurship as a career path.	19	1.7%	28	2.5%	260	23.4%	802	72.3%
I am willing to invest significant time and effort into starting my own business.	28	2.5%	37	3.3%	412	37.2%	632	57.0%

I am dedicated to overcoming obstacles to achieve my entrepreneurial goals.	200	18.0%	27	2.4%	241	21.7%	641	57.8%
I am prepared to make personal sacrifices to ensure the success of my business.	0	0.0%	65	5.9%	351	31.7%	693	62.5%

2. What is the level of knowledge of business opportunities among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria?

	Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %
Awareness of current market trends has increased my interest in starting a business.	18	1.6%	54	4.9%	230	20.7%	807	72.8%
Understanding market trends has helped me identify potential business opportunities.	0	0.0%	80	7.2%	519	46.8%	510	46.0%
Knowledge of market trends has influenced my decision to pursue entrepreneurship.	10	0.9%	54	4.9%	226	20.4%	819	73.9%
Being aware of emerging market trends has strengthened my intention to become an entrepreneur.	10	0.9%	0	0.0%	324	29.2%	775	69.9%
Market trend insights have made me more confident in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures.	0	0.0%	28	2.5%	463	41.7%	618	55.7%
Access to resources such as funding and business networks has enhanced my entrepreneurial ambitions.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	451	40.7%	658	59.3%
Access to resources has made starting a business seem more feasible to me.	18	1.6%	9	0.8%	480	43.3%	602	54.3%

Having access to entrepreneurial resources has positively influenced my intention to start a business.	0	0.0%	19	1.7%	367	33.1%	723	65.2%
Resource availability has increased my confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities.	0	0.0%	38	3.4%	420	37.9%	651	58.7%
Access to essential business resources has strengthened my intention to become an entrepreneur.	19	1.7%	38	3.4%	331	29.8%	721	65.0%
Acquiring entrepreneurial skills has increased my motivation to start my own business.	18	1.6%	28	2.5%	362	32.6%	701	63.2%
Developing entrepreneurial skills has improved my confidence in pursuing business opportunities.	0	0.0%	28	2.5%	375	33.8%	706	63.7%
Skills in entrepreneurship have positively impacted my intention to become an entrepreneur.	18	1.6%	46	4.1%	487	43.9%	558	50.3%
Training in entrepreneurial skills has made the prospect of starting a business more appealing to me.	10	0.9%	18	1.6%	260	23.4%	821	74.0%
Enhanced entrepreneurial skills have strengthened my commitment to pursuing entrepreneurial ventures.	0	0.0%	80	7.2%	215	19.4%	814	73.4%
Knowledge of business opportunities, including market trends, resources, and entrepreneurial skills, has significantly increased my intention to start a business.	156	14.1%	198	17.9%	348	31.4%	407	36.7%
Overall, understanding business opportunities has strengthened my commitment to pursuing entrepreneurship.	28	2.5%	45	4.1%	228	20.6%	808	72.9%

The combined knowledge of market trends, access to resources, and entrepreneurial skills has made me more inclined to start my own business.	18	1.6%	27	2.4%	349	31.5%	715	64.5%
Awareness of business opportunities has positively influenced my motivation to become an entrepreneur.	30	2.7%	44	4.0%	244	22.0%	791	71.3%
The integration of market trend insights, resource availability, and entrepreneurial skill development has enhanced my entrepreneurial intentions.	36	3.2%	18	1.6%	297	26.8%	758	68.3%

3. What is the level of career awareness creation among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria?

	Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %
Exposure to various career options has expanded my understanding of entrepreneurship.	99	8.9%	19	1.7%	260	23.4%	731	65.9%
Learning about diverse career paths has increased my interest in starting my own business.	18	1.6%	201	18.1%	113	10.2%	777	70.1%
Information about different entrepreneurial fields has motivated me to consider entrepreneurship.	0	0.0%	19	1.7%	332	29.9%	758	68.3%
Seeing successful entrepreneurs has positively influenced my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	18	1.6%	19	1.7%	327	29.5%	745	67.2%

Understanding various career options has helped me envision entrepreneurship as a viable career path.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	233	21.0%	876	79.0%
Skill development workshops have enhanced my entrepreneurial skills and ambitions.	0	0.0%	27	2.4%	321	28.9%	761	68.6%
Training sessions have boosted my confidence in my ability to start a business.	0	0.0%	72	6.5%	243	21.9%	794	71.6%
Practical skill development activities have increased my motivation to become an entrepreneur.	0	0.0%	44	4.0%	495	44.6%	570	51.4%
Skill-building programs have made entrepreneurship seem more achievable to me.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	277	25.0%	832	75.0%
Opportunities to develop relevant skills have strengthened my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	0	0.0%	8	0.7%	401	36.2%	700	63.1%
Career counseling has clarified the steps needed for an entrepreneurial career.	0	0.0%	64	5.8%	386	34.8%	659	59.4%
Guidance from career counselors has helped me see entrepreneurship as a viable option.	0	0.0%	28	2.5%	298	26.9%	783	70.6%
Career counseling has provided valuable insights into the skills required for entrepreneurship.	0	0.0%	55	5.0%	262	23.6%	792	71.4%
Support from career counselors has positively impacted my intention to pursue entrepreneurial activities.	19	1.7%	46	4.1%	402	36.2%	642	57.9%

Career counseling has assisted me in understanding how to prepare for a successful entrepreneurial journey.	47	4.2%	9	0.8%	270	24.3%	783	70.6%
Career awareness initiatives at my college have made me more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship.	9	0.8%	47	4.2%	384	34.6%	669	60.3%
Exposure to career options, skill development, and career counseling has reinforced my entrepreneurial intentions.	0	0.0%	37	3.3%	392	35.3%	680	61.3%
Career awareness programs have significantly influenced my desire to start a business.	0	0.0%	56	5.0%	379	34.2%	674	60.8%
Overall, career awareness creation efforts have enhanced my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	19	1.7%	37	3.3%	404	36.4%	649	58.5%
The combined impact of career awareness initiatives has strengthened my commitment to becoming an entrepreneur.	0	0.0%	47	4.2%	322	29.0%	740	66.7%



Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
mean	0				
std	0				
EntrepreneurialIntentions	0				
EntrepreneurialSelfEfficacy	0				
I am confident in my ability to start and run a successful business.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.5825	.57135

I believe I have the skills and knowledge to be an entrepreneur.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.7367	.52819
I feel prepared to handle the challenges of entrepreneurship.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6438	.69443
I am capable of identifying business opportunities and acting on them.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.2092	.80917
I frequently see opportunities for starting a new business.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.3030	.73108
I believe there are many unmet needs in the market that I can address.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6456	.57453
I can identify gaps in the market that could be filled by a new business.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6916	.67212
I am aware of various resources and support systems available for new entrepreneurs.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5933	.64544
I am committed to pursuing entrepreneurship as a career path.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6637	.61388
I am willing to invest significant time and effort into starting my own business.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.4860	.68443
I am dedicated to overcoming obstacles to achieve my entrepreneurial goals.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.1930	1.13474
I am prepared to make personal sacrifices to ensure the success of my business.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5663	.60263
VAR00002	0				
Knowledge of Business Opportunity	0				

Awareness of Market Trends	0				
Awareness of current market trends has increased my interest in starting a business.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6465	.65091
Understanding market trends has helped me identify potential business opportunities.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.3877	.61807
Knowledge of market trends has influenced my decision to pursue entrepreneurship.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6718	.61018
Being aware of emerging market trends has strengthened my intention to become an entrepreneur.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6808	.52121
Market trend insights have made me more confident in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5320	.54749
Access to resources such as funding and business networks has enhanced my entrepreneurial ambitions.	1109	3.00	4.00	3.5933	.49143
Access to resources has made starting a business seem more feasible to me.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.5023	.60327
Having access to entrepreneurial resources has positively influenced my intention to start a business.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6348	.51607
Resource availability has increased my confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5528	.56217

Access to essential business resources has strengthened my intention to become an entrepreneur.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.5816	.64424
Acquiring entrepreneurial skills has increased my motivation to start my own business.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.5744	.62666
Developing entrepreneurial skills has improved my confidence in pursuing business opportunities.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6114	.53699
Skills in entrepreneurship have positively impacted my intention to become an entrepreneur.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.4292	.65247
Training in entrepreneurial skills has made the prospect of starting a business more appealing to me.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.7060	.54257
Enhanced entrepreneurial skills have strengthened my commitment to pursuing entrepreneurial ventures.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6619	.60697
Knowledge of business opportunities, including market trends, resources, and entrepreneurial skills, has significantly increased my intention to start a business.	1109	1.00	4.00	2.9071	1.04908

Overall, understanding business opportunities has strengthened my commitment to pursuing entrepreneurship.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6375	.68129
The combined knowledge of market trends, access to resources, and entrepreneurial skills has made me more inclined to start my own business.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.5879	.62346
Awareness of business opportunities has positively influenced my motivation to become an entrepreneur.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6195	.69124
The integration of market trend insights, resource availability, and entrepreneurial skill development has enhanced my entrepreneurial intentions.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6023	.68350
VAR00001	0				
CareerAwarenessCreation	0				
ExposuretoCareerOptions	0				
Exposure to various career options has expanded my understanding of entrepreneurship.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.4635	.90515
Learning about diverse career paths has increased my interest in starting my own business.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.4869	.84282

Information about different entrepreneurial fields has motivated me to consider entrepreneurship.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6664	.50677
Seeing successful entrepreneurs has positively influenced my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6222	.60585
Understanding various career options has helped me envision entrepreneurship as a viable career path.	1109	3.00	4.00	3.7899	.40756
Skill development workshops have enhanced my entrepreneurial skills and ambitions.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6619	.52225
Training sessions have boosted my confidence in my ability to start a business.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6510	.59779
Practical skill development activities have increased my motivation to become an entrepreneur.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.4743	.57357
Skill-building programs have made entrepreneurship seem more achievable to me.	1109	3.00	4.00	3.7502	.43308
Opportunities to develop relevant skills have strengthened my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6240	.49928
Career counseling has clarified the steps needed for an entrepreneurial career.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5365	.60367

Guidance from career counselors has helped me see entrepreneurship as a viable option.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6808	.51774
Career counseling has provided valuable insights into the skills required for entrepreneurship.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6646	.56780
Support from career counselors has positively impacted my intention to pursue entrepreneurial activities.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.5032	.66041
Career counseling has assisted me in understanding how to prepare for a successful entrepreneurial journey.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.6132	.71286
Career awareness initiatives at my college have made me more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.5446	.61790
Exposure to career options, skill development, and career counseling has reinforced my entrepreneurial intentions.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5798	.55735
Career awareness programs have significantly influenced my desire to start a business.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5573	.58994
Overall, career awareness creation efforts have enhanced my intention to pursue entrepreneurship.	1109	1.00	4.00	3.5176	.64776

The combined impact of career awareness initiatives has strengthened my commitment to becoming an entrepreneur.	1109	2.00	4.00	3.6249	.56520
TSELFEF	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5431	.39558
TPENTOPP	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5584	.39318
TCOMITM	1109	1.50	4.00	3.4772	.59952
TAWMATRE	1109	2.20	4.00	3.5838	.36482
TACCRES	1109	2.60	4.00	3.5729	.36851
TENTSKS	1109	2.00	4.00	3.5966	.38523
TOIMKNBO	1109	1.60	4.00	3.4709	.45234
TEXCAOP	1109	2.60	4.00	3.6058	.37170
TSKDEVOP	1109	2.80	4.00	3.6323	.30425
TCARCONS	1109	1.80	4.40	3.6045	.47174
TOVIMCAAW	1109	2.00	5.80	3.5859	.50672
TENTINTE	1109	1.83	4.00	3.5262	.36256
TKNBUSOP	1109	2.25	4.00	3.5560	.31011
TCAAWCRA	1109	2.35	4.40	3.6071	.33302
VAR00003	0				
Valid N (listwise)	0				

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H₀₁: There will be no significant combined influence of knowledge of business opportunities and career awareness creation on entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.753 ^a	.568	.567	.23862

a. Predictors: (Constant), Career Awareness Creation, Knowledge of Business Opportunities

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	82.669	2	41.335	725.911	.000 ^b
	Residual	62.978	1106	.057		
	Total	145.647	1108			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Career Awareness Creation, Knowledge of Business Opportunities

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.262	.088		2.971	.003
	Knowledge of Business Opportunities	.755	.032	.646	23.587	.000
	Career Awareness Creation	.161	.030	.145	5.281	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intention

H₀₂: There will be no significant relative impact of the knowledge of business opportunities indicators (awareness of market trends, access to resources, proficiency in entrepreneurial skills) and career awareness creation indicators (exposure to diverse career options, opportunities for skill development, access to career counseling) on entrepreneurial intention among business education students in Colleges of Education, Southwest Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2a

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.749 ^a	.561	.559	.24067

a. Predictors: (Constant), TENTSKS, TACCRES, TAWMATRE

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	81.644	3	27.215	469.852	.000 ^b
	Residual	64.003	1105	.058		
	Total	145.647	1108			

a. Dependent Variable: TENTINTE

b. Predictors: (Constant), TENTSKS, TACCRES, TAWMATRE

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.544	.085		6.389	.000
	TAWMATRE	.166	.026	.167	6.282	.000
	TACCRES	.170	.023	.173	7.453	.000
	TENTSKS	.495	.026	.526	19.258	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TENTINTE

Hypothesis 2b

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.598 ^a	.358	.356	.29094

a. Predictors: (Constant), TCARCONS, TEXCAOP, TSKDEVOP

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	52.112	3	17.371	205.214	.000 ^b
	Residual	93.535	1105	.085		
	Total	145.647	1108			

a. Dependent Variable: TENTINTE

b. Predictors: (Constant), TCARCONS, TEXCAOP, TSKDEVOP

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.311	.114		11.459	.000
	TEXCAOP	.108	.026	.111	4.115	.000
	TSKDEVO P	.134	.035	.113	3.836	.000
	TCARCON S	.371	.022	.478	16.642	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TENTINTE

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Bio-data

A. Personal Data

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B. Educational Background

Educational Institutions Attended with Dates and Qualification:

i. Primary Education:

- Moslem Primary School, Esure, Ijebu Imushin, Ogun State.

Primary School Leaving Certificate 1988

ii. Secondary Education:

- Comprehensive High School, Ikala, Ijebu Imushin Ogun State.

Senior School Certificate Examination 1994

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- Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Otto/Ijanikin, Lagos

NCE. Business Education 2002

- University of Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State

B.Sc. (Ed) Business Education 2007

- M.Ed. Business Education (Office Automation Option OTM)

- Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State.

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C. Working Experience with Dates:

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- Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)
- Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (ABEN)

F. Publication if Any

(a) Published Journals/Articles

1. Obisanya A. A., David S., **Adeniji O. O.**, Enilolobo G. F. & Obisanya F. D. (2024). Unlocking human potential for institutional excellence: an examination of talent management practices and employee productivity in Ogun State universities, Nigeria. *Kabale University Interdisciplinary Research Journal (KURJ)*. 2(2), 70 – 77. Online Publication of Kabale University, Uganda. **Offshore**
2. Okusanya, A. O., **Adeniji O.O.**, Odumosu M.O. (2023) Moderating Effect of External Environment on the Relationship Between Corporate Enterprenuership Dimensions and Organizational Development in Some selected Food and Beverages Companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. *GADAWUR Journal of Educational Research and Development*, Median Edition, 1 -14.
3. **Adeniji O.O.**, Ogunyemi K.M., & Egbeyemi K. A., (2022). Internship and Student's Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship: Study of Federal University in South – West Nigeria... *Al-Hikmah Journal of Business Education (AJOBED)*, 2(2), 58-6.
4. Okusanya, A.A., Ogunyemi K.M., **Adeniji O.O.** (2022). Economic Factors and Performance Selected Quoted Consumer Goods Manufacturing Companies in Nigeria: The moderating Roles of firm agility. *International journal of entrepreneurship innovation and management*, 3(1), 104-117

(b) Seminal Papers Accepted For Publication: Nil

(c) Seminal Papers Presented At Conference

1. **Adeniji O. O (2022)**. Internship and student's attitude towards entrepreneurship: study from federal universities in Southwest Nigeria. A Seminal paper presented at the National Conference of the Association of Business Educators of Nigeria on Business Education, Entrepreneurship and Skills Acquisition in Digital Era

held at Amphitheater, Rivers State University, Rivers State. 11th – 14th October, 2022

(d) Thesis/ Dissertation

1. **Adeniji O. O (2015).** Influence of instructional materials on the teaching and learning of business subjects in selected secondary schools in Lagos State. M.Ed. Business Education Project submitted to Faculty of Education, Department of Business Education, University of Lagos, Akoka
2. **Adeniji O. O. (2015).** Contributions to Accounting Education to Self-Reliance in Nigeria. B.Sc. Ed. Business Education Project Submitted to Faculty Of Education, Department of Business Education, University of Lagos, Akoka.

(e) Books/Monographs: Nil

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Date

29th July, 2025

The University Compliance Certification

This is to certify that this thesis was carried out by **Olawale Oladele ADENIJI** with matric number **LCU/PG/003229** in the Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Lead City University, Ibadan, in Full compliance with the approved University format and style.

Signature

Date

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