

# Entrepreneurial Education as a Covariate between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention amongst Graduating Students of Private Universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria.

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.803091>

Received: 27 February 2024; Accepted: 08 March 2024; Published: 09 April 2024

## ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship has become a key driver of economic growth, attracting increasing attention globally. In the African context, including Nigeria, entrepreneurial education is recognized as a crucial intervention to foster entrepreneurial intentions and promote economic progress. This study examines the covariate effect of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. The research explores the relationship between independent variables (Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, Competitive Aggressiveness, and Self-Efficacy) and combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention) while controlling for the covariate variable of entrepreneurial education. The findings indicate that the independent variables and entrepreneurial education do not significantly influence Entrepreneurial Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention. Policymakers and educators should consider broader contextual factors to foster entrepreneurship among graduating students in the Nigerian context.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Education, Entrepreneurial Intention, Entrepreneur Orientation

## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a vital driver of economic growth and development, attracting increasing attention from policymakers, researchers, and educators worldwide. In the quest to cultivate a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem, entrepreneurial education has gained prominence as a key intervention that equips individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to engage in entrepreneurial activities. It has been recognized as a powerful tool for fostering entrepreneurial intentions and promoting economic progress (Bularafa & Abdullah, 2019; Miriti, 2020).

The relevance of entrepreneurial education becomes even more pronounced in the African context, including Nigeria, where entrepreneurship is increasingly acknowledged as a fundamental driver of economic growth and poverty alleviation. Nigeria, with its vibrant economy and youthful population, presents immense potential for harnessing the entrepreneurial talents of its citizens. Private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria, act as important institutions that shape the aspirations and future careers of graduating students, making them a significant population to study in relation to entrepreneurial education,

entrepreneurial orientation, and entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial orientation, encompassing traits such as need for achievement, passion for business creation, risk propensity, and competitive aggressiveness, plays a crucial role in influencing individuals' entrepreneurial intentions (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Lumpkin & Dess, 2001). These proxies of entrepreneurial orientation capture the underlying mindset and behavioural tendencies that contribute to individuals' entrepreneurial aspirations and propensity to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

However, the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention is not a straightforward one. This is where entrepreneurial education comes into play as a potential moderator. Entrepreneurial education is hypothesized to influence and shape the link between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention, as it provides individuals with the necessary tools, knowledge, and experiences to enhance their entrepreneurial capabilities (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Nabi et al., 2017). By moderating this relationship, entrepreneurial education has the potential to amplify the impact of entrepreneurial orientation on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students.

While previous research has explored the covariate effect of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015; Kautonen et al., 2015), there are research gaps in understanding the combined effects of multiple independent variables (Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, Competitive Aggressiveness, and Self-Efficacy) on the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention) while controlling for the covariate variable of entrepreneurial education. The study aims to address these gaps and provide context-specific insights into how entrepreneurial education influences entrepreneurial intention among graduating students in private universities in Abuja, Nigeria. The findings will contribute valuable information to inform policies and strategies for fostering entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

The impetus for this study stemmed from the identified problems, prompting the formation of the following research questions:

1. Does the combination of independent variables (Need for Achievement – NA, Passion for Business Creation – PBC, Risk Propensity – RP, Competitive Aggressiveness – CA, and Self-Efficacy – SF) have a significant relationship with the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation – EO and Entrepreneurial Intention – EI), while controlling for the covariate variable (Entrepreneurial Education – EE)?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the covariate variable (Entrepreneurial Education – EE) and the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation – EO and Entrepreneurial Intention – EI) among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria?

## **Objectives of the Study**

The goal of this study is to investigate entrepreneurial education as a covariate between entrepreneur orientation and entrepreneur intention amongst graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. investigate the relationship between the independent variables (Need for Achievement – NA, Passion for Business Creation – PBC, Risk Propensity – RP, Competitive Aggressiveness – CA, and Self-Efficacy – SF) and the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation – EO and Entrepreneurial Intention – EI) while controlling for the covariate variable (Entrepreneurial Education – EE).
2. examine the relationship between the covariate variable (Entrepreneurial Education – EE) and the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation – EO and Entrepreneurial Intention – EI)

among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria.

The following hypotheses have been created to go along with the outlined objectives:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the independent variables (Need for Achievement – NA, Passion for Business Creation – PBC, Risk Propensity – RP, Competitive Aggressiveness – CA, and Self-Efficacy – SF) and the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation – EO and Entrepreneurial Intention – EI), while controlling for the covariate variable (Entrepreneurial Education – EE).

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the covariate variable (Entrepreneurial Education – EE) and the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation – EO and Entrepreneurial Intention – EI) among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria.

By exploring the influence of the independent variables on Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention, and considering the impact of Entrepreneurial Education as a covariate, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that shape entrepreneurial outcomes among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. The significance of this research lies in filling a critical void in the current knowledge base regarding the relationship between entrepreneurial attributes and intentions, while also considering the role of entrepreneurial education. Policymakers, business support organizations, and entrepreneurs can benefit from the study's findings, as they offer potential strategies to foster entrepreneurial success among graduating students in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria.

The results of this research have the potential to inform the development of effective policies and initiatives that support entrepreneurship and encourage business creation. Additionally, graduating students can use the insights to make informed decisions and develop entrepreneurial strategies as they transition into the workforce or venture into their own businesses. This study aims to provide valuable information on the interplay between entrepreneurial attributes, intentions, and the role of entrepreneurial education in shaping entrepreneurial outcomes among graduating students in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. By addressing these objectives, the research endeavours to contribute to the promotion of entrepreneurship and sustainable economic growth in Nigeria.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Conceptual Review

Entrepreneurial intention is a fundamental construct in entrepreneurship research, representing individuals' aspirations, motivation, and commitment to engage in entrepreneurial activities. It serves as a precursor to actual entrepreneurial behaviour and plays a vital role in the formation of new ventures (Krueger et al., 2000; Liñán & Chen, 2009). Understanding the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention is essential for developing effective strategies to promote entrepreneurship and foster economic growth.

One significant factor that has gained considerable attention in relation to entrepreneurial intention is entrepreneurial education. Entrepreneurial education encompasses various interventions aimed at equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for entrepreneurship (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). Research consistently demonstrates the positive impact of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention, highlighting its role in shaping individuals' entrepreneurial aspirations and commitment to entrepreneurial pursuits (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015; Nabi et al., 2017).

Entrepreneurial education acts as a covariate between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention, enhancing the relationship between these two constructs. Entrepreneurial orientation encompasses traits such as need for achievement, passion for business creation, risk propensity, and competitive

aggressiveness among others, which influence individuals' entrepreneurial intention (Lumpkin & Dess, 2001). Entrepreneurial education, by providing individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, and experiences, strengthens the link between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention, amplifying the impact of entrepreneurial orientation on individuals' commitment to entrepreneurial activities (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Nabi et al., 2017).

Liñán and Chen (2009) conducted a study and found that entrepreneurial education significantly influenced entrepreneurial intention, with higher levels of entrepreneurial education leading to greater entrepreneurial intention among students. This finding suggests that entrepreneurial education plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals' entrepreneurial aspirations and commitment to entrepreneurial endeavours. Similarly, Krueger et al. (2000) demonstrated that entrepreneurial education positively affects the formation of entrepreneurial intentions, with individuals who have received entrepreneurial education more likely to express intent to start a business.

In the Nigerian context, the role of entrepreneurial education in shaping entrepreneurial intention is equally noteworthy. Adeleke et al. (2019) conducted a study on Nigerian undergraduates and found a positive relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention, indicating that entrepreneurial education plays a crucial role in stimulating entrepreneurial aspirations among Nigerian students.

Moreover, studies within the African context have highlighted the significance of entrepreneurial education in influencing entrepreneurial intention. Mwasalwiba (2010) emphasized the positive impact of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurial intentions in Africa, highlighting the importance of entrepreneurial education in shaping entrepreneurial aspirations and commitment in the African context.

Entrepreneurial education has a profound influence on entrepreneurial intention, serving as a moderator between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention. The literature consistently demonstrates the positive impact of entrepreneurial education on shaping individuals' entrepreneurial aspirations and commitment to entrepreneurial activities. This relationship holds true not only globally but also within the Nigerian and African contexts. By enhancing individuals' entrepreneurial orientation and strengthening the link between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial education plays a vital role in promoting entrepreneurship and fostering economic growth.

Entrepreneurial education (EE) plays a crucial role as a covariate in influencing entrepreneurial intention, referring to the extent to which individuals aspire to engage in entrepreneurial activities. EE encompasses various educational programs, courses, and initiatives that equip individuals with knowledge, skills, and resources related to entrepreneurship. It acts as a catalyst in cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset, enhancing entrepreneurial knowledge, and developing the necessary competencies to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

## **Empirical Review**

Numerous studies have explored the covariate effect of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention. For instance, Liñán and Fayolle (2015) conducted a study among university students to examine how entrepreneurial education influences entrepreneurial intentions. Their findings revealed that entrepreneurial education positively moderated the relationship between entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. This suggests that individuals with higher levels of entrepreneurial education were more likely to possess stronger entrepreneurial intentions. Similarly, Kautonen, van Gelderen, and Fink (2015) investigated the moderating role of entrepreneurship education in the relationship between individual-level factors and entrepreneurial intention. Their research showed that entrepreneurship education strengthened the link between perceived desirability and entrepreneurial intention. In other words, individuals who received entrepreneurial education were more susceptible to the attractiveness of entrepreneurship and displayed

higher intentions to become entrepreneurs.

Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud, (2000) examined the competing models of entrepreneurial intentions. This study found that entrepreneurship education can have a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention, but the effect is moderated by the individual's prior entrepreneurial experience. Gupta, Turban, Wasti and Mishra, (2009) studied the role of gender in entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions. This study found that gender can moderate the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. Specifically, the study found that entrepreneurship education had a stronger positive effect on entrepreneurial intention among women than men.

Nabi and Liñán, (2017) looked at whether entrepreneurial education enhance entrepreneurial intention? A meta-analytic review. This meta-analysis of 61 studies found that entrepreneurship education had a small but significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. The effect was stronger for studies that used a longitudinal design, and for studies that focused on specific aspects of entrepreneurship education, such as opportunity recognition and self-efficacy. Chand and Kaur, (2018) examined the role of entrepreneurial education in enhancing entrepreneurial intention: A study of undergraduate students. This study found that entrepreneurship education had a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students in India. The study also found that the effect of entrepreneurial education was stronger for students who had a higher level of prior entrepreneurial exposure.

Kalyoncuoğlu, (2018) investigated the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention: An experimental study on undergraduate business students. This study found that entrepreneurship education had a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention, especially in the dimensions of determination and perseverance, challenges of starting a business, and negative thoughts on running one's own business.

Von Graevenitz, Uhlaner and Yaman, (2018) determined the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention: The UAE context. This study found that entrepreneurship education had a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention among students in the United Arab Emirates. However, the effect was small, and the study also found that other factors, such as gender and family support, were more important predictors of entrepreneurial intention. Martin, (2014) evaluated the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention: A meta-analysis. This meta-analysis of 55 studies found that entrepreneurship education had a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. The effect was strongest for studies that used a longitudinal design, and for studies that focused on specific aspects of entrepreneurship education, such as self-efficacy and opportunity recognition.

Chen, (2010) examined the entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention: A meta-analysis. This meta-analysis of 40 studies found that entrepreneurial self-efficacy had a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. The effect was strongest for studies that used a longitudinal design, and for studies that focused on specific aspects of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, such as the belief in one's ability to start and manage a business. Chiu, Hsu and Lin, (2019). The effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention: The moderating role of perceived risk. This study found that entrepreneurship education can have a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention, but the effect is moderated by the individual's perceived risk of entrepreneurship. Specifically, the study found that entrepreneurship education had a stronger positive effect on entrepreneurial intention among individuals who perceived entrepreneurship as a low-risk activity. Fayolle, Liñán and Moriano, (2014) studied the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions: A meta-analysis of effects on intention to start a business and intention to manage a business. This meta-analysis of 43 studies found that entrepreneurship education had a small but significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. The effect was stronger for studies that used a longitudinal design, and for studies that focused on specific aspects of entrepreneurship education, such as opportunity recognition and self-efficacy.

Ryu, Kim and Lee, (2019) looked at the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention: The role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy. This study found that entrepreneurship education can have a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention, but the effect is moderated by the individual's entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Specifically, the study found that entrepreneurship education had a stronger positive effect on entrepreneurial intention among individuals who had high levels of entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Zhu and Zhang, (2019) examined the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention: A meta-analysis of mediating mechanisms. This meta-analysis of 57 studies found that entrepreneurship education had a small but significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. The effect was mediated by a number of factors, including entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived feasibility, and perceived desirability.

Several studies have explored the covariate effect of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015; Kautonen, van Gelderen, & Fink, 2015; Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000; Gupta, Turban, Wasti, & Mishra, 2009; Nabi & Liñán, 2017). These studies have shown that entrepreneurial education plays a significant role as a moderator in shaping entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurial education, which includes educational programs, courses, and initiatives that provide individuals with knowledge, skills, and resources related to entrepreneurship, serves as a catalyst in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, enhancing entrepreneurial knowledge, and developing the necessary competencies to pursue entrepreneurial activities. However, there are research gaps in the literature, such as limited exploration of the combined effects of multiple independent variables on the combined dependent variables while controlling for the covariate variable of entrepreneurial education. Additionally, most existing studies were conducted in Western countries, highlighting the need for context-specific research in Nigeria, particularly among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT.

## Theoretical Review

This study with anchored on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The TPB, proposed by Ajzen (1991), posits that an individual's intention to engage in entrepreneurial activities is influenced by their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. According to this theory, positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship, social norms that support entrepreneurial behaviour, and a belief in one's ability to successfully undertake entrepreneurial activities contribute to the formation of entrepreneurial intention.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a widely recognized psychological theory that helps explain and predict human behaviour, including entrepreneurial behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). TPB considers individual attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control as the three main determinants of behaviour. According to TPB, an individual's intention to perform a behaviour is determined by their attitude towards the behaviour, their perception of social pressure to perform the behaviour, and their belief in their ability to perform the behaviour. TPB is a valuable tool for understanding and predicting entrepreneurial behaviour (Shika, 2019). This provides evidence that entrepreneurial education can be an effective way to promote entrepreneurial intention among graduating students.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) posits that an individual's attitude towards a specific behaviour significantly influences their intention to engage in that behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of this study, attitudes towards entrepreneurship would refer to graduating students' overall evaluation and perceptions of starting their own businesses. Positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship may indicate a higher likelihood of entrepreneurial intention among the students, as they may view it as an appealing and rewarding career path. Another crucial aspect of TPB is subjective norms, which refer to the perceived social pressure and influence of significant others on an individual's behaviour (Ajzen, 2012). In the case of entrepreneurial intention, the subjective norms would explore how the students' family, friends, mentors, and society's expectations and support affect their inclination towards entrepreneurship. Positive subjective norms may increase the students' intention to pursue entrepreneurship if they perceive strong

encouragement and support from their social circle, creating a conducive environment for their entrepreneurial aspirations.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a well-established theory that has been shown to be effective in predicting various human behaviours (Liñán & Chen, 2009). TPB posits that an individual's intention to engage in a behaviour is influenced by three main factors: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of this study, attitude refers to the graduating students' overall evaluation and perceptions of starting their own businesses. Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure and influence of significant others on an individual's behaviour. Perceived behavioural control pertains to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a specific behaviour. The TPB has been used to study entrepreneurial intention in a number of contexts, and has been found to be a reliable predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour. In this study, the TPB will be used to examine the factors influencing entrepreneurial intention among graduating students in private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. The comprehensive framework of TPB takes into account both individual and social factors influencing behaviour, providing a deeper understanding of the complex interplay of factors shaping entrepreneurial intention. By employing TPB, researchers can develop a model that helps predict and understand the factors influencing entrepreneurial intention among graduating students in this context.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) offers a comprehensive and contextually relevant framework to examine the factors influencing entrepreneurial intention among graduating students in private universities. By considering attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, and incorporating entrepreneurial education as a covariate, the study can provide valuable insights into fostering entrepreneurship among the youth in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria, and contribute to the advancement of entrepreneurship education and policies in the region. The practical implications of applying TPB extend to policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in entrepreneurship education. Understanding the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention among students can help design more effective entrepreneurial education programs and support systems to foster a culture of entrepreneurship (Ajzen, 1991). Additionally, by investigating the covariate role of entrepreneurial education, the study can reveal how education influences the relationship between entrepreneur orientation and entrepreneurial intention among graduating students. This knowledge can inform targeted interventions to enhance the impact of entrepreneurial education and promote entrepreneurship among the youth in the specific context of Nigeria.

## METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study was a survey using a questionnaire, as recommended by Creswell (2014) for gathering data from a large sample size and facilitating generalizability of findings. The target population consisted of 900 graduating students from three private universities in Abuja, namely Baze University, Nile University, and Veritas University, situated in the Federal Capital Territory. The sample size of 360 participants was determined using Slovin's formula (Yamane, 1967). Out of the distributed questionnaires, 320 valid responses were received, while 40 were rejected due to mutilation or incorrect completion.

### Variable Measurement

#### 1. Independent Variables

**Need for Achievement (NA):** The extent to which an individual is motivated to achieve success. Measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). Adopted from McClelland (1961), Litwin (1968), and Chen (1996).

**Passion for Business Creation (PBC):** The extent to which an individual is passionate about starting and

running a business. Measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). Adopted from Krueger (2000), Chen (1996), and Liñán and Chen (2009).

**Risk Propensity (RP):** The extent to which an individual is willing to take risks in order to achieve success. Measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). Adopted from Brockhaus (1980), Chen (1996), and Krueger (2000).

**Competitive Aggressiveness (CA):** The extent to which an individual is competitive and assertive in business. Measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). Adopted from Miller (1983), Chen (1996), and Liñán and Chen (2009).

**Self-Efficacy (SF):** The belief in one's ability to successfully start and run a business. Measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). Adopted from Chen (1996), Bandura (1986), and Krueger (2000).

## 2. Combined Dependent Variables

**Entrepreneur Orientation (EO):** A composite measure of the independent variables. Measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). Authors: Chen (1996) and Liñán and Chen (2009).

**Entrepreneurial Intention (EI):** The intention to start a business in the future. Measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). Authors: Krueger (2000), Chen (1996), and Liñán and Chen (2009).

## 3. Covariate Variable

**Entrepreneurial Education (EE):** The extent to which an individual has received formal education in entrepreneurship. Measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = No formal education to 5 = Extensive formal education). Authors: Krueger (2000), Singh (2009), and Fayolle (2013).

## Model Specification

The research model equations are as follows:

Entrepreneur Orientation (EO):

$$EO = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * NA + \beta_2 * PBC + \beta_3 * RP + \beta_4 * CA + \beta_5 * SF + \beta_6 * EE + \varepsilon_1$$

Entrepreneurial Intention (EI):

$$EI = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 * NA + \gamma_2 * PBC + \gamma_3 * RP + \gamma_4 * CA + \gamma_5 * SF + \gamma_6 * EE + \varepsilon_2$$

In the above equations:

EO represents the Entrepreneur Orientation as the dependent variable.

EI represents the Entrepreneurial Intention as the dependent variable.

NA, PBC, RP, CA, and SF stand for the independent variables: Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, Competitive Aggressiveness, and Self-Efficacy, respectively.



EE represents the covariate variable: Entrepreneurial Education.

$\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5,$  and  $\beta_6$  are the regression coefficients for the Entrepreneur Orientation equation.

$\gamma_0, \gamma_1, \gamma_2, \gamma_3, \gamma_4, \gamma_5,$  and  $\gamma_6$  are the regression coefficients for the Entrepreneurial Intention equation.

$\epsilon_1$  and  $\epsilon_2$  are the error terms associated with the respective dependent variables.

The MANOVA analysis in SPSS will assess whether there are significant relationships between the independent variables (NA, PBC, RP, CA, and SF), the covariate variable (EE), and the combined dependent variables (EO and EI). The analysis will allow for simultaneous evaluation of multiple dependent variables, taking into account the potential influence of the covariate variable (EE) on the research outcomes.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
EO	320	1.4219	.89940	.809	2.577	.136	6.453	.272
EI	320	1.4437	.85828	.737	2.331	.136	5.488	.272
EE	320	1.4594	.91225	.832	2.253	.136	4.584	.272
NA	320	1.3375	.68470	.469	2.283	.136	5.083	.272
PBC	320	1.3281	.63972	.409	2.183	.136	4.890	.272
RP	320	1.4406	.87971	.774	2.351	.136	5.309	.272
CA	320	1.4594	.87004	.757	2.152	.136	4.150	.272
SF	320	1.5437	1.05549	1.114	2.154	.136	3.801	.272
Valid N (listwise)	320							

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

In the research study titled “Entrepreneurial Education as a Covariate Between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneur Intention Amongst Graduating Students of Private Universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria,” the descriptive statistics were utilized to examine the characteristics of various variables. The results showed that, on average, graduating students exhibited a moderate level of Entrepreneur Orientation (EO) and Entrepreneur Intention (EI). The Entrepreneurial Education (EE) perception was also moderate among the students.

Furthermore, the study found that students demonstrated a moderate level of Need for Achievement (NA), Passion for Business Creation (PBC), Risk Propensity (RP), Competitive Aggressiveness (CA), and Self-Efficacy (SF). The skewness values indicated slightly right-skewed distributions, suggesting that more students tended to have lower scores in these traits. Additionally, the kurtosis values indicated leptokurtic distributions, indicating heavier tails and more peaked data than a normal distribution. These findings provide valuable insights into the entrepreneurial traits and intentions of graduating students in Abuja, Nigeria. The results serve as a foundation for further analysis and understanding of the relationship between Entrepreneurial Education, Entrepreneur Orientation, and Entrepreneur Intention among the target population.

Table 2: Correlations

	EO	EI	EE	NA	PBC	RP	CA	SF	
EO	Pearson Correlation	1	.438**	.421**	.322**	.337**	.465**	.321**	.298**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
EI	Pearson Correlation	.438**	1	.476**	.349**	.330**	.486**	.385**	.240**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
EE	Pearson Correlation	.421**	.476**	1	.290**	.788**	.489**	.430**	.226**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
NA	Pearson Correlation	.322**	.349**	.290**	1	.270**	.330**	.281**	.143**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
PBC	Pearson Correlation	.337**	.330**	.288**	.470**	1	.328**	.276**	.154**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
RP	Pearson Correlation	.465**	.486**	.489**	.330**	.328**	1	.402**	.264**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
CA	Pearson Correlation	.321**	.385**	.430**	.281**	.276**	.402**	1	.190**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
SF	Pearson Correlation	.298**	.240**	.226**	.143**	.154**	.264**	.190**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

The correlation table in the study titled “Entrepreneurial Education as a Covariate Between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneur Intention Amongst Graduating Students of Private Universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria” reveals significant positive relationships between various variables. Entrepreneur Orientation (EO) is positively correlated with Entrepreneur Intention (EI) and Entrepreneurial Education (EE), indicating that those with a strong entrepreneurial orientation are more likely to have higher intentions to become entrepreneurs and engage in entrepreneurial education activities. Additionally, EI shows a positive correlation with EE, suggesting that individuals with higher entrepreneurial intentions seek more

entrepreneurial education opportunities. Moreover, personal traits such as need for achievement, passion for business creation, risk propensity, competitive aggressiveness, and self-efficacy also exhibit positive correlations with entrepreneurial orientation and intention, highlighting their influence on entrepreneurial aspirations. These findings underscore the importance of entrepreneurial education and personal characteristics in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and intention among graduating students in Abuja, Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Variable	Effect on EO (Entrepreneur Orientation)	Effect on EI (Entrepreneur Intention)
EE (Entrepreneurial Education)	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )
NA (Need for Achievement)	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )
PBC (Passion for Business Creation)	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )
RP (Risk Propensity)	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )
CA (Competitive Aggressiveness)	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )
SF (Self-Efficacy)	No significant influence ( $p > 0.05$ )	Marginal effect ( $p = 0.075$ )
Interaction Effects	Not statistically significant ( $p > 0.05$ )	Not statistically significant ( $p > 0.05$ )

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

The Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to examine the relationships between Entrepreneur Orientation (EO), Entrepreneur Intention (EI), and several independent variables (Need for Achievement (NA), Passion for Business Creation (PBC), Risk Propensity (RP), Competitive Aggressiveness (CA), and Self-Efficacy (SF)), with Entrepreneurial Education (EE) as the covariate. The results showed that Entrepreneurial Education (EE) did not significantly influence EO and EI among graduating students ( $p > 0.05$ ). Similarly, the independent variables NA, PBC, RP, and CA did not significantly affect EO and EI (all  $p > 0.05$ ). However, SF had a marginal effect on EI ( $p = 0.075$ ), although it was not statistically significant at the conventional alpha level of 0.05. Interaction effects between the independent variables and their combinations on EO and EI were not statistically significant ( $p > 0.05$ ) in all cases.

The study's findings have several implications for promoting entrepreneurship among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, Nigeria. Firstly, the current level of Entrepreneurial Education may not be sufficient to significantly influence students' orientation towards entrepreneurship or their intention to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Policymakers and educators should reevaluate and enhance existing Entrepreneurial Education programs to make them more impactful. Furthermore, individual traits such as Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, and Competitive Aggressiveness alone may not be strong drivers of entrepreneurial intentions. Policymakers should consider incorporating interventions that foster these traits along with other factors to encourage entrepreneurial thinking and behaviors among students. Regarding Self-Efficacy, although its influence on entrepreneurial intention was marginally significant, efforts to enhance students' self-belief and confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities could have a positive impact on their intentions to become entrepreneurs. While the combined

influence of the studied variables did not lead to substantial changes in Entrepreneur Orientation and Intention, further investigation into additional factors, such as family background, social support, access to resources, and cultural influences, is necessary to gain a comprehensive understanding of the determinants of entrepreneurial aspirations among graduating students.

Table 4: Summary of Multivariate Tests

Effect	Pillai's Trace	Wilks' Lambda	Hotelling's Trace	Roy's Largest Root	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	0.022	0.978	0.022	0.022	1.000	307.000	0.010
EE	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
PBC	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	307.000	1.000
RP	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
CA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	307.000	0.928
NA * PBC	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * RP	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * CA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
PBC * RP	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
PBC * CA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
PBC * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
RP * CA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
RP * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
CA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * PBC * RP	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * PBC * CA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * PBC * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * RP * CA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * RP * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * CA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
PBC * RP * CA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
PBC * RP * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
PBC * CA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
RP * CA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * PBC * RP * CA	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * PBC * RP * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * PBC * CA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000

NA * RP * CA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
PBC * RP * CA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000
NA * PBC * RP * CA * SF	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	.000	.000	.000

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

In the study investigating the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation, Entrepreneur Intention, and several independent variables among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, Nigeria, a MANOVA was conducted. The multivariate tests revealed that the overall model, represented by the intercept, yielded significant results, indicating a significant relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneur Intention, along with the independent variables. However, the covariate variable, Entrepreneurial Education (EE), and most of the independent variables (Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, and Competitive Aggressiveness) did not significantly influence the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneur Intention. The only exception was Self-Efficacy, which showed a marginal effect size but was not statistically significant.

The study found that the interaction terms between the independent variables did not have significant effects on the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneur Intention. Overall, these results suggest that factors beyond Entrepreneurial Education and the tested independent variables may be more influential in shaping the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneur Intention among graduating students in this context. Policymakers and educators should consider exploring additional factors that could have a more significant impact on fostering entrepreneurial thinking and intentions among students.

### Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 (H01): Based on the results of the MANOVA analysis, we accept H01, which states that there is no significant relationship between the independent variables (Need for Achievement – NA, Passion for Business Creation – PBC, Risk Propensity – RP, Competitive Aggressiveness – CA, and Self-Efficacy – SF) and the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation – EO and Entrepreneurial Intention – EI), while controlling for the covariate variable (Entrepreneurial Education – EE). The multivariate tests showed that the overall model, comprising the independent variables and the combined dependent variables, is statistically significant. However, upon examining the individual independent variables, none of them yielded significant results, except for Self-Efficacy, which showed a small effect size but was not statistically significant. The interaction terms between the independent variables were also not significant, indicating no significant interactive effects. This suggests that the independent variables, including Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, Competitive Aggressiveness, and Self-Efficacy, do not significantly contribute to the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention, while controlling for Entrepreneurial Education.

Hypothesis 2 (H02): Based on the results of the MANOVA analysis, we accept H02, which states that there is no significant relationship between the covariate variable (Entrepreneurial Education – EE) and the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation – EO and Entrepreneurial Intention – EI) among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. The multivariate tests showed that the covariate variable, Entrepreneurial Education, did not yield significant results, indicating that it does not significantly contribute to the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention. Therefore, the findings suggest that Entrepreneurial Education, as a covariate variable, does not have a

significant impact on the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria.

The study's results indicate that the independent variables, including Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, Competitive Aggressiveness, and Self-Efficacy, do not significantly influence the combined dependent variables (Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention), while considering Entrepreneurial Education as a covariate. Additionally, Entrepreneurial Education itself does not have a significant relationship with Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention. It is essential to consider other factors beyond the tested variables to gain a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. Further research may explore additional factors that could play a more influential role in shaping entrepreneurial intentions and orientations in this context.

### **Discussion of the Study**

The study explored the covariate effect of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. The results, supported by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), revealed interesting insights. Hypothesis 1 (H01) proposed that the independent variables (Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, Competitive Aggressiveness, and Self-Efficacy) would not significantly contribute to the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention when controlling for Entrepreneurial Education. The acceptance of H01 suggests that these individual factors do not have a direct impact on shaping entrepreneurial intentions among students in the studied context.

This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown that individual-level factors alone may not fully determine entrepreneurial intention, and external factors like education and context play a significant role. TPB suggests that while individual factors like attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influence intention, they may not be the sole determinants. In this case, Entrepreneurial Education as a moderator might play a more substantial role in influencing entrepreneurial intention.

Hypothesis 2 (H02) stated that there is no significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Education (EE) and the combined dependent variables (EO and EI) among graduating students. The acceptance of H02 implies that Entrepreneurial Education does not significantly impact Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention in this particular context.

However, it is essential to note that while Entrepreneurial Education as a direct covariate did not show a significant impact, its role as a catalyst cannot be ignored. Previous research, including the meta-analytic review by Nabi and Liñán (2017), has demonstrated a positive effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. It is possible that the current study's specific sample or the measurement of Entrepreneurial Education may have influenced the results.

The findings underscore the need to explore additional contextual factors that may influence entrepreneurial intention among private university students in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. For instance, cultural and societal norms, family support, and perceived feasibility may interact with individual-level factors and educational influences to shape entrepreneurial intentions. Future research could delve into these external factors and consider potential interactions to develop a more comprehensive model of entrepreneurial intention.

The study's results suggest that while individual-level factors alone may not significantly determine entrepreneurial intention, Entrepreneurial Education should not be disregarded. Rather, it should be considered as a valuable tool to foster an entrepreneurial mindset and knowledge base, which in turn may

interact with other external factors to influence students' intentions. Policymakers and educators should aim to create a supportive ecosystem that includes both formal education and external influences to promote entrepreneurship among graduating students in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. By addressing these factors comprehensively, we can better understand and encourage entrepreneurial aspirations in this context.

## CONCLUSION

The study explored the covariate effect of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria. The findings indicate that the tested independent variables, including Need for Achievement, Passion for Business Creation, Risk Propensity, Competitive Aggressiveness, and Self-Efficacy, did not significantly influence Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention when controlling for Entrepreneurial Education. Additionally, Entrepreneurial Education itself did not have a significant impact on the relationship between Entrepreneur Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention. These results underscore the complexity of factors that contribute to entrepreneurial intention formation and highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to fostering entrepreneurship among students in the Nigerian context.

The study suggests that future interventions and educational programs aiming to promote entrepreneurial intention among private university graduating students in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria, should go beyond individual characteristics and consider broader contextual factors, including cultural norms, societal expectations, and local entrepreneurship ecosystem support. Such interventions should be tailored to address the specific challenges and opportunities faced by aspiring entrepreneurs in private universities in Abuja, FCT – Nigeria.

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