

# The Effects of Entrepreneurship Education on University Students' Attitude and Entrepreneurial Intention

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## Abstract

The study is informed by high number of graduate unemployment and possibility of making entrepreneurship as a carrier choice affected by entrepreneurship education course offered by the students. This study investigated the relationship that exists between offering entrepreneurship education course and students intention to become entrepreneurs in selected universities in north east Nigeria. The population of the study were all undergraduate students from five selected universities in north east Nigeria. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the five universities, while simple random sampling was used in selecting four faculties and respondents from each university. The data was gathered across two semesters using four point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agreed to strongly disagree. SPSS version 16, descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation were used in the analysis of the data. The results showed that the students agreed that there is positive relationship between offering entrepreneurship education and their intention to become entrepreneurs. The Pearson correlation results also showed that, there is positive relationship between offering entrepreneurship education course and students' intention to become entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurship, Students, Intention, Subjective Norms, Attitude, Behavioural Control

## 1. Introduction

Nigeria is a nation blessed with both human and material resources which can be used to advance economic development, but reverse is the case. With over 50 years of independence, majority of Nigerians are still living below the poverty line. Nigerian Universities are producing thousands of graduates at the end of every academic session, and the number is too large for government ministries, commissions and agencies to absorb. Days are gone where Nigerian graduates will stay behind for government to provide employment, individuals and corporate organizations should strive to complement government efforts by creating jobs through establishment of small and medium scale enterprises.

Considering the abundant resources the country has compared to countries like Japan, Malaysia and Indonesia with Nigeria, due to the positive attitude and high level commitment towards Entrepreneurship, these countries were able to break the vicious circle of poverty and made standard of living in their countries better than ever before. In the words of Ogundele (2005), the Asian Tigers have developed and equipped their human assets with orientation and capacity for spontaneous responses to opportunities of wide ranging patterns both near and far. This he said is because of the appropriate Entrepreneurship Education (EE), training and development. Right from childhood six out of every ten people in Indonesia are entrepreneurs.

In recognition of the importance of the role of Entrepreneurship in economic growth and development, most countries are now shifting interest on promoting and developing Entrepreneurship Education (EE) both formal (Entrepreneurship Education in schools) and informal (apprenticeship) as a strategy to solve the problems of underdevelopment, unemployment, high level poverty and other social problems inherent in the economy.

The Nigerian government through the National Universities Commission has made it compulsory on every undergraduate student to offer Entrepreneurial course as a step towards stimulating active and productive Entrepreneurial activities in the country. It is believed, would help in developing students' attitude and interest in Entrepreneurship. Also the Federal Government and National Universities Commission recently directed all Federal Universities to establish Entrepreneurship Study/Development Centres (ESCs) at each of the Universities. This centre is to be funded by Educational Trust Fund (ETF). Similarly, the Senate of University of Maiduguri has approved the introduction of two credit units Entrepreneurship Education course known as Introduction to Entrepreneurial Skills II (practical aspect). This is to enable students to acquire practical aspect of Entrepreneurship. It is with this background that this study intends to assess the relationship that may exist between offering entrepreneurship education course and students' intention to become entrepreneurs in selected universities in north east Nigeria.

## 2.1 Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

- i. to assess the effects of attitude on entrepreneurial intention.
- ii. to assess the effects of subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention.
- iii. to assess the effects of perception of behavioural control on entrepreneurial intention.
- iv. to determine the effects of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention.

## 2.2 Hypothesis

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between attitude and entrepreneurial intention.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between perception of behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention.

**Ho<sub>4</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention.

## 3. Literature Review

### 3.1 Entrepreneurship

Precisely, there is no consensus definition of entrepreneurship. However, Opara (2000) defined entrepreneurship as the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully, based on the identifiable opportunities. Nwachukwu (1990) defined entrepreneurship as ability to see and evaluate business opportunities, gather the necessary resources to take advantages of them and initiates appropriate action to ensure success. UNIDO (1999) defined entrepreneurship as the process of using initiative to transform business concept to new venture, diversifying existing venture, or enterprises to high growing venture potential. Entrepreneurship is the starting of a new business or refreshing an existing one which have some problems. The process by which Entrepreneurship skills and knowledge can be transmitted or imparted mainly is through education.

### 3.2 Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship Education is the process of imparting individuals/students with the concepts and skills to recognized opportunities that others have overlooked, and to have the insight, self esteem and knowledge to act where others have hesitated. Entrepreneurship Education has been view as a systematic training and instruction that transmit entrepreneurial knowledge and development of skills in students (CELCEE, 1999). Entrepreneurship education is meant to change students' behaviour pattern in the desired direction. Therefore, Entrepreneurship education is a continuing development of relevant entrepreneurial skills and habits whose understanding and application enable the students to contribute meaningfully towards the growth and development of Nigerian economy.

Bink (2005) is of the opined that entrepreneurship education refers to the instructive process involved in the encouragement of entrepreneurial activities, behaviours and mindsets. Entrepreneurship education has come to symbolize all forms of knowledge delivering that seek to empower the individuals/students to create real wealth in the economic sector, thereby, advancing the cause of development of the nation as a whole (Ekpoh & Edet, 2011). Similarly, Entrepreneurship education is the process of imparting knowledge and teaching skills to potential entrepreneurs on how to venture into business that is relatively small in nature for future development or advancement (Aminu, 2009).

The Centre for Entrepreneurial Leadership Clearinghouse on Entrepreneurship Education defined Entrepreneurship education (EE) as the process of imparting structural and formal entrepreneurial concept, entrepreneurial behaviour, entrepreneurial culture, skills and mental awareness to be used by students and individuals to develop abilities, and willingness, to seek out investment opportunities, initiate, start, manage and develop business and entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurship education is an imperative component of university education providing a motivation, self efficacy and confidence for students in making career choice of becoming entrepreneurs. Thereby, creating and increasing the new venture creation, economic growth and development. The new businesses established play very important and significant role in the economy.

### 3.3 The Effects of Entrepreneurship Education on Students' Entrepreneurial Intention

There exist empirical research findings that support and gave evidence that entrepreneurship education influence students' intention to become entrepreneurs. According to Kakkonen (2010) in his research finding revealed that taking entrepreneurship education course has positive effects on entrepreneurial carrier choice of students and the effects are significant. Dyer (1994) found link between offering entrepreneurship education course and students intention to start business. He further explained that entrepreneurship education training might give some students the confidence they need to start their own business. Robinson et al (1991) found that entrepreneurship education increase and improve the perceived feasibility for entrepreneurship by increasing the knowledge of students, building confidence and promote self-efficacy. According to them, it also improve the perceived desirability for entrepreneurship by showing that entrepreneurship education is highly desirable, regarded and socially acceptable and that it can be rewarding. The research findings of Autio et al (1997),

Krueger, Reilly and Carrud (2000), Adenipekun (2004), Thandi and Sharma (2003), Uwameiye and Uwameiye (2006), and Izedonmi and Okafor (2010) found that entrepreneurship education significantly influence the intention of students to become entrepreneurs.

According to Ajzen (1991) based on the understanding of the belief, attitude and intention relationship, individuals' beliefs and attitudes regarding entrepreneurship would inform their intention to become entrepreneurs. Kolvereid (1996) found attitude towards entrepreneurship, favourable social norms and strong entrepreneurial self-efficacy positively influence the intention of an individual/student to become entrepreneurs. Also, an empirical research finding by McStay (2008) reported that students perceived desirability and self-efficacy influenced their intention to become entrepreneurs. This means that offering entrepreneurship education positively increases the students Perception of feasibility and desirability of entrepreneurship. Frank and Luthje (2004) state that lack of entrepreneurship education leads to low level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and intention.

#### **4. Theoretical Framework**

##### **4.1 The Theory of Planned Behaviour**

The proponent of this theory is Ajzen. The Theory of Planned Behaviour, states that behavioural intentions are formed by individual's attitude towards that behaviour, subjective norms and perception of behavioural control. The Theory postulated that must behaviour results from an individual's intention to perform entrepreneurial behaviour and their ability to make mindful choices among alternatives and make good decisions. This Theory is made up of three components: the attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control.

##### **4.2 Attitude towards Entrepreneurship**

Individuals work with what they are expecting at the end of the day will bring benefit to them. In other words, if they perceive entrepreneurship will help them in achieving their goals, aims and objectives, they will tend to develop positive attitude towards it. And reverse will be the case when the opposite occur. Therefore, attitude towards the entrepreneurship refers to the degree to which an individual has a desirable or undesirable, favourable or unfavourable appraisal of the entrepreneurial behaviour.

##### **4.3 Subjective Norms**

Norms are rules or expectation through which a society guides the behaviour of its members and often reflect social values. It has been noted that attitude influence behaviour through intentions, Ajzen (1991) refers to the perceived social norms and relationship that exist among an individual peers, parents, friends and associates as impacting on individuals' intention to engage or not to engage entrepreneurial behaviour. That means parents, friends, associates, teachers on one hand, and values, beliefs, culture, and customs on the other hand may influence individuals' formation of attitude and intention towards entrepreneurship and its education.

##### **4.4 Perceived Behavioural Control**

This show the degree or extent of maturity, organization and control display by an individual in relation to entrepreneurial attitude, intention and its sustainability and the influence it exert on entrepreneurial activities of individuals. Perceived behavioural control is defined in the Theory as the individual perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour of interest.

##### **4.5 Entrepreneurial Intention**

Entrepreneurial Intention refers to the intent to perform entrepreneurial behaviour/activities (McStay, 2008). It is concerned with the inclination of a person to an entrepreneurial activity in the future (Davidson, 1995). According to Krueger and Brazeal, (1994) Zhao et al. (2005) entrepreneurial intention is defined as the intention to start a new business, while Crant (1996) viewed it as the intention to own a business. Douglas and shepherd (2002), and Kolvereid (1996) defined it as the intention to be self-employed. Entrepreneurial Intentions reflect an individual/student's acceptance, willingness, zeal and plans to engage in an entrepreneurial behaviour.

#### **5. Methodology**

##### **5.1 Sources of Data**

The researcher utilized both primary and secondary source of data. Primary source was used to gather information from the students of the population through, the use of questionnaire across two semesters. The secondary data was obtained through the use of reports, journals, text books and other relevant published data.

##### **5.2 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

The sample for this study is undergraduate students drawn from five Universities in North East geo – political

zone. This is because all undergraduate students are offering entrepreneurship education course from the Division of General Studies. Multi stage sampling was applied. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting five Universities. The reasons for using this method is to compose a sample that has federal (UNIMAID and ATBU) and state (ADSU and GSU) Universities. Secondly, is to involve conventional (UNIMAID, ADSU and GSU) and special University (ATBU).thirdly, to involve private University (AUN). And fourthly, is because the Universities are spread across the study area with exception of Yobe and Taraba states which are having infant Universities.

Simple Random Sampling was used in selecting four faculties and respondents. The sample size for this study is four hundred. The respondents were collected proportionally (proportionally) from the five selected Universities. To arrive at numbers of respondents in each university the following procedure was followed.

Sample size = 400

No. of Faculties in all universities = 28

Ratio =  $400/28 = 14.28$

Then: ADSU:  $14.28 * 3 = 43$

ATBU:  $14.28 * 6 = 86$

AUN:  $14.28 * 3 = 43$

GSU:  $14.28 * 4 = 57$

UNIMAID:  $14.28 * 12 = 171$

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents According to Universities**

S/No	University	Faculties in each University	Faculties		Total Number of Respondents
			Sciences	Humanities	
1.	ADSU	3	2	2	43
2.	ATBU	6	2	2	86
3.	AUN	3	2	2	43
4.	GSU	4	2	2	57
5.	UNIMAID	12	2	2	171
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>			<b>400</b>

ADSU: Adamawa State University, Mubi

ATBU: Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi

AUN: American University of Nigeria, Yola

GSU: Gombe State University, Gombe

UNIMAID: University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri

### 5.3 Methods of Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four main sections. The first section is about demographic characteristics of the respondents. The second section is to measured attitude; while the third section measured the subjective norms, and the fourth section measured the intention of students to become entrepreneurs.

Structured questionnaire on Likert scale was used. The responses ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree (4 point scale). This has enabled the respondents to record the questionnaire easily. It also helps in keeping the respondents focus, and minimizes likelihood of misinterpretation.

### 5.4 Methods of Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 16) was used in the analysis of the collected data. Similarly, frequency tables, simple percentage, descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis were also used.

### 6. Results and Analysis

The demographic results indicated that 52.70% of the respondents are within the age of 18 to 25 years. 40.30% of the respondents fall within the age of 26 to 35 years. From 35 to 55 years constitute only 6.70% of the total respondents, while 56+ constitute only 0.3% of the respondents. This indicates that large proportions of the respondents are within the labour force age, Therefore indicating that the students are having the potentials to be become entrepreneurs. Large number of the students comprised of young and active potential entrepreneurs. They are likely to be more productive and may develop positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and its education and development of intention to become entrepreneurs. This consequently will be transformed into establishment of business that will create employment opportunities and reduce dependency on family and government. Male students constitute 60.80% of the sample, while female students constitute 39.20%. Singles constitute the large portion of the respondents with 77.30%. This may be due to delay of marriage till after graduation, or they are not prepared to get married. 20.50%, of the respondent are married while 2.10% are

divorcees. 52.50% of the respondents are science base students, while humanities students constitute 47.50% of the respondents.

**Table 2: Effects of Attitude on Students Entrepreneurial Intention**

Variables	Agreed		Disagreed	
	Freq.	%	Freq	%
Being an entrepreneur implies more advantages	203	54.13	172	45.87
A career as entrepreneur is attractive for me	232	61.87	143	38.13
if I had the opportunities and resources, I would like to start my business	321	85.60	54	14.40
being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfaction for me	299	79.73	76	20.27
Among various options, I would rather be an Entrepreneur	301	80.27	74	19.73
<b>Mean</b>		<b>72.32</b>		<b>27.68</b>

**Source:** field survey 2013

The results from table 2 show that the respondents gave affirmative responses. 54.13% of the respondents agreed that to become an entrepreneur will be of advantages to them than engaging in paid jobs. 61.87% agreed that being an entrepreneur is attractive them. 85.60% agreed that if they have the opportunities and resources at there disposal, they will like to start their businesses. 79.73% are of the opinion that to be an entrepreneur would entail great satisfaction for them. 80.27 % opined that giving various options, they will prefer to become entrepreneurs.

**Table 3: Effects of Subjective Norms on Students' Entrepreneurial Intention**

Variables	Agreed		Disagreed	
	Freq.	%	Freq	%
My Family encourage & support me to become entrepreneur	306	81.60	69	18.40
My friends encourage & support me to become entrepreneur	286	76.27	89	23.73
My peer group encourage & support me to become entrepreneur	250	66.67	125	33.33
My colleagues are main source of entrepreneurial information	191	50.93	184	49.07
Role model inspired & stimulate my interest in entrepreneurship	186	49.60	189	50.40
<b>Mean</b>		<b>65.01</b>		<b>34.99</b>

**Source:** field survey 2013

The results from table three, 81.60% of the respondents are of the belief that their family members have influence on their decision to become entrepreneurs. 76.27% agreed that their friends encourage and support them to become entrepreneurs. 66.67% agreed that their peer members do encourage and support them to go into entrepreneurial activities. 50.93% are agreed that their colleagues/reference group members support them by giving out entrepreneurial related information that will assist them in going into business. While only 49.60% see the presence and interaction with role models will inspired & stimulate their interest in entrepreneurship.

**Table 4: Effects of Perception of Behavioural Control on Students' Entrepreneurial Intention**

Variables	Agreed		Disagreed	
	Freq.	%	Freq	%
to start a firm & keep it working would be easy	288	76.80	87	23.20
I am prepared to start a viable business	269	71.73	106	28.27
I can control the creation process of new business	274	73.07	101	26.93
I know the necessary practical details to start a firm	286	76.27	89	23.73
I know how to develop entrepreneurial project	301	80.27	74	19.73
if I tried to start a firm, I would have a high probability of success	278	74.13	97	25.87
<b>Mean</b>		<b>75.38</b>		<b>24.62</b>

**Source:** field survey 2013

Table four shows the results of the perception of behavioural control of the respondents.76.80% of the respondents agreed that to start a firm and keep it working would be easy for them. 71.73% of the respondents believe that they are prepared to start viable businesses. 73.07% agreed that they can control the creation process of new business. 76.27% agreed that they know the necessary practical details to start a firm. 80.27% agreed that they know how to develop entrepreneurial projects. 74.13% of the respondents believe if they try to start a firm they would have a high probability of success.

**Table 5: Effects of Entrepreneurship Education on Students' Entrepreneurial Intention**

Variables	Agreed		Disagreed	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
EE has impact on my intention become entrepreneur	297	79.2	78	20.8
I desperately want to start my own business.	291	77.6	84	22.4
Owning my business is very appealing & important to me.	289	77.1	86	22.9
I cannot imagine working for someone else.	231	61.6	144	38.4
I intend to start my business as soon as possible.	285	76	90	24
I am now equipped with skills needed for identifying business opportunities	280	74.7	95	25.3
<b>Mean</b>		<b>74.36</b>		<b>25.64</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table five show the results of influence of entrepreneurship education on students to become entrepreneurs. The students agreed that entrepreneurship education has impacted on their intention to become entrepreneurs with 79.20%. They very much want to start business with 77.60%. Owning my business is appealing and important with 77.10%. They rejected working under someone with 61.60%. Intention of starting business is rated at 76%. While equipped with entrepreneurial skills for identifying new business opportunities and managing business with 74.70%. Averagely, the influence of entrepreneurship education on students' intention to become entrepreneurs in Nigeria is 74.25%.

## 7. Hypotheses Testing

**Table 6: Correlation between Attitudes, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioral Control and Entrepreneurial Intention**

Variables	EI	ATB	SN	PBC
EI Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1  375	.274** .000 375	.240** .000 375	.950** .000 375
ATB Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.274** .000 375	1  375	.361** .000 375	.274** .000 375
ATB Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.240** .000 375	.361** .000 375	1  375	.240** .000 375
PBC Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.950** .000 375	.274** .000 375	.240** .000 375	1  375

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table six presents the correlation analysis results of the variables in this research work.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between attitude and entrepreneurial intention.

Attitude towards entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention are positively related ( $r=0.274$ ). Therefore, we reject the hypothesis one.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention.

Subjective norm and entrepreneurial intention are positively related ( $r=0.274$ ). Therefore, we reject the hypothesis two.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between perception of behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention

Perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention are positively related ( $r=0.950$ ). Therefore, we reject the hypothesis one.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention.

**Table 7: Effects of Entrepreneurship Education on Students' Entrepreneurial Intention**

Factors	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. Value	Decision
EE has impact on my intention become entrepreneur	0.163**	0.01	Significant
I desperately want to start my own business	0.227**	0.00	Significant
Owning my business is very appealing & important	0.307**	0.00	Significant
I cannot imagine working for someone else	0.182**	0.00	Significant
I intend to start my business as soon as possible	0.275**	0.00	Significant
I am now equipped with entrepreneurial skills needed for identifying business opportunities and managing business	0.280**	0.00	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2013      \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Table seven is a correlation table that measures the relationship between offering entrepreneurship education and students' intention to become entrepreneurs. The results indicate that there is positive relationship between offering entrepreneurship education course and students intention to become entrepreneurs with coefficient of 0.163. There is positive correlation between desirability of starting business with entrepreneurship education with 0.227, coefficient of correlation. There is positive relationship between entrepreneurship educations owning business by students with coefficient of 0.307. The students prefer to work for themselves instead of engaging in paid jobs with 0.182. The results showed that entrepreneurship education has impact on the students' intention to start business very soon coefficient of 0.275. While the students showed that they are equipped with skills of identifying business opportunities and managing businesses with positive relationship of 0.280. Therefore the correlation between offering entrepreneurship education course and students intention of becoming entrepreneurs is significant.

From table seven the correlation analysis shows that there is significant relationship between offering entrepreneurship education and students intention to become entrepreneurs. Therefore we reject the null hypothesis that: There is no significant relationship between offering entrepreneurship education course and students' intention to become entrepreneurs.

## 8. Discussion of Findings

The results from this research work supported some previous research works. That means there is significant positive relationship between attitude towards entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention of the students ( $r = 0.274$ ). Therefore, entrepreneurship teachers, stakeholders and policy makers should focus on how to stimulate their students to develop and sustain positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and its education so as to achieve the desired results.

The results shows positive correlation relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention ( $r = 0.240$ ). This means that subjective norms of the respondents influence their intention towards becoming entrepreneurs. Therefore, family members, friends, peer members, reference members and role models should assist the students in developing strong entrepreneurial intention that will be transformed into actual behaviour.

Perception of behavioural control is positively related to entrepreneurial intention. That means, the stronger the behavioural control, the greater the entrepreneurial intention. This has been in accord the proposition made in the theory.

The results of the correlation indicated that statistically, there is significant relationship between offering entrepreneurship education and students' intention to become entrepreneurs where all coefficients are significant. This has concurred with the findings of Ajzen (1991), Bandura (1997), Kolveried (1996) and Mc Stay (2008). They conclude that entrepreneurship education act as the medium of attitude and behaviour change, which make the students to perceive entrepreneurial entry as feasible and desirable. Furthermore the finding of Lee (1996) indicated that entrepreneurs with entrepreneurship education and experience may create higher profit from their businesses. The results of this study has agreed with the study findings of Kakkonen (2010), where it revealed that offering entrepreneurship education course has positive effects on the students intention to become entrepreneurs. Similarly the finding of Dyer (1994) agreed with this finding where his results show positive association between entrepreneurship education and students intention to become entrepreneurs. So therefore, entrepreneurship education will give the students the confidence they need to become entrepreneurs. In a similar finding which agreed with this one is that of Robinson et al (1991), where they stated that entrepreneurship education increase and improves the perception of feasibility and perception of desirability for entrepreneurship

by increasing the knowledge of students, building confidence and promotes self-effectiveness. Volery and Mueller (2006) and Gorman et al (1997) found that entrepreneurship education influence students decision to become entrepreneurs, this means participation in entrepreneurship education has significant influence or relationship on students' entrepreneurial intention to become entrepreneurs.

## 9. Conclusion

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that descriptively, the students agreed the exposure to entrepreneurship education course lead to the development of entrepreneurial intention by the students and students may make decision in favour of starting their own businesses before or after graduation. The Pearson correlation analysis indicated that there exist positive relationships between offering entrepreneurship education course and students intention to become entrepreneurs. Attitude toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms and perception of behavioural control were found to be predictors of entrepreneurial intention.

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