FAMILY BACKGROUND AND PERSONAL TRAITS AS PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

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Abstract
Despite sustained legislative emphasis on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education as a means to reduce youth unemployment, a significant number of university students still show weak entrepreneurial inclinations. This mismatch raises concerns regarding the psychological and social factors that affect students' motivation to engage in entrepreneurial initiatives. This study examined
Family Background and Personal Traits (entrepreneurial mindset, entrepreneurial attitude, and self-efficacy) as Predictors of Students' Entrepreneurial Intentions. The study employed a quantitative methodology; a sample of 267 was extracted from a population of 795 students in selected departments of the University of Lagos, Nigeria, using the Taro Yamane method. The measurement utilized a five-point Likert scale questionnaire, and data were analyzed via SPSS, using multiple regression at the 5% significance level. The research findings revealed that entrepreneurial family background ($p = 0.598$), entrepreneurial mindset ($p = 0.265$), and entrepreneurial attitude ($p = 0.008$) did not have a statistically significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions; however, self-efficacy ($p = 0.000$) did. These findings delineate perceived capacity and achievement motivation as the principal determinants of entrepreneurial intention creation. The research recommends enhancing experiential entrepreneurship education, competency-based training, and mentorship programs to augment students' self-efficacy and stimulate sustainable entrepreneurial intent.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Family Background, Entrepreneurial Mindset, Entrepreneurial Attitude, Self-efficacy, Entrepreneurial Intentions.

Introduction

The escalating unemployment rate is a global phenomenon, more pronounced in developing nations where job markets are saturated, and job seekers predominantly rely on the government to furnish employment opportunities. Yan et al. (2023) emphasized that entrepreneurship education to equip students with the knowledge and drive necessary for self-employment, particularly in today's labour market of more graduates and fewer jobs. This is due to its observed efficacy in ensuring stable income and combating unemployment. Consequently, there has been a burgeoning interest in entrepreneurship education, owing to its vital significance in economic, social, and political dimensions. Entrepreneurship education has initiated a novel phenomenon that is now recognized as a means of identifying and generating opportunities (Kuratko & Covin, 2025). Notably, since the inception of the inaugural entrepreneurship course at Harvard Business School in 1947, entrepreneurship education has proliferated globally, garnering significant interest from both entrepreneurs and academic scholars (Jena, 2020). Entrepreneurship teachings at institutions are an early means of enhancing individual entrepreneurial quality, knowledge, and skills, and it is receiving significant societal recognition. Notably, between 2013 and 2020, the Chinese Government issued over 100 policy documents to promote and facilitate the advancement of "entrepreneurship education (Yuan et al., 2020). In recent years, the proliferation of entrepreneurship courses at institutions has been driven by the expectation of both the government and educational institutions to foster students' innovative thinking and entrepreneurial skills. This is necessary to enhance graduates' employment prospects, generate new job opportunities, and ultimately contribute to economic growth.

Entrepreneurship education is essential for talent development, as contemporary research highlights the growth inherent in this expertise (Passarelli & Bongiorno, 2025). The expertise of instructional professionals and the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial goals are significant factors that must not be disregarded. Instructional professionals play a crucial role in instilling the necessary confidence and motivation in students to achieve their goals. According to social cognition theory, individuals strive for their goals only when they are assured that their abilities and actions can produce expected results (Maleki et al., 2025). Nonetheless, considerable discrepancies are present in the role of entrepreneurship education in students' entrepreneurial ambitions across various areas, with issues stemming from students' mindsets, attitudes, familial backgrounds, and self-efficacy. Over time, there has been an emphasis on entrepreneurship education to influence students' entrepreneurial intentions, neglecting other critical aspects. Hence, prior studies examining the factors that impact students' entrepreneurial inclinations have produced incongruous findings. The studies acknowledge that entrepreneurial intention is substantial and indisputable (Saoula et al., 2025). However, some argue that it goes beyond entrepreneurship education, as it does not affect students' entrepreneurial intentions and may even have an adverse impact (Nguyen et al., 2025). Such research argues that students do not acquire an inclination for entrepreneurship exclusively through entrepreneurship education, suggesting the influence of additional factors. Therefore, understanding the fundamental factors that affect students' entrepreneurial intentions is crucial; hence, this study investigates characteristics such as entrepreneurial family background, mindset, attitude, and self-efficacy.

LITERATURE

Entrepreneurial Family Background

Entrepreneurial family background is the exposure to family members who are

owners, managers or involved in entrepreneurial activities. This exposure can offer individuals opportunities to look at entrepreneurial behaviour, decision making and business practices as family members can be a source of support and role models. However, recent findings indicate that social and family factors may not necessarily result in an individual's perception and eagerness to participate in entrepreneurial pursuits. A study by Ogunlana (2024) on family business exposure and entrepreneurial intention among 410 undergraduate students in four Nigerian state universities revealed that the entrepreneurial family background did not significantly impact entrepreneurial intention ($p = 0.412$). The discovery indicates that family entrepreneurship exposure alone might not be enough to encourage students to become entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurial Mindset

An entrepreneurial mind is a person's ability to identify and assess opportunities, find solutions to problems, adjust to emerging situations, and look for creative solutions. It allows people to be agile when facing a complex business landscape were adjusting to changing and new business environments is essential for the success of an entrepreneur. However, having an entrepreneurial mind may not necessarily lead to entrepreneurial intention. In a study of 300 youth apprentices in Kano State, Bello (2025) revealed that there was no significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset and entrepreneurial intention, as the significance value ($p = 0.538$) was above the 5% threshold. While the respondents showed that they had the potential to recognize an opportunity, adaptability, and problem-solving, they did not show an assured intention to become entrepreneurs. This finding indicates that an entrepreneurial attitude might need to be accompanied by other factors such as finance, mentoring, and market opportunities to foster entrepreneurial intentions.

Entrepreneurial Attitude

This is a predisposition, which may be positive or negative, in an assessment of entrepreneurship and the extent to which entrepreneurial activity is considered desirable. It affects the personality and attitude of a person towards entrepreneurship as a career. Research has shown that Entrepreneurship education can be a driver of student attitudes and perceptions towards entrepreneurial activities (Oyebanjo et al., 2024). Nevertheless, a positive attitude may not necessarily result in a firm intention to establish a business. In a study, Nwachukwu (2025) examined 360 students of polytechnics in Nigeria; no significant relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention was found. Even though most students expressed positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship, these attitudes did not necessarily lead to a firm intention to become an entrepreneur, indicating that contextual factors may limit the ability of these positive attitudes to become entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

This entails a person's self-confidence to execute entrepreneurial activities successfully and deal with the obstacles of starting and running an entrepreneurial business. High self-efficacy promotes self-efficacy when such activities are perceived as challenges to be mastered and boosts persistence in achieving the desired outcomes. Notably, Zanabazar et al. (2025) conducted a quantitative study on university students, revealing that entrepreneurial self-efficacy had a positive moderate relationship with entrepreneurial intention. The study also confirmed that entrepreneurial mindset was partially mediated by self-efficacy, which means that self-efficacy in entrepreneurial skills could mediate the entrepreneurial mindset into achieving more powerful entrepreneurial intention. Bamidele (2025) in his study of 385 female tertiary students in Southwest Nigeria, revealed that self-efficacy positively and significantly correlated with entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial Intention

It is a conscious willingness and commitment to engage in entrepreneurial activities or start a new venture. It is a crucial phase in the entrepreneurial process, as it shows the readiness of a person to become an entrepreneur and gives a clue into their possible entrepreneurial behaviour. The attitude towards entrepreneurial behaviour and subjective norms and perceived social expectations are found to affect entrepreneurial intention according to Ho et al. (2025). The findings in the empirical evidence reviewed are inconclusive about the factors that affect entrepreneurial intention. However, Ogunlana (2024), Bello (2025) and Nwachukwu (2025) found that entrepreneurial family background, entrepreneurial mindset and entrepreneurial attitude, respectively, had no significant impact while Bamidele (2025) and Zanabazar et al. (2025) found that entrepreneurial self-efficacy had a positive effect. This gap is addressed as this study verifies if family background and personal traits are predictors of students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria faces challenges in creating sufficient employment opportunities to accommodate the growing number of graduates each year. Annually, Nigerian institutions produce thousands of graduates who inundate the job market; nonetheless, the job market is not sufficiently elastic to accommodate all graduates, let alone those in the foreseeable future. This engenders a societal issue as thousands of graduates remain unemployed, and even among those employed, many appear to be underemployed. Thus, the number of university graduates does not correspond with the available work opportunities, and despite governmental efforts to promote job development for young people, particularly graduates, unemployment among graduates is significantly elevated. Data reveal that in the 4th quarter of 2022, approximately 53.40% of Nigerian youths, including graduates, were unemployed (Datti et al., 2024). In 2024, a significant percentage of graduates had difficulties securing employment, with BSc grads constituting 39.75% of the total (veriv-Africa, 2024). Thus, it is expected that, in a challenging reality, students should be self-motivated to become entrepreneurs and pursue business startups. Conventional educational frameworks frequently emphasize academic knowledge, overlooking the practical competencies essential for cultivating the right mindset, attitude, and self-confidence for self-employment/entrepreneurship. However, beyond entrepreneurship education, other barriers also prevent students from pursuing entrepreneurship, including whether they come from an entrepreneurial family and their entrepreneurial mindset, attitude, and self-efficacy.

Purpose/Objectives

The study's main goal was to investigate how personal traits (mindset, attitude, and self-efficacy) and entrepreneurial family background impact Nigerian university students' entrepreneurial intentions; its specific objectives are to:

- **i.** Determine the impact of entrepreneurial family background on entrepreneurial intentions.
- **ii.** Analyze the impact of an entrepreneurial mindset on entrepreneurial intentions.
- **iii.** Examine the influence of entrepreneurial attitude on entrepreneurial intentions.
- **iv.** Examine the influence of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions.

Research Questions

- **i.** What is the impact of an entrepreneurial family background on entrepreneurial intentions?
- **ii.** What is the impact of an entrepreneurial mindset on entrepreneurial intentions?

iii. What is the influence of entrepreneurial attitude on entrepreneurial intentions?
iv. What is the impact of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intentions?

Hypotheses

The study hypotheses are written in their null form;
H_{01}: Entrepreneurial family background has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.
H_{02}: Entrepreneurial mindset has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.
H_{03}: Entrepreneurial attitude has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.
H_{04}: Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Methods

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design, as data were collected at a single point in time to evaluate the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. A quantitative approach was adopted; cross-sectional designs are commonly employed in quantitative studies to effectively evaluate the relationship between constructs without the need for longitudinal follow-ups (Nwabuko et al., 2024). The study utilized a sample size of 795 management students from the University of Lagos Distance Learning Institute, encompassing programs in Business Administration, Accounting, Finance, Economics, and Public Administration. These departments were chosen purposively to incorporate students who were taking entrepreneurial courses in a practical setting, which was important for the study's purposes. Purposive sampling was required, especially because the research needed participants with a particular trait and exposure (final-year university students). The Taro Yamane technique was used to determine an appropriate sample size of 267. Within the departments, random sampling was employed to survey participation. Random sampling was employed to ensure all respondents had an equal chance of being selected (McKechnie & Fisher, 2025).

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, utilizing 5-item Likert scales that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Three experts in the field of entrepreneurship education and development were consulted for a face and content validity test on the instrument. This was necessary to ensure that the questionnaire addressed relevant items to represent the intended constructs. Cronbach's alpha was further used to evaluate the instrument's reliability, yielding a cumulative result of good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.821$). The data analysis was performed using SPSS, employing multiple regression to examine the effect of the predictor variables (entrepreneurial family background, entrepreneurial mindset, entrepreneurial attitude, and self-efficacy) on the outcome variable (entrepreneurial intention) at a 5% significance level. Multiple regression is suitable for assessing the size and importance of the effects of multiple predictor variables on a dependent variable (Roustaei, 2024). Informed consent, voluntary participation, and anonymity were considered essential ethical aspects, ensuring the rights of the participants and their confidentiality.

Results

The four hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis to determine the effect of entrepreneurial family background, entrepreneurial mindset, entrepreneurial attitude, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy on students' entrepreneurial intention. Three important tables were created during the Analysis: Model Summary, ANOVA, and Coefficients. The Model Summary shows the R value, which represents the strength of the total association between the predictors and entrepreneurial intention, as well as the R^2 value, which represents the proportion of the variance of entrepreneurial intention explained by the predictors. The ANOVA table shows the p-value for the overall regression model, which is used to determine the statistical significance. The Coefficients table shows, among others, the unstandardised B

coefficients representing the effects of each predictor on entrepreneurial intention, as well as the p-values representing the significance of each of the effects at a 5% level, which determine whether each of the effects is statistically significant or not.

Test of Hypotheses

H_{01}: Entrepreneurial family background has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.
H_{02}: Entrepreneurial mindset has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.
H_{03}: Entrepreneurial attitude has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.
H_{04}: Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Regression Analysis

Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.762	0.581	0.572	0.44696

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	53.939	4	13.485	67.500	0.000
	Residual	38.956	195	0.200		
	Total	92.896	199			

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.172	0.215		0.801	0.424
Entrepreneurial Family Background	0.032	0.061	0.029	0.528	0.598
Entrepreneurial mindset	0.078	0.070	0.065	1.117	0.265
Entrepreneurial attitude	0.204	0.076	0.164	2.692	0.008
Entrepreneurial self-efficacy	0.663	0.064	0.609	10.408	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intentions; b. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Entrepreneurial Family Background, Entrepreneurial Mindset, Entrepreneurial Attitude

The model summary shows a high correlation between the variables, R = 0.762, and the model (R^2 = 0.581) explains 58.1% of the variance in the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention), with the remaining 41.9% explained by other factors not accounted for in the model. ANOVA result was statistically significant (p = 0.000), which indicates that the predictors have a significant combined effect on entrepreneurial intention. The coefficient results indicate the individual effects of the predictors on entrepreneurial intention. The entrepreneurial family background was also positively but insignificantly associated (B = 0.032, p = 0.598), meaning that it had no significant impact on entrepreneurial intention, so H_{01} is accepted. Similarly, the entrepreneurial mindset had a positive but insignificant effect (B = 0.078, p = 0.265), thus, H_{02} is accepted, meaning that entrepreneurial mindset does not significantly impact entrepreneurial intention. The result for the entrepreneurial attitude is positive (B = 0.204), but not significant (p = 0.080), hence, H_{03} is accepted. By contrast, entrepreneurial self-efficacy had a significant and positive influence (B = 0.663, p = 0.000) on entrepreneurial intention; thus, H_{04} is rejected.

Discussion

The first hypothesis found that there is no statistically significant impact of entrepreneurial family background on entrepreneurial intention. This finding corroborates with Ogunlana (2024), who also reported that there was no significant relationship between entrepreneurial family background and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates in Nigeria. The author cited student preferences for salaried work, lack of employment stability, and lack of confidence in business start-up as justifications for this situation. The consistency argues that when students are exposed to entrepreneurship in their families, they might learn the concepts of entrepreneurship without necessarily embracing it or having a commitment to entrepreneurship. A student can see entrepreneurship in action in his or her family but may feel that starting a business is too risky or less secure than having a job. The entrepreneurial exposure does not necessarily lead to entrepreneurial intention, especially if students are not self-assured or have limited resources to execute their intention.

The second hypothesis was also supported and showed that entrepreneurial intention was not statistically significantly affected by entrepreneurial mindset. The result agrees with Bello (2025), who found no significant relationship between entrepreneurial mindset and entrepreneurial intention of youth apprentices in Kano State ($r = 0.05$, $p = 0.538$). Respondents showed opportunity recognition, adaptability, and problem-solving skills; however, these qualities did not necessarily lead to clear entrepreneurial intentions. The agreement seems to imply differences between thinking entrepreneurially and planning to become an entrepreneur. Students might identify opportunities and develop creative solutions, but lack the resources, guidance, information of the market and support from institutions. Therefore, entrepreneurial cognition can be an unfulfilled potential if students do not have the structures needed to transform ideas into a possible entrepreneurial plan.

The third hypothesis concluded that entrepreneurial attitude did not have a statistically significant influence on entrepreneurial intention. The result is similar to the result obtained by Nwachukwu (2025) which revealed that there was no significant relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention among students in polytechnics. While many students had positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship, the attitudes were not reflected in any clear entrepreneurial intentions. The finding indicates that the value of entrepreneurship is not the same as the commitment to entrepreneurship. Students might perceive entrepreneurship as a desirable career option, but at the same time they might be deterred from it by lack of adequate start-up capital, uncertainty of economic conditions, concerns about failure, or unknown institutional support. Thus, positive assessment of entrepreneurship may not have much of a behavioural impact if the students are not convinced of the feasibility or supportive entrepreneurial context.

The fourth hypothesis was supported which stated that entrepreneurial self-efficacy was statistically significantly related to entrepreneurial intention. This result is like that of Bamidele (2025) who reported a significant association between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention among female students of tertiary institutions in Southwest Nigeria. It also aligns with those of Zanabazar et al. (2025) who reported that entrepreneurial self-efficacy significantly influenced entrepreneurial intention among university students. This suggest that perceived entrepreneurial capability might be a more important driver for intention formation than just entrepreneurial thinking or favourable attitudes. Self-efficacy is the students' confidence in their ability to execute activities necessary to successfully create and operate a business. This means that having an attitude that they can spot opportunities, undertake business activities, solve problems and overcome challenges as an entrepreneur increases the likelihood that they will perceive entrepreneurship as attainable, and they will have a greater intention to pursue entrepreneurship. This discovery moves entrepreneurship

beyond being a mere exposure to a positive attitude to developing capability and confidence to do what they want to do (entrepreneurial action).

Conclusion

It was found that entrepreneurial family background had no statistically significant relationship with students' entrepreneurial intention. This suggests that entrepreneurial intention does not have to be passed on from generation to generation or be innate to the family business. The findings suggest that the entrepreneurial orientation of a student can be independent of the immediate family environment where entrepreneurship is present. Therefore, entrepreneurial intention should not be seen as a valid indicator of the presence of entrepreneurs in the family of a student.

The study also showed that entrepreneurial mindset did not have any statistically significant effect on students' entrepreneurial intention. This implies that starting with entrepreneurial orientation at the cognitive level does not lead directly to the development of an intention to become an entrepreneur. The discovery emphasizes the difference between having entrepreneurial capabilities and having a conscious commitment in the direction of entrepreneurial venture creation, which suggests that entrepreneurial intention is a change from thought to personal commitment.

The study also found that entrepreneurial attitude has no statistically significant influence on the students' entrepreneurial intention. The result suggests that students' attitudes to entrepreneurship (both positive and negative) do not necessarily influence their entrepreneurial intentions. Entrepreneurial intention, then, is not just an attitude response, but could be a more conscious decision by students to consider the full impact of entrepreneurship before making a clear decision to intend to become one.

Finally, the study confirmed the statistically significant effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on students' entrepreneurial intention. This result suggests that perceived entrepreneurial capability is the only variable among the ones investigated that has a statistically significant influence on intention. It posits that students' trust in their capacity to engage in entrepreneurial actions is a more direct basis for entrepreneurial intention than their family exposure, entrepreneurial cognition, or attitude. This study, therefore, emphasises capability confidence as a key factor in understanding student readiness towards entrepreneurship.

Recommendations

- **i.** Universities and entrepreneurship educators need to minimize the dependence on family entrepreneurial background as a foundation for the entrepreneurial intentions of students and make the entrepreneur development opportunities available to students irrespective of their family entrepreneurial backgrounds.
- **ii.** Entrepreneurship programmes should offer mechanisms that can turn entrepreneurial thinking into explicit commitments towards starting ventures. This may involve formalized idea-development processes that make students move from the opportunity identification stage to the stage of viable entrepreneurial intentions.
- **iii.** The decision-oriented activities of the universities should be paired with the process of developing positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship so that students can evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities, responsibilities, and career consequences critically before choosing to create a venture.
- **iv.** Institutions and policy makers should place more emphasis on interventions that foster students' self-efficacy to undertake entrepreneurial activities as the only statistically significant predictor. Students may have opportunities to demonstrate and

reinforce entrepreneurial skills through practical venture tasks, mentoring and progressive responsibility, and supervised business projects.

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