



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between environmental factors and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design. The target population was 329 Final Year undergraduates from College of Medical Sciences of University of Port Harcourt and Madonna University, Rivers State. The sample size of 181 was obtained using the Taro Yamen's determination formula. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypothesis test was carried out using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 17.0 at a 0.05 level of significance. After data cleaning, only data for 168 respondents were used for data analysis. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between environmental factors and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State. The study therefore concluded that where the right environmental factors are created and same provided it would greatly enhance the entrepreneurial intentions of medical undergraduate students in Rivers State. The study recommended that the Government and the Administrators of Universities should create a conducive environment for the students who have such entrepreneurial intention to help them go into it as it will help them get self-employed to reduce the rate of theft and cultism in the society.

Keyword: *Entrepreneurial Factors, Environmental Influence, Environmental Support, Entrepreneurial Intention, Medical Students*

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INTRODUCTION

Unemployment and poverty among youths are the major socio-economic problems facing the developing countries especially the African sub region (Emmanuel, Oluwakemi, Ewomazino & Mercy, 2017; Okikiola, 2017). Over the years, Nigeria is experiencing a decline in the general standard of living, largely due to poverty and unemployment among its citizens. The number of unemployed people stand at 20.9 million as at the third quarter of 2018 (Olawoyin, 2018). Moreover, graduate employability stands at 36% per graduate (Stutern, 2016). This is therefore indicating a serious problem to graduate employability in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship is an act creating and growing business (Obi, 2018). It is seen as an important tool for transforming the economy, stimulating development, creation of jobs and wealth and promotes the general economy (Obembe, Tesile & Ukpong, 2014). Empirical investigation supports positive relations between entrepreneurship and economic growth (Van Praag & Versloot, 2007).

The relevance of youth in entrepreneurship cannot be underrated in any economy (Abubakar, Ibrahim & Yazeed, 2018), since they are the future entrepreneurs who would determine the economic viability of every nation. When youth appreciate the importance of entrepreneurship, the economy can experience an increased growth, while the rate of unemployment is expected to decline (Glinskiene & Petuskiene, 2011). Many developing countries are now investing heavily to support the prospective entrepreneurs at different levels in order to create new businesses.

Entrepreneurial intention presumes that new business formation is a deliberately designed behaviour (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993), as such; entrepreneurship is viewed as a process that crops up in the course of time (Kyro & Carrier, 2005). Entrepreneurial intention is also considered to be the first step in new business formation (Lee & Wong, 2004). Entrepreneurship development programmes offer students such opportunities by helping them identify and respond to societal

needs. According to Dixon, Meier, Brown and Custer (2005), entrepreneurship programme provides graduates with competencies that enhance entrepreneurial key skills, intention to create new venture and business ownership. Linan, Cohard and Guzman (2008) stated that the information regarding entrepreneurs and new venture creation is obtained through entrepreneurship programme. Education about entrepreneurship and for entrepreneurship according to Friedrich and Visser (2005) will increase students' interest in becoming entrepreneurs at some stage after graduation. Walstand and Kourilsky (1998) stated that students are introduced into entrepreneurship on the ground of careers.

To achieve better economic development and growth, many countries are adopting entrepreneurship development programs at their tertiary institutions with a view to inculcate the concept to their teaming student/young population. However, the possibility of students taking entrepreneurship course to become future entrepreneurs has become a major concern within and outside the academic community as many of them never turn out to become one. Governments and all stake holders are doing more to ensure that they promote its conduct at all levels. This includes the introduction of compulsory entrepreneurship program in schools and universities with the aim of producing and inculcating the culture and habit of becoming entrepreneurs.

One of the key roles played by Universities in enhancing students' entrepreneurial intention is by providing an enabling environment that can aid the entrepreneurial intention of foreign students. Thus, environmental factors are seriously concerned for an effective entrepreneurial intention among the students. It has been observed that the lack of enabling and supportive environment are major challenges among the students in the academic institution towards building their intention on entrepreneurship activities (Qureshi, Rasli & Zaman 2014; Khan, Yusoff & Khan, 2014). They all believe

that the relationship between environment and entrepreneurial intention is worth investigating. The study by Lucky, Hamzah and Minai (2013) affirmed that studies on entrepreneurship without reference to the environment should be considered as insufficient and incomplete.

The environment has widely been identified as one of the key players that ensure and dictate the continual survival and continuation of the business (Arowomole, 2000). Obviously, the assumption and perception of people to engage in business is encouraged by a conducive environment irrespective of the region or specialty of the business. Gnyawali and Fogel (1994) classify entrepreneurial environment as a policy and program of the government with entrepreneurial skills, socio-economic conditions, financial and non-financial support. The business environment plays a very vital role in influencing entrepreneurial activities, which many scholars associated it with

the role of government in promoting entrepreneurship. Some of the role of the government comes in terms of policies and programs such as of funding, externalities, and infrastructures that shapes the real local context. In addition, the University environment (support) is also identified as vital mechanisms that influence entrepreneurial activities (Fini, Grimaldi & Sobrero, 2009). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between environmental factors and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State. Similarly, the specific objectives of the study were to:

- Examine the relationship between environmental support and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.
- Determine the relationship between environmental influence and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.

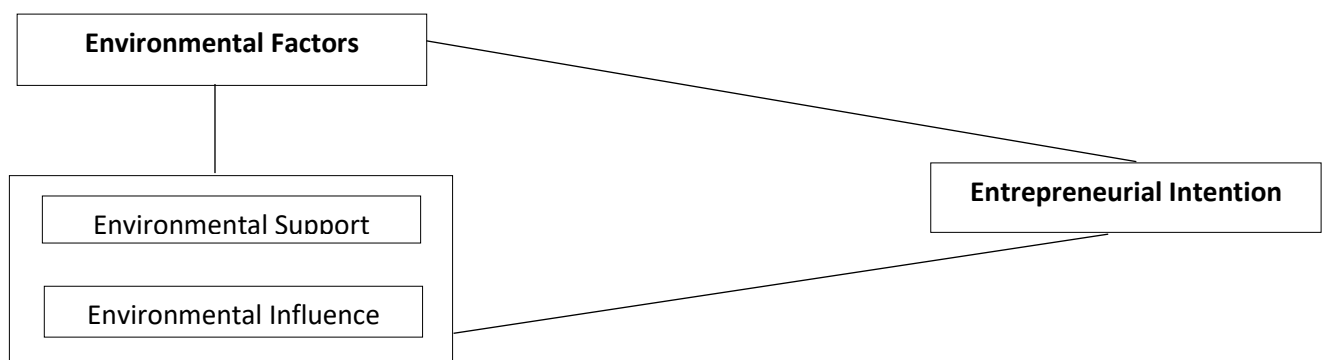


Figure 1: Conceptual model for environmental factors and entrepreneurial intention

Source: Desk Research (2019)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

Many behaviours in our daily life may fall under voluntary control as people perform these behaviours easily if they have the desire to perform. This can be further be justified by the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) which was used to forecast the voluntary behaviours and assist others in

recognizing their own psychological factors. It is designed based on the assumption that human beings normally behave in a reasonable manner where they consider the available surrounding information and the consequences of their actions.

A person's intention functions based on two elements; Attitude with respect to behaviour and subjective norm are two elements that act as the function to a person's intention. People normally hold multiple salient beliefs in relation to any given behaviour. Each of the salient belief links the

behaviour to a valued outcome and the outcomes has a certain subjective value. It is assumed that these salient beliefs and evaluated outcome combine to produce an overall positive or negative attitude towards the behaviour. Salient beliefs explain when the individual perceived that the disadvantages outweigh perceived advantages, they will resist performing the behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The beliefs underlying subjective norm are normative beliefs, which individuals are influenced by persons important to them to perform a given behaviour.

Environmental Factors

Gnyawali and Fogel (1994) define the entrepreneurial environment as “the overall economic, sociocultural and political factors that influence people’s willingness and ability to undertake entrepreneurial activities. The reaction of the environment is felt by both entrepreneurs and the businesses; this is because neither of them acts in a vacuum (Ibrahima & Mas’ud, 2016). As such, the entrepreneurs and businesses have to relate in one way or the other either through the exchange of goods and services or through human capital and resources in synergy with the larger society. The critical factors for the development and sustainability of entrepreneurship in a country or region are referred to as entrepreneurial environment (Gnyawali & Fogel, 1994). Ogundele (2007) describes environment as all the conditions and influences affecting the development of an organism or organization. Van de Ven (1993) is of the view that any study on entrepreneurship that disregard environment is insufficient and incomplete. Thus, indicating that environment is a key factor in predicting an effective and successful entrepreneurship development. Accordingly, environment has been widely identified as one of the key players that ensure and dictate the continual survival and continuation of the businesses (Arowomole, 2000).

Obviously, the assumption and perception of people to engage in business is encouraged by a conducive environment irrespective of the region or

specialty of the business. Gnyawali and Fogel (1994) classified entrepreneurial environment as a policy and program of the Government that includes, entrepreneurial skills, socio-economic conditions, financial and non-financial support. The business environment plays a very vital role in influencing entrepreneurial activities, which many scholars associated it with the role of the Government in promoting entrepreneurship. Some of the role of the Government comes in terms of policies and programs such as of funding, externalities and infrastructures that shapes the real local context. In addition, the University environment (support) is also identified as vital a mechanism that influence entrepreneurial activities (Fini, Grimaldi & Sobrero, 2009c; Morris & Lewis, 1995).

Abdullah, Hamali, Deen, Saban and Abdurahman (2009) noted that the environment plays a positive impact on the development of small firms in the society to the extent that it influences entrepreneurial activity. Similarly, Uddin and Bose (2012) in his study found a strong correlation between the environment and the entrepreneurial intention. Their study suggest that the relationship between environment and entrepreneurial intention is worth investigating. Also, Taormina and Lao (2007) pointed out that the environment has a strong influence on every individual. They argued that environment can encourage or discourage them from becoming entrepreneurs. For example, an individual is likely to be interested in becoming an entrepreneur in an environment that promote business while on the other hand, an individual may not have interest in business or entrepreneurship activities where the environment does not promote business.

It is also worthy to note that Lucky and Minai (2011) posited that environmental factors play a crucial role in determining the probability of individuals becoming entrepreneurs. They argued that enabling an environment would help people to think of becoming entrepreneurs. Also, the study by Indarti, Rostiani and Nastiti (2007) reported that the

environment is a significant factor in influencing entrepreneurial intention among Asian students.

Environmental Support

Environmental factors impact the entrepreneurial intentions of individuals and their subsequent Behaviour (Sesen, 2013). Previous research has proven that significant environmental antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions include access to capital (Luthje & Frank 2003), regional context (Dohse & Walter, 2012), formal and informal country-level institution (Engle *et al.*, 2011) and entrepreneurship education (Linan, 2008; Martin, McNally & Kay 2013; Zhang *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, economic development, financial capital availability and government regulations are among the environmental factors. Additionally, the entrepreneurial process can be fostered by the local context that includes physical infrastructure (Niosi & Bas. 2001), entrepreneurial support service (Foo, Wong & Ong, 2005) and specific University support mechanisms, for instance, technological transfer offices and University incubators (Mian, 1997). Research has suggested that cultural context can also shape entrepreneurial attitude and behaviours (Shinnar *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, the authors assumed that each culture might have specific values and norms regarding new venture creation and that there is a strong relationship between the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour that are strongly moderated by cultural values.

According to the literature, there is a relationship between University context and the intended entrepreneurial action carried out by students. Universities play an active role in entrepreneurial activities as partners in the commercialization of University knowledge (Politis, Winborg & Dahlstrand, 2012) and as a promoter of regional development and economic growth (Rothaermel, Agung & Jiang, 2007). Thus, promoting entrepreneurship education also enhances the entrepreneurial intention among students (Klosten, 2000), hence incubator facilities (Hughes, Ireland & Morgan, 2007) and network platforms are provided (Nielson & Lassen 2012). Therefore, the role of

universities has been increasing because they have contributed to the nation's start-up infrastructure by training the new generation of entrepreneurs (Torrans *et al.* 2013). As the literature states, the context of the University may include University governance and leadership (Sotirakou, 2004), its organizational culture and infrastructure and the different types of entrepreneurial resources. This means that University initiatives aimed at enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit accelerate the building of positive beliefs about entrepreneurial careers among students and will give them the courage and attitude to be comfortable with venture development and realization.

As stated in the literature, the practices oriented to promote entrepreneurship at the University create a supportive atmosphere and a favourable milieu for intentions-action transformation because students will constantly be encouraged to proceed with venture creation by members of the University community (Etzkowitz, 2003; Poole & Robertson, 2003). Shane and Venkataraman (2000) stated that the University context of entrepreneurship can provide a pool of resources for students and can also influence students' entrepreneurial behaviours and help them develop viable new ventures. Student entrepreneurs have a chance to benefit from utilizing resources offered by their universities.

Nowadays, Universities are expected to take an active role not only as human capital providers but as partners in the commercialization of University knowledge and as a seedbed for new knowledge-intensive firms. Besides the traditional focus on education and research, universities are expected to promote regional development and economic growth (Rothaermel, Agung & Jiang, 2007). Examples of such activities include offering entrepreneurship education to aspiring student entrepreneurs (Rasmussen & Sørheim, 2006) and providing incubator facilities that offer specialist support and R&D services to start-ups originating from the University (Hughes, Ireland & Morgan, 2007). As a result, a growing group of

entrepreneurs would have been educated and fostered within the University milieu and would continue to develop new firms in close interaction with the University.

Environmental Influence

Higher education is crucial to students' career-related choices and their perceptions of the attractiveness and the feasibility of business start-ups and may enhance students' entrepreneurial efficacy by providing them with attitudes and skills to cope with complexities embedded in entrepreneurial tasks and activities (Wilson, Kickul & Marlino, 2007). Recognizing the importance of education for enhancing graduates' entrepreneurial perceptions with the aim of providing an education that stimulates ideas and entrepreneurship is currently on the agenda of many higher education institutions. It is widely acknowledged that the University milieu can be a significant influence on the attitudes and behaviour of students (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2009). Such influence comes from various sources such as their interactions with peers and faculty, the general presuppositions, disciplinary paradigms and cognitive convictions of their discipline, as well as the normative contexts of college campuses. In this process of socialization, students can acquire "the norms and standards, the values and attitudes, as well as the knowledge, skills and behavioural patterns associated with particular statuses and roles" (Zuckerman, 1977).

The influence of the University milieu thus operates by socializing students into a group and helping them internalize the norms and culture. However, although there seems to be little doubt that the number of student entrepreneurs in the economy is growing (Kolvereid & Åmo, 2007). There have been limited empirical investigations about whether their close connection to the University has any significant influence on their activities and behaviour in the start-up process. However, most prior studies have focused on students' motivation, perceptions and awareness of entrepreneurship as a career choice (Pittaway and Cope, 2007). In a recent systematic literature review of different

themes within studies of entrepreneurship education, the authors conclude that this kind of education has an impact on student propensity and intentionality, but it is unclear whether it enables graduates to become more effective entrepreneurs. Hence, despite much interest in understanding student entrepreneurs, little is known about their entrepreneurial activities and behaviours once they start to develop an entrepreneurial career.

Entrepreneurial Intention

According to Ajzen (1991), intention is the immediate antecedent of behaviour. He asserted that behaviour is not performed mindlessly but follows reasonably and consistently from the behaviour-relevant information which are reinforced by rewarding events and weakened by pushing events. Individuals would like to be self-employed as they perceive that entrepreneurship is a suitable career path for them (Davidsson, 1995) and is a way for them to accomplish their personal goals, pursue their own ideas and realize their financial rewards (Barringer & Ireland, 2010). Just like entrepreneurship, the concept of entrepreneurial intention has been defined by several authors. The concept of entrepreneurial intention is defined by Bird (1988), as the mind-sets that directs, guide, coordinate and control the basic concept (action) of new business development, implementation and evaluation. Entrepreneurial intention is also defined by Thompson (2009) as the self-acknowledged conviction of an individual mind in the possibility of starting up a new business with a sincere and dedicated plan at a certain point of time. He went further to state that the concept of entrepreneurial intention is determined by the strength or intention of starting up a new business. This is in line with the assumption of the Ajzen's theory which explains that the higher the intention the higher the possibility of displaying the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). In fact, it has been strongly established that entrepreneurial intention is a validated determinant of the entrepreneurial activities of an individual, as such studying the entrepreneurial intention clearly helps in

understanding the antecedents that predict entrepreneurial intention (Bird, 1988; Davidsson, 1995; Ismail et al., 2009; Krueger, Reilly & Carsrud, 2000; Peterman & Kennedy, 2003).

Entrepreneurial intention is defined as the willingness of individuals to perform entrepreneurial behaviour, engage in entrepreneurial action, be self-employed, or to establish a new business (Dell, 2008; Dhose & Walter, 2010). It usually involves inner guts, ambition and the feeling to stand on one's feet (Zain, Akram & Ghani, 2010). An individual may have potential to be an entrepreneur but not make any transition into entrepreneurship unless they have such intentions (Mohammad Ismail et al., 2009). Birds (1988) proposed that entrepreneurial intention refers to individual's states of mind that aimed at creating a new venture, developing a new business concept or creating a new value within existing firms. It is an important factor in facilitating a new venture establishment and has a significant impact on the firms' venture success, survival and growth.

Scholars empirically evidenced that entrepreneurial intention is a valid predictor for entrepreneurial behaviour as entrepreneurial actions always fall into the category of intentional behaviour. Studying entrepreneurial intention provides valuable insights for researchers to understand entrepreneurial process and predict entrepreneurial activities in a better way through identifying antecedents of entrepreneurial intention (Davidsson, 1995; Bird, 1998; Krueger et al., 2000; Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Kolvereid & Isaksen, 2006; Krueger, 2007; Dell, 2008; Mohammad Ismail et al., 2009). Findings of Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006) on 297 business founders by using longitudinal data revealed that intentions to be self-employed did actually determine later entry into self-employment.

With regards to entrepreneurial intention in the health area, health services differ from other industries due to different factors such as their organizational structure, service provision and financing. Administrative and human management

professionals need to better understand what entrepreneurship in health care is. Why do some professionals move beyond their traditional professional values to profit companies? What drives them to make changes in this unique industry? (McClearly, Rivers & Schneller, 2006). The predisposing factors are those characteristics that are related to the motivation of an individual or a group to act. In the context of health entrepreneurship, there are traits, types and characteristic dispositions that motivate an individual to undertake the necessary effort in the area (McClearly, *et al.* 2006). The differences in levels of entrepreneurial intention among students from different areas of study underscores the need for Universities to focus their entrepreneurship education in other areas apart from companies, engineering or technological sciences (Teixeira & Forte, 2017).

In relation to entrepreneurship education, an important premise underlying these programs are that "entrepreneurs can be created, that is to say that it is possible to learn to be an entrepreneur through different policies and specific educational programs. In this way, students are expected to acquire self-esteem and motivation, become proactive, creative and learn to work as a team (Welsh, Tullar & Nemati, 2016). The University environment, entrepreneurship education, courses and awareness workshops, all comprise the student's environment and influences their intention and possible actions as nascent entrepreneurs and generators of new jobs (Serra, & Kabadayi & Doganay, 2014).

Environmental Factors and Entrepreneurial Intention

Environment, in this sense, is encompassing of such factors as infrastructure, cultural, economic, social and political environments. These environmental forces have been found to be capable of either impeding or facilitating entrepreneurial activities in any society. Gnyawali and Fogel (1994) define the entrepreneurial environment as "the overall economic, sociocultural and political factors that

influence people's willingness and ability to undertake entrepreneurial activities". As Romanelli (1989) noted that availability of resources brings about the emergence of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship researchers have identified various environmental factors, which some have tagged external factors. Principal among the factors identified are influences of firms, influences of markets (Thorntorn, 1999), public policies (Dobbin & Dowd, (1997), regulations and policies (Baumol, 1990) and physical infrastructure (Agboli & Ukaegbu, 2006). Some scholars have gone ahead to particularize or associate environmental needs to the level of economic development.

Behaviour does not exist in a vacuum (Sullivan, Johnson, Owens & Conway, 2014). Entrepreneurship is a complex social activity that involves discovering, evaluating, and exploiting opportunities. These activities need extensive and diverse resources, which are in the hands of the government, organizations, and individuals. Among them, universities are increasingly regarded as critical institutions for developing national entrepreneurship through teaching, research, and outreach (Fetters, Greene & Rice, 2010). According to universities' organizational characteristics, University entrepreneurship support (UES) is mainly based on entrepreneurial education support while considering other support aspects. In this sense, the UES is referred to as a concept broader than entrepreneurial education, which includes a portfolio of entrepreneurial support activities, based on descriptions of University's entrepreneurship support factors in the literature (Fetters, et al., 2010).

The essential feature of UES is the entrepreneurial environment created by the University. Theoretically, first, according to Krueger and Brazeal's "Entrepreneurial Potential Model" (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994), the University can create a "nutrient-rich" environment that can provide reliable information and role models, emotional/psychological support, and more material resources to stimulate entrepreneurial

behaviour. Second, from the theory of human capital and social capital, the basic principles of the relationship between UES and EI depend on the importance of resources like knowledge, skills, relation, and materials in establishing and operating enterprises. A University's entrepreneurial education support such as entrepreneurship courses, training and lectures can help college students obtain entrepreneurial information and accumulate entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and additional capacities. It can also allow students to contact influential personnel, including entrepreneurial investors, suppliers, distributors, potential customers, partners, and like-minded students. These social networks facilitate college students in obtaining the necessary entrepreneurial social capital, especially for college students who lack family support.

Third, Granovette's (1985) embedded theory suggests that individual behaviour will be guided or restricted by the surrounding environment. An excellent entrepreneurial climate means that in universities, entrepreneurship is considered a reliable and respectable career choice. There is no doubt that this collective cognition is beneficial in emotionally and psychologically reducing college students' aversion to entrepreneurial risks and entrepreneurial failure. Finally, according to the entrepreneurial event model, services such as University entrepreneurship policies, training conditions, and funds may enhance the college students' perceived feasibility of entrepreneurship and become a trigger to stimulate their entrepreneurial intentions.

In empirical research, it is widely suggested that University entrepreneurship education, climate, policies, funds, and other support positively affect entrepreneurial intentions. For example, Lüthje and Franke (2003) conducted an analysis using a sample of 512 students at MIT and revealed that the University's entrepreneurial climate makes a direct contribution to students' entrepreneurial intention. In another empirical study, they found that the imperfect and immature entrepreneurship

education and various University support conditions may dampen students' optimism for entrepreneurship (Franke & Lüthje, 2004). Nasiru, Keat and Bhatti (2015) explained that perceived University support raises students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Krauss, Franco, Bonomo, Mandirola and Laura (2018) carried out a study on entrepreneurial intention of health sciences' students in the Catholic University of Uruguay. This research is a descriptive study that analyzes the survey conducted on 1088 University students by the Center for Entrepreneurial Development of the Catholic University of Uruguay in 2016, within the framework of the annual global study of the Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey organized by the University of St. Gallen-Switzerland and audited by the consultancy Ernst & Young. After a quantitative analysis of statistical associations (chi-square tests) and difference of significant means, it is concluded that these students present a lower entrepreneurial intention than the rest of the students of the University. The result was expressed in percentage terms, but the differences are not statistically significant.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1: Correlation Matrix for Environmental factors and Entrepreneurial Intention

			Environmental Support	Entrepreneurial Intention
Spearman's rho	Environmental Support	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.924**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	168	168
	Entrepreneurial Intention	Correlation Coefficient	.924**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	168	168

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

Source: SPSS output

Table 1 illustrates the test for the first previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statement. The results show that:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between environmental support and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.

From the foregoing discourse, the study hypothesized thus:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between environmental support and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between environmental influence and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design. The target population was 329 Final Year undergraduates from College of Medical Sciences of University of Port Harcourt and Madonna University, Rivers State. The sample size of 181 was obtained using the Taro Yamen's determination formula. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypothesis test was carried out using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 17.0 at a 0.05 level of significance. After data cleaning, only data for 168 respondents were used for data analysis.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between Environmental support and Entrepreneurial Intention. The rho value 0.924 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a high

correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant

relationship between environmental support and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix for Environmental Influence and Entrepreneurial Intention

			Environmental Influence	Entrepreneurial Intention
Spearman's rho	Environmental Influence	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.830**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	168	168
	Entrepreneurial Intention	Correlation Coefficient	.830**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	168	168

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

Source: SPSS output

Table 2 illustrates the test for the second previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statement. The results show that for:

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between environmental influence and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between Environmental Influence and Entrepreneurial Intention. The rho value 0.830 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between environmental influence and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study findings revealed that there is strong positive relationship between environmental factors and entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State. These findings agree with previous findings of Sesen (2013) who stated that environmental factors impact the entrepreneurial intentions of individuals and their subsequent

behaviour. Previous research has proven that significant environmental antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions include access to capital (Luthje & Frank 2003), regional context (Dohse & Walter, 2012), formal and informal country-level institution (Engle *et al.*, 2011) and entrepreneurship education (Linan, 2008; Martin, McNally & Kay, 2013; Zhang *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, economic development, financial capital availability and government regulations are among the environmental factors. Research has also suggested that cultural context can shape entrepreneurial attitude and behaviours (Shinnar *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, the authors assumed that each culture might have specific values and norms regarding new venture creation and that there is a strong relationship between the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour that are strongly moderated by cultural values.

The finding of this study also corroborated with a similar study earlier conducted by Adim, Adelaiye and Adubasim (2018) who examined the relationship between entrepreneurial networking and women entrepreneurs' contribution to employment creation in Rivers State, Nigeria and found that entrepreneurial networking has a significant relationship with women entrepreneurs to employment. Furthermore, the finding of this

study also resonates the theoretical postulation of Granovette (1985) embedded theory which suggests that individual behaviour will be guided or restricted by the surrounding environment. The study finding empirically support the arguments that an excellent entrepreneurial climate means that in universities, entrepreneurship is considered a reliable and respectable career choice. There is no doubt that this collective cognition is beneficial to college students, helping them in emotionally and psychologically reducing their aversion to entrepreneurial risks and entrepreneurial failure.

In like manner the current finding is in alignment with widely held view that University entrepreneurship education, climate, policies, funds, and other support positively affect entrepreneurial intentions. Moreover, the finding corroborates with Lüthje and Franke (2003) whose study revealed that the University's entrepreneurial climate does make a direct contribution to students' entrepreneurial intention. Also, the finding supports the earlier work of Franke and Lüthje (2004) who found that the imperfect and immature entrepreneurship education and various University support conditions may dampen students' optimism for entrepreneurship. Nasiru, Keat and Bhatti (2015) reported that a perceived University support raises students' entrepreneurial intentions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the high rate of unemployment and the need for these youths to be empowered such that

they can take care of themselves after school while waiting for white collar job, it has been established by scholars and professionals that environmental factors are essential components of entrepreneurial intention. Due to the present state of the country entrepreneurship is one of the major things needed by the youths such that as they graduate from the University, they are sure that they are able to cater for themselves instead of waiting for white collar jobs. This therefore brings in the concept of environmental factors and its influence on entrepreneurial intentions in students. This study therefore concluded that the environmental significantly influences entrepreneurial intention of medical students in Rivers State.

The study made the below recommendations;

- The Government and the Administrators of Universities should create a conducive environment for the students who have such entrepreneurial intention so as to help them go into it as it will enable them get self-employed in order to reduce the rate of theft and cultism in the society. The study clearly proves that if the environment is conducive, a lot of youths and students will be willing to inculcate entrepreneurship skills.
- The government and the leaders of the community should create a lot of support and empowerment programs to support those who have such entrepreneurial intention and skills. The study showed that such supports will go a long way to help the students with entrepreneurial intentions.

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