

Proactive Personality and Entrepreneurial Intentions among Nigerian Students: Moderating Role of Perceived Institutional Support

Proaktivni karakter i poduzetničke namjere među nigerijskim studentima: Posrednička uloga prepoznate institucionalne podrške

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Abstract: The youth unemployment especially among graduates in Nigeria is at all-time high. The study explored the moderating role of perceived institutional support in the relationship between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions among students. Cross-sectional and survey research methods were used in the study. The study used a technique called purposive sampling as students at four federal universities in the states of Kaduna, Kano, Sokoto, and Zamfara completed 1,000 questionnaires, of which 627 were legitimate and used in the analyses. The preliminary analyses for the study, including

the detection of missing values, outliers, multicollinearity, and tests for normality, were conducted using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The structural and measurement models were both conducted using a structural equation model (SmartPLS). The results showed that students in the chosen institutions had significant and positive effects on entrepreneurial intentions due to proactive personality and institutional support. Furthermore, the association between an entrepreneurial intention and a proactive personality was strongly attenuated by institutional support. According to the findings, educational institutions should encourage students to have entrepreneurial inclinations. Including entrepreneurial education, coaching, and counselling to support entrepreneurial objectives is one approach to do this. Meanwhile, future studies can also conduct a longitudinal study as against the cross-survey employed by this study to properly ascertain the established relationship or otherwise of the constructs of study.

Key words: Entrepreneurial intentions, Institutional support, Proactive personality, Theory of Planned Behaviour

JEL Classification: M10, ML12, ML14

Sažetak: Nezaposlenost mladih, posebno među diplomiranim studentima u Nigeriji je trenutačno na rekordnoj razini. U radu se istražuje posrednička ulogu primjećene institucionalne podrške u odnosu između proaktivnog karaktera i poduzetničkih namjera među studentima. U studiji su korištene metode poprečnog istraživanja i ankete. Studija je koristila tehniku nazvanu svrhovito uzorkovanje tijekom koje su studenti na četiri savezna sveučilišta u državama Kaduna, Kano, Sokoto i Zamfara popunili 1000 upitnika, od kojih je 627 bilo važećih i korišteno u analizama. Preliminarne analize studije provedene su pomoću statističkog paketa za društvene znanosti (SPSS), uključujući otkrivanje nedostajućih vrijednosti, ekstremnih vrijednosti, multikolinearnosti (višeproravnosti) i testove normalnosti. I strukturni i mjerni modeli provedeni su korištenjem modela strukturnih jednadžbi (SmartPLS). Rezultati su pokazali da su studenti u odabranim institucijama imali značajne i pozitivne učinke poduzetničkih namjera zahvaljujući proaktivnom karakteru i institucionalnoj podršci. Nadalje, povezanost između poduzetničke namjere i proaktivnog karaktera bila je jako ublažena institucionalnom podrškom. Prema nalazima studije, obrazovne institucije trebale bi poticati učenike na poduzetničku sklonost. Uključivanje poduzetničkog obrazovanja, treniranja i savjetovanja za potporu poduzetničkim ciljevima je jedan od pristupa za postizanje tog cilja. U međuvremenu, buduće studije također mogu provesti longitudinalno istraživanje u usporedbi s poprečnom anketom korištenom u ovoj studiji kako bi se pravilno utvrdio uspostavljeni odnos ili drugačije ishode zamisli studije.

Ključne riječi: Poduzetničke namjere, institucionalna podrška, proaktivni karakter, teorija planskog ponašanja

JEL klasifikacija: M10, ML12, ML14

1 Introduction

Youth unemployment is a serious issue plaguing Nigeria as a country (Ojeleye *et al.*, 2022). Despite their eagerness and availability to work, more over 49% of young graduates are unemployed in Nigeria (Stutern's Research, 2022). Olatunji (2019) claimed that this might be due to many young people's desires to pursue white-collar careers despite the country's dwindling quantity of formal positions. However, today's reality shows that no government in any nation can create enough employment to

absorb all graduates from its educational institutions (Delle and Amadu, 2016). As a consequence, governments, development aid organisations, and academics all over the world believe that entrepreneurship is critical to growth of the economy, job creation, and raising people's living standards (Ndofirepi, 2020). Therefore, if the epidemic of youth unemployment is to be reversed, the government and its agencies must make an effort to cultivate young entrepreneurs, particularly among students at the nation's higher institutions. This will boost the country's economic growth through innovation, employment, and welfare (Patricia and Silangen, 2016; Alalade, 2021). In essence, entrepreneurship is the cornerstone and engine of every country's economic progress (Anjum et al., 2021).

Pomianek (2018) noted that entrepreneurship resists definitional operations due to its intricacy and historical aspects. Nonetheless, entrepreneurship is the process of establishing and operating a business, which incorporates aspects such as identifying market opportunities and options, developing a firm strategy and gathering available materials, forming a company, and handling an organisation through its various growth phases. (Pomianek, 2018). Giriuniene, Giriunas, and Cernius (2016) define it as a collection of specific personal abilities or the capacity to develop and produce anything using innovations. To Hoppe (2016), entrepreneurship is tied to exploiting economic possibilities, with the entrepreneur defined by a sensitivity to previously unforeseen prospects. Entrepreneurship is defined as the process of detecting new business possibilities and developing them into marketable products or services by individuals (Patricia and Silangen, 2016). To summarise, these definitions are only a few of the many that exist in the subject of entrepreneurship.

Meanwhile, entrepreneurship is a conscious and purposeful behaviour. As a result, an individual's ambition to start a new firm is known as entrepreneurial intention (Kazmi and Nabradi, 2017). The yearning to begin a new company is referred to as entrepreneurial intentions (Joensuu-Salo, 2021). Entrepreneurial intention is defined as an individual's inner persuasion that they want to establish a new venture in the nearest future (Ndofirepi, 2020). According to Patricia and Silangen (2016), it is a state of mind in which people aspire to establish a new company or a new value driver inside current firms. Similarly, Delle and Amadu (2016) defined entrepreneurial intention as an individual's readiness, preparedness and aptitude to participate in entrepreneurial behaviours or build a firm that is relevant to the individual, others, and society at large. Entrepreneurial intention has long been recognised as a good predictor of real entrepreneurial conduct. To summarise, it is sacred in propelling entrepreneurial operations.

Scholars have made several efforts to examine and discover the determinants of entrepreneurial inclinations among individuals (Ojeleye *et al.*, 2021). Proactive personality is a well-established predictor of entrepreneurial goals (Kumar and Shukla, 2019). Proactive personality has been characterised as a dispositional concept that detects disparities in people's levels of activity to change their surroundings (Delle and Amadu, 2016). The term "proactive personality" refers to a steady and dynamic personality, rather than passively reacting to existing conditions, challenges the status quo by improving the current environment or creating an entirely new one. (Luo, Huang and Gao, 2022). Individuals with a proactive attitude are more aware of their surroundings and their possibilities to adjust to them (Travis and Freeman, 2017).

The previous empirical studies linked proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions (e.g., Shah *et al.*, 2019; Kumar and Shukla, 2019; Luo, Huang, and Gao, 2022; Yurtkoru, Kuscu, and Doganay, 2014). However, prior studies have mostly centred on the direct role of proactive personality in predicting entrepreneurial intentions. As a consequence, the current study extended on this line of inquiry by going further and using a moderator. Besides, inconsistencies in findings have also been observed in past research. Kumar and Shukla (2019), for example, discovered that proactive personality positively and significantly drive college students' entrepreneurial intentions in India. Luo *et al.*, (2022) and Shah *et*

al., 2019 found similar findings. On the contrary, Naz *et al.*, (2020) revealed that proactive personality does not predict entrepreneurial goals of Pakistani university students. It is on the basis of these inconsistencies in findings and need to fill this literature gap that this study introduced a moderator to explain these inconsistencies in findings as suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). They proposed that anytime contradictions in findings are found in the literature, a moderator is needed to enhance, weaken, or modify the direction of the relationship.

Furthermore, Farooq and Vij (2017) contended that, in addition to contradictions in findings, theoretical explanations are required to include a moderator in a particular model. Thus, entrepreneurial intentions are considered as the primary point in grasping the entrepreneurial process, on basis of the theoretical prepositions of theory of planned behaviour, which claimed that intentions are the most accurate determinants of behaviour (Jimoh *et al.*, 2021). According to Ajzen (1991), the individual's purpose to do a certain activity is the essential aspect in the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). Intentions are supposed to capture the motivational components that influence an action (Ojeleye *et al.*, 2021). In general, the greater the desire to participate in an activity, the more plausible its performance will be (Jimoh *et al.*, 2021). Meanwhile, Prieto (2010) identified three significant predictors of a person's intentions: First, subjective norms reflect perceived social pressure to execute or not to act the target outcome. Second, attitude the full assessment of positive or negative impact of performing appropriate behaviour, and perceived behavioural control; which reflects the degree to which the action is perceived to be under voluntary control. This study posited that person's attitude formed by his personality has great tendency of influencing students' intention in undertaking entrepreneurial endeavour. Furthermore, subjective norm in the form of perceived institutional support will not only influence entrepreneurial intentions but also strengthens attitude (i.e., proactive personality) and towards entrepreneurial intentions. Consequently, perceived institutional support was introduced as a moderator. The desire of students to become an entrepreneur may be a castle in the air, if they lack adequate preparation to set up a business venture (Abhayarathne, 2021). Regrettably, the effectiveness of encouraging entrepreneurship via merely providing entrepreneurial education has been questioned; as a result, studies have focused on entrepreneurship-specific support inside higher institutions (Liu *et al.*, 2022). The construct perceived institutional support comprised of three dimensions; perceived educational support, perceived business development support and perceived concept development support (Abhayarathne, 2021). Perceived educational support relates to promoting and teaching broad entrepreneurial knowledge and skills (Jadmiko, Azliyanti & Putri, 2019). Perceived business development support is a reflection of the support given for business idea's commercialization (Liu *et al.*, 2022). While perceived concept development support represents the dissemination of business knowledge and inspiring the establishment of new ventures (Abhayarathne, 2021). Nonetheless, this study attempts to categorised institutional support based on House (1981) categorisation of social support; institutional instrumental support (providing tangible or financial aid to start new venture), institutional emotional support (caring, empathy and trust to sustain new venture), institutional appraisal support (affirmation, feedback or communicating self-evaluation) and institutional informational support (providing comprehensive entrepreneurial skills to propel venture creation). Consequently, perceived institutional support is defined in this study as policies, emotional, appraisal, informational, and instrumental assistance that help accelerate or foster student entrepreneurship. According to studies, many students' entrepreneurial ambitions are hampered by a lack of preparedness (Liu *et al.*, 2022; Alalade, 2021; Nasiru, Keat & Bhatti, 2015). Hence, it is critical that institutions position themselves as incubators for startup businesses by cultivating a conducive entrepreneurial climate and contributing significantly to society. However, Aliedan *et al.*, (2022) noted that the effect of institutional support on entrepreneurial intention has not been adequately researched.

Thus, the current study argued that, although proactive personality positively drives entrepreneurial intentions, the inclusion of institutional support as a resource for students might improve the interaction between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions based on the moderation typology of Baron and Kenny (1986) and Gardner *et al.*, (2017). Simply said, students with proactive personalities who get institutional assistance are more likely than those who do not receive any type of help to participate in entrepreneurial endeavors. As such, the study looked at the effect of perceived institutional support in moderating the relationship between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions. Three hypotheses were developed based on the study's objective:

H₁: Proactive personality has a significant effect of students' entrepreneurial intentions in the selected institutions.

H₂: Perceived institutional support has a significant effect of students' entrepreneurial intentions in the selected institutions.

H₃: Perceived institutional support significantly moderates the relationship between proactive personality and students' entrepreneurial intentions in the selected institutions.

1.1 Research Model

Figure 1 diagrammatically depicts the research framework. The moderator and predictor variables are institutional support (IS) and proactive personality (PP) influencing the criterion variable entrepreneurial intentions (EI).

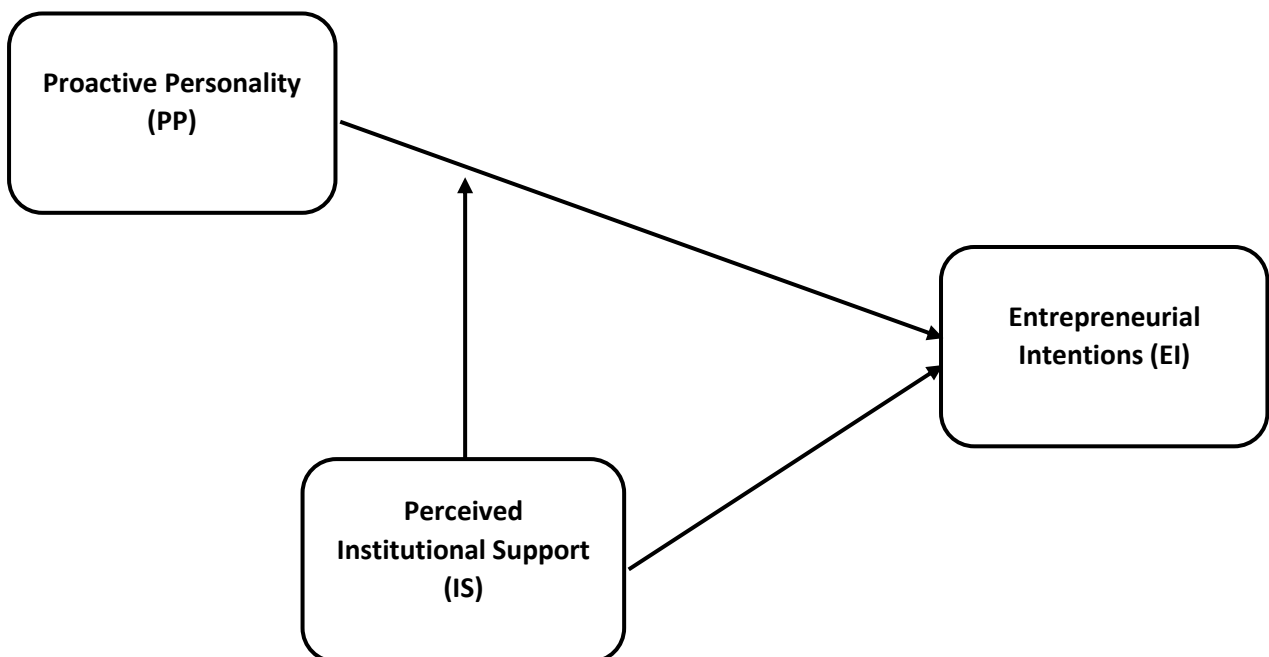


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Source: Authors' conceptualisation of moderation (2022)

2 Research Methodology

The study employed quantitative research design. Specifically, survey and cross-sectional research approaches were utilised in the study. In survey research, researchers choose a representative sample of the general population and administer a structured questionnaire to them (Odoh and Ihedigbo, 2014). In a cross-sectional study, data are collected on the spot or single point in time as against longitudinal research where researchers repeatedly examine same individual to ascertain variations in behavioural or responses over a period of time (Ojeleye *et al.*, 2021). Purposive sampling was employed in the study, with 1000 questionnaires sent to students of Federal Universities in Kaduna, Kano, Sokoto and Zamfara states. Out of which 627 (62.7%) copies of questionnaire were returned complete filled with in four weeks period. According to Ali *et al.*, (2020) cited by Ojeleye *et al.* (2022) 50% response rate is sufficient to construct a plausible generalisation. As a result, the current study's 62.7% response rate is deemed appropriate for making a meaningful recommendation.

2.1 Measures

Linan and Chen (2009) 6-item Entrepreneurial Intentions was employed to measure Entrepreneurial Intentions using 5-point Likert scale; 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. The Cronbach alpha of the instrument was reported to be 0.78 demonstrating the instrument's suitability and dependability for the investigation.

Samples of items for the instrument was: "I will make every effort to start and run my business". In this study, the Cronbach alpha is 0.842. Proactive personality was measure using 10-item Bateman and Crant (1993) proactive personality. The Cronbach's alpha reported by the validators was 0.79 demonstrating the instrument's suitability and dependability for the investigation. Sample items was "I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life" Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale. In this study, the Cronbach alpha is 0.921. Lastly, Perceived Institutional Support was measured using O'Driscoll (2000) 4-item social support scale with Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). Sample of item is "My school provides helpful information about starting a business". For this study, the Cronbach alpha is 0.793.

3 Data Analysis

Statistical Software for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 was used to do preliminary assessments, such as replacing missing values, common method bias, testing for normality and removing non-response bias, to confirm that the data was accurate. In nutshell, the dataset was deemed suitable for additional studies. Additionally, the measurement model and structural model—the two fundamental models of PLS path modeling—were computed using SmartPLS 3.3.8.

3.1 Measurement Model

The measurement model consists of analysis of item loading of reflective construct, reliability (Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha) and validity (convergent and discriminant) test.

Items that loaded 0.500 and above were kept once the item loadings were examined (Hair *et al.*, 2021; Hulland 1999). Items PP3, PP5, and PP8 were eliminated because their loading times fell below the predetermined 0.500 threshold. Furthermore, to confirm the convergent validity, Average Variance

Extracted (AVE) was looked at, and all of the results met the Fornell and Larcker criteria (1981) of 0.5. In other words, because the values of AVE varied from 0.599 to 0.679, they were more than 0.5.

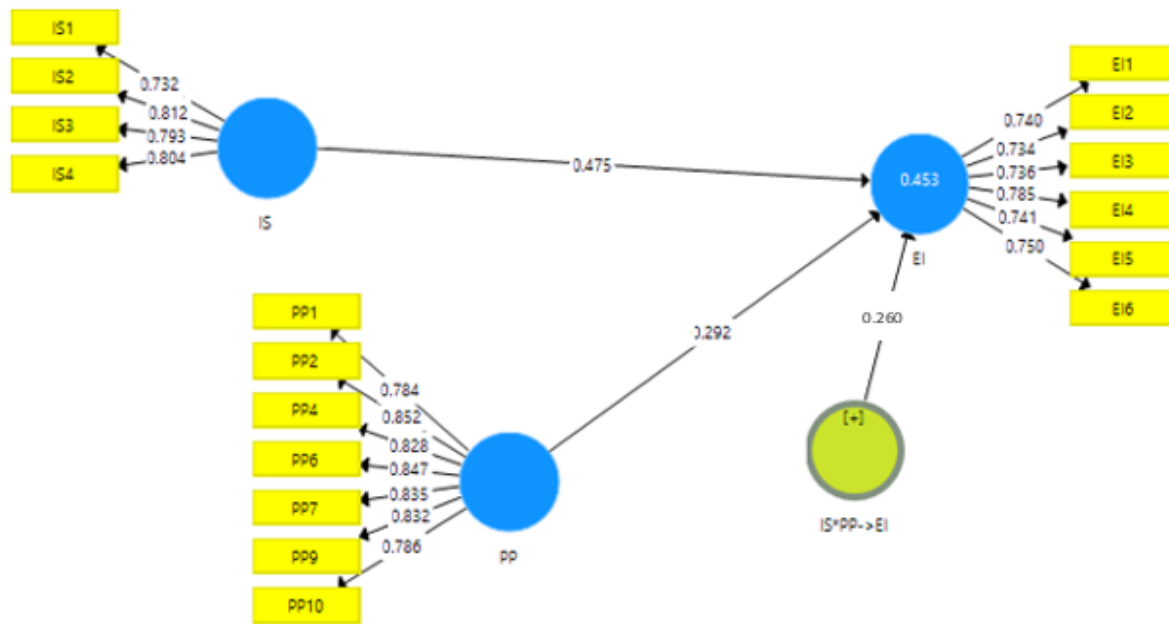


Figure 2. Measurement Model

Source: Authors’ systemization of SmartPLS output (2022)

The composite reliability (CR) used to gauge internal consistency met the criterion for satisfaction with a value of 0.700, with the lowest value being 0.866 and the maximum value being 0.937. Similar to this, the Cronbach's alpha (CA) varied from 0.793 to 0.921. Table 2 below provides a list of these:

Table 1. Item Loadings, Reliability and Convergent Validity

Constructs	Indicators	Loadings	CR	CA	AVE
Entrepreneurial Intentions	EI1	0.740	0.884	0.842	0.559
	EI2	0.734			
	EI3	0.736			
	EI4	0.785			
	EI5	0.741			
	EI6	0.750			
Perceived Institutional Support	IS1	0.732	0.866	0.793	0.618
	IS2	0.812			
	IS3	0.793			
	IS4	0.804			
Proactive Personality	PP1	0.784	0.937	0.921	0.679
	PP2	0.852			
	PP4	0.828			
	PP6	0.847			
	PP7	0.835			
	PP9	0.832			
	PP10	0.786			

Source: Authors' systemization of SmartPLS output (2022)

Additionally, Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt's (2015) Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio was employed in the study to verify the discriminant validity. The HTMT ratio for empirically different terms is 0.85 smaller than the cautious figure of 0.90 for conceptually similar construct. Table 2 below depicted that the values of the intercorrelation are less than the thresholds. Therefore, the paper's findings support the discriminant validity is established using whatever threshold.

Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio for Discriminant Validity

Construct	EI	IS	PP
EI			
IS	0.765		
PP	0.606	0.646	

Source: Authors' systemization of SmartPLS output (2022)

3.2 Structural Model

In order to assess the study's hypotheses, a structural model was employed. To test the association, 5000 bootstrapping were performed in total. Furthermore, the predictive relevance, and the effect size were all analyzed. Predictive relevance was used to test the practical utility of the research model. The effect size was employed to ascertain each individual predictor variable's contribution to the variance in the dependent variable.

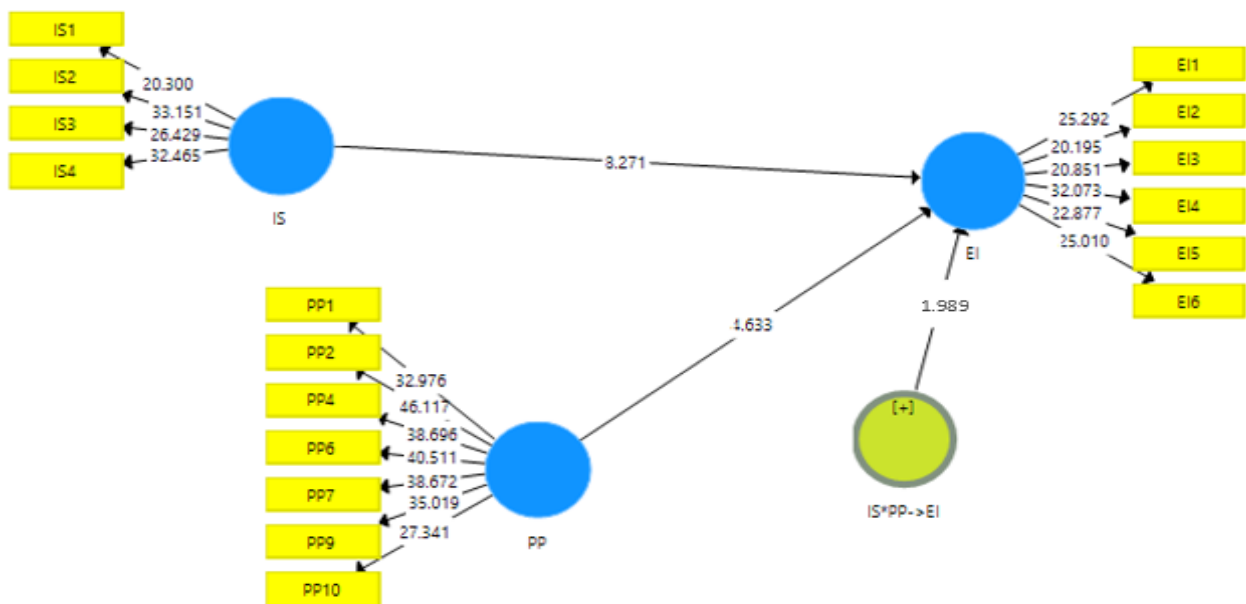


Figure 3. Structural Model

Source: Authors' systemization of SmartPLS output (2022)

3.3 Test of Hypotheses

Table 3. Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	Standard Error	T-value	P-value	Decision
H ₁	PP-> EI	0.292	0.063	4.633	0.000	Accepted
H ₂	IS->EI	0.475	0.057	8.271	0.000	Accepted
H ₃	IS*PP->EI	0.260	0.063	1.989	0.047	Accepted

Source: Authors' systemization of SmartPLS output (2022)

The association between the criterion variable, which is entrepreneurial intentions, and the predictor and moderating factors, proactive personality (PP) and perceived institutional support (IS), was depicted in the aforementioned Table 3 and Figure 3. (EI). First, at a 1% significant level, the study discovered that a proactive personality had a favourable significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions among university students in the chosen institutions. A 1% increase in proactive personality will result in a 0.292% rise in entrepreneurial intentions. The study thus accepts the first hypothesis, which claims that students' entrepreneurial intentions in the chosen institutions are significantly influenced by proactive personality. In a similar vein, the study's second hypothesis revealed that students in the chosen schools' perceived institutional support had a favourable and significant impact on their plans to start their own businesses. University students in the chosen institutions will have 0.475% more entrepreneurial intentions with every 1% increase in institutional support. The second hypothesis, according to which students' entrepreneurial intentions in the chosen institutions are significantly influenced by perceived institutional assistance, is thus accepted. Lastly, the study found that perceived institutional support significantly moderated the relationship between proactive personality and students' entrepreneurial intentions in the selected institutions. Meanwhile, Gardner *et al.*, (2017) posited that when the coefficient of the predictor and moderator variables are positive, then strengthen effect is established.

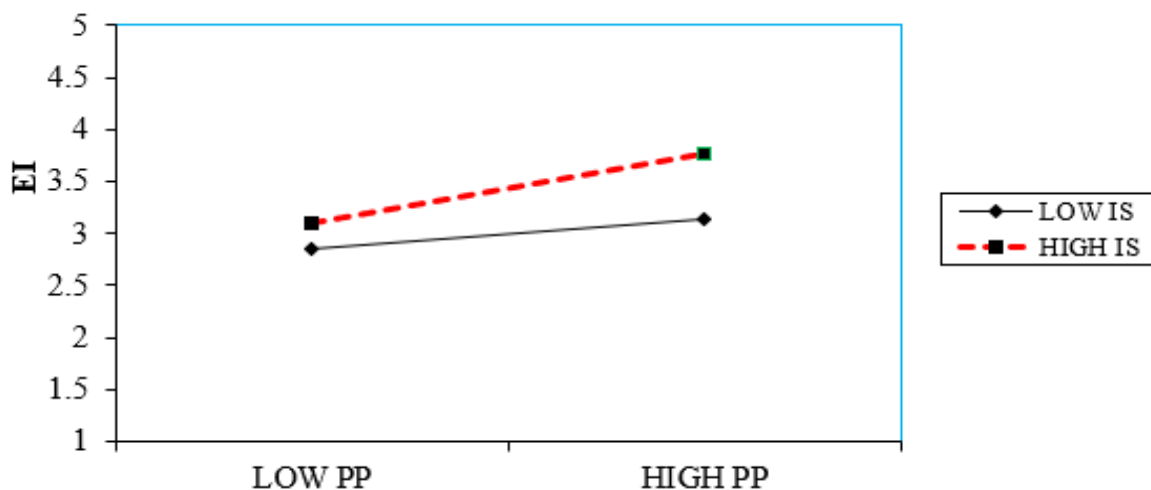


Figure 4. Interaction between PP and IS using Jeremy Dawson Graph.

Source: Authors' systemization of Jeremy Dawson Graph (2022)

Therefore, since the coefficient of the moderator and the predictor variable as depicted in Figure 4 are positive, the study conclude that IS strengthens the relationship between PP and EI. Simply put, students with high institutional support are more likely to have intention to be engaged in entrepreneurship than students with low perceived institutional support. Consequently, perceived institutional support significantly moderated the relationship between PP and EI.

In addition, the R^2 which explains the variance in the criterion variable entrepreneurial intentions that is caused by the predictor and moderating variables i.e., PP and IS was reported to be 0.453 or 45% shown in the measurement model, while other variables not included in the study model account for 55% of the variance. According to Chin (1998) the R^2 value is moderate.

3.4 Effect Size

The study looked at the predictor factors' effect size (f^2) on the criterion variable. This is done to ascertain which of the predictor factors best accounts for the criterion variable. According to Cohen (1988), small, medium, and large effects, respectively, correspond to (f^2) values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35. Proactive personality has a small effect size, whereas perceived institutional support and moderating influence have medium impacts, according the analysis of Table 4 below.

Table 4. Effect Size (f^2)

Construct	f^2	Effect size
IS	0.287	Medum
PP	0.103	Small
IS*PP	0.201	Medium

Source: Authors' systemization of SmartPLS output (2022)

3.5 Predictive Relevance

Additionally, Predictive relevance Q^2 was utilised to assess the exogenous variable's usefulness in real-world applications. According to Hair *et al.* (2021), a Q^2 value of 0 or negative indicated that the model was inapplicable for predicting the endogenous variable. The findings, which are shown in Table 5, show that the model is useful in practise because its value of 0.231 is more than zero (0).

Table 5. Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
EE	1,758.000	1,351.400	0.231

Source: Authors' systemization of SmartPLS output (2022)

4 Discussion and Implications

The research examined the moderating role of institutional support in the relationship between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions based on the assertion of the theory of planned theory. The results of the research supported all hypothesised direct and indirect relationships. The result of the first hypothesis revealed that proactive personality has positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions. The finding is in tandem with previous studies of (e.g., Travis & Freeman, 2017; Kumar & Shukla, 2019; Luo, Huang, & Gao, 2022; Shah, Katohar, Mahar, & Ilyas, 2019; Naz, Li, Zaman, & Rafi, 2020). The result supports the work of Naz *et al.* (2020) who asserted that there is a positive significant

relationship between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions. This is based on the premises that people with a strong proactive personality may spot chances and take advantage of them by acting in a proactive, energetic, and persistent manner until the desired or specific significant improvements were realised (Luo *et al.*, 2022).

The result also showed that institutional support has positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions. The study is in line with earlier investigations of (e.g., Abhayarathne, 2021; Alalade, 2021; Nasiru *et al.*, 2015; Liu *et al.*, 2022; Aliedan *et al.*, 2022). Universities, according to Anjum *et al.* (2021), may significantly influence students' aspirations and efforts toward entrepreneurship and help them become capable of creating a new enterprise through education and development programmes. Indeed, by imparting the information and skills required for company creation, these institutions may offer help in various ways (Liu *et al.*, 2022). This suggests that if students see entrepreneurship to be simple, which can be attained with university support, they will regard it favourably. Students' attitudes will change and their likelihood of starting new firms will rise in universities that give them the necessary training and motivation (Aliedan *et al.*, 2022).

The result of the moderating role of institutional support in the relationship between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions was significant. This means that the support received by the students. strengthen the already existing relationship between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions. The figure 4 graphically explained the relationship between IS, PP and EI. As PP grows, EI moved in the same direction depicting positive association. Similarly, when IS was introduced, the relationship between PP and EI was boosted by IS.

For academics, the findings have some theoretical implications. The findings demonstrated that proactive personality and institutional support had a direct and moderating effect on students' intentions to pursue entrepreneurship in Nigeria. So, since proactive personality and institutional support have a beneficial impact on entrepreneurial intentions, academics should study more to understand their functions. This indicates that the two constructs can improve the entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, the theoretical contribution is the strengthening effect of institutional support in bolstering the effect of proactive personality on entrepreneurial intentions in the Nigerian context. Logically, based on TPB a person's attitude is a product of his personality. When the personality is proactive it drives entrepreneurial intentions which is then strengthen by institutional support system received.

This study also has practical implications for policymakers, other government officials, and stakeholders in higher institutions. Higher institutions should routinely evaluate the assistance they provide and check to see if students are aware of the support for entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial-driven support may be provided to encourage entrepreneurship based on such evaluation, curriculum creation, and other tailored programmes. It cannot be overstated how important it is to offer each student the individualized support they need in order to cultivate their entrepreneurial intentions, in addition to the basic entrepreneurial education that these institutions give. Due to the difficulties of university life, some students who may have become entrepreneurs require the institution's emotional support in order to remain cognitively engaged and take advantage of opportunities. When emotional support is given, it may help the student perceive obstacles as opportunities to launch new ventures. Similar to the previous illustration, as these institutions are hubs for venture creation research, giving input on environmental threats that might bring about the venture's demise can be a type of informational and appraisal support to spark real entrepreneurial intention. The requirement for instrument support in the form of financial aid and other tangible help offered by institutions acting as government agents in the form of venture capital is crucial to fostering entrepreneurial initiatives. Thus, should be given due consideration by policymaker.

5 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

It is important to highlight some of our study's limitations. Self-report measures were used in the study to gather data, which raises questions about common method bias. However, they overcame this issue by adopting a procedural and statistical remedies, such as the elimination of the double-barreled questions, the simplification of the questions and the guarantee of participant anonymity and confidentiality. Statistically, Kock collinearity assessment was checked and the variance inflation factor (VIF) was less than 3.3 as recommended by (Kock, 2015). Furthermore, data were gathered at the same spot for the research, i.e., cross-sectional in nature. It was impossible to establish the issue of causality. Besides, similar to the majority of research in the literature, the study place more of an emphasis on behavioural intentions than on actual entrepreneurial behaviour. There is still a disconnect between intentions and actual action, even if some researchers have found a substantial favorable connection between entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial behaviours. As a result, our study is unable to forecast the number of students who will really follow through on their aspirations to launch a firm even when supported. Future longitudinal research could provide further insight into whether entrepreneurial intentions really result in behaviour or ascertain how institutional support and a proactive personality affect entrepreneurial intentions.

In addition, the study focused on the moderating role of institutional support on the relationship between proactive personality and entrepreneurship. The instrument used are reflective in nature. Simply put, they are unidimensional. However, the various dimensions of social support (*i.e.*, instrumental support, emotional support, appraisal support and informational support) need to be studied using a reflective-formative type of hierarchical component model (HCM). Doing so by using a multi-dimensional instrument will add to the body of knowledge on the effect of each dimension of institutional support in predicting entrepreneurship intentions or otherwise.

In this study, we looked into how institutional support moderated proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions in the context of Nigeria. Understanding the variations from a cross-cultural viewpoint would be crucial. Future cross-cultural research should seek to incorporate samples from Nigeria and other emerging African nations as young entrepreneurs are required on a continent plagued by a high incidence of youth unemployment in order to better understand cross-cultural differences in entrepreneurial intentions.

Lastly, the study employed a purposive sampling technique a non-probabilistic sampling technique that does not give respondent equal chance of being selected thereby introducing bias to the study and inability to generalise research findings. Thus, future studies should employ a probabilistic sampling technique for easily generalisation of study's findings

6 Conclusion and Recommendation

It is crucial to comprehend what motivates people to pursue entrepreneurial professions since governments all over the globe continue to rely on entrepreneurship to lower unemployment, boost economic development, and solve various social issues. The development of EI, which is recognised to be a good predictor of eventual entrepreneurial behaviour, is at the forefront of deciding on an entrepreneurial career. According to the results of the current study, students' entrepreneurial intentions were positively and significantly predicted by proactive personality and institutional support. The current study demonstrated the considerable moderating influence of institutional support, which contributed to a nuanced understanding of this connection.

Based on the study's findings the following recommendations are advanced.

1. Prospective and emerging entrepreneurs need to cultivate and enhance their proactive personalities. Hence, educational programmes must incorporate strategies for developing students' proactive personalities.
2. Institutions should support the students to develop entrepreneurial intentions. Including entrepreneurial education, coaching, and counselling to support entrepreneurial objectives is one approach to do this.
3. The government, educational stakeholders and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) should make concerted effort at supporting both the development of proactive personality in students to trigger entrepreneurial intentions.

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