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Research Article

Navigating Role Conflict: The Influence of Students' Entrepreneurial Identity on Academic Performance in Two Ghanaian Universities

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

There is a significant lack of consensus regarding the impact of students' entrepreneurship engagement on academic performance, despite the growing interest in entrepreneurship among university students and its potential benefits for financial independence and societal innovation. As some scholars suggest that entrepreneurial engagement could enhance skills such as time management and practical application of knowledge, others indicate that the demands of running a business may lead to academic neglect, stress, and lower academic performance. This concern influenced the purpose of this study, which sought to determine the influence of entrepreneurship activities on the academic performance of students at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and Akenten Appiah Menkah University of Skills Training and Entrepreneural Development (AAMUSTED) in KUMASI, Ghana and factors that influence entrepreneurship intention among these university students. In terms of methodology, this study employed a cross-sectional research design and via the stratified sampling method, a sample of 374 students was surveyed with self-administered questionnaire acting as the primary data collection tool. With regard to the findings, this study found that students who engaged in entrepreneurship in entrepreneurship performed significantly better than those who were not engaged (Mean = 4.91, 95% CI = 2.64 – 7.18, P < 0.001), and that feasibility and perceived behavioural control, attitude, and subjective norms are significant factors that determine entrepreneurial intention among university students. This study therefore, concludes that fostering entrepreneurial competence, supportive networks, and a positive mindset among students not only strengthens their intention to become entrepreneurs but can also enhance their academic and personal growth. Therefore, it is recommended that universities encourage students to participate in entrepreneurship programs, business clubs, and innovation hubs that allow them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical challenges.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship in the words of Gartner (2016) is the process by which new organizations or business comes into existence (Gedeon, 2010; Alerasoul *et al.*, 2022). In situations where educated people are unable to find employment, entrepreneurship has been proved to be the best way to combat youth unemployment, underemployment and poverty (Osakede *et al.*, 2017).

Globally, there has been a notable surge in student entrepreneurship in recent years due to increasing access to technology, innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems in universities (Ferreira *et al.*, 2017; Osakede *et al.*, 2017). "As reported by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), entrepreneurship rates among young individuals like students have been rising as young people perceive business ownership as a viable career path in a rapidly changing job market (GEM, 2021). Related to this, a report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provides that over 65% of higher education institutions in OECD countries offer some form of entrepreneurship support, demonstrating the increasing institutional focus on this trend (OECD, 2020). For instance studies assert that by providing students with the resources and mentorship needed to develop business ideas, universities now include entrepreneurship courses, incubator programs and innovation hubs that provide students with the resources and mentorship needed to develop business ideas (Ferreira *et al.*, 2017; Osakede *et al.*, 2017). Additionally, the 2020 report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stated that student entrepreneurship is increasing especially in developing Nations and Low Middle Income Countries (LMIC) where economic opportunities are limited and students are seeking alternative career paths beyond traditional employment (UNESCO, 2020). With the need for financial independence and the desire to address societal challenges through business innovation, these global trends suggest that entrepreneurship among students is not merely a regional phenomenon but a worldwide movement."

As a result of the economic condition of developing countries, entrepreneurship, especially small scale businesses that involves buying and selling, has been at the apex in recent years among students (Adu *et al.*, 2022). "According to the African Development Bank, youth unemployment rates in sub-Saharan Africa reached nearly 13.9% in 2021, contributing to a surge in entrepreneurial initiatives among university students (AfDB, 2021). Research by Oyinlola *et al.* (2024) shows that 45% of students in Nigerian universities expressed an interest in starting their own businesses before graduation, a trend mirrored in many African countries. Similarly, in an assessment of entrepreneurial intention among university students in Cameroon, Neneh (2014) shows that the students in general possess a high intention to become entrepreneurs (M=4.39; SD 0.469). This was consistent with findings by Ooi and Ahmad (2012), who established that university students in Malaysia possess high intention to become entrepreneurs. Two reasons, among the reasons given, are that they are prepared to do anything to become an entrepreneur (M=4.56; SD= 0.797), closely followed by the fact that they are ready to put in every effort to start and run their own business highlighting the prevalence of entrepreneurship intentions among African students."

"In similar context, the government of Ghana's focus on entrepreneurship development initiatives such as the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Plan (NEIP) has further increased student participation in business creation (Owusu *et al.*, 2016). For instance, in 2020 a survey by the Association of Ghana Industries in 2020 revealed that 35% of university students were engaged in some form of entrepreneurial activity (AGI, 2020). To add up, Amanamah *et al.* (2018) reports that as a reflecting on the country's emphasis on agriculture as a key economic driver, 40% of student entrepreneurs in Ghana's public universities were engaged in agribusiness. These statistics imply that entrepreneurship has indeed been survival medium to combat youth unemployment, underemployment and poverty reflecting the broader African trend, influenced by numerous factors."

In Africa research mostly attribute the growing student entrepreneurship trend limited formal job opportunities in many African nations. "Specifically, the African Development Bank explained that youth unemployment rates in sub-Saharan Africa reached nearly 13.9% in 2021 which contributed to a surge in entrepreneurial initiatives among university students (AfDB, 2021). In findings from the Ghana Statistical Service (2021), the unemployment rate among youths aged 15-24 was around 19.7% pushing many university students to engage themselves in entrepreneurial ventures as a viable alternative to traditional employment supporting the claim that student entrepreneurship is a critical response to economic pressures and an opportunity to foster innovation and economic resilience."

"The growing interest in entrepreneurship activities among university students and its potential benefits for financial independence and societal innovation has been proven by scholars. However, there remains a significant lack of consensus regarding its impact on academic performance. That is, while some studies suggest that entrepreneurial engagement could enhance skills such as time management and practical application of knowledge (Asamani & Mensah, 2013; Johansen & Schanke, 2014), other scholars like Osakede *et al.* (2017) indicate that the demands of running a business may lead to academic neglect, stress and decline in academic performance (Osakede *et al.*, 2017). This discrepancy raises critical questions about how entrepreneurship affects the academic outcomes of university students particularly in an era where higher education institutions are increasingly promoting entrepreneurial initiatives. As such, this study sought to determine whether there is a statistical difference in the academic performance of students who engage in entrepreneur activities and those who do not. Furthermore, this study seeks to determine the factors that influence entrepreneur intention among university students in Ghana, specifically at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and the Akenten Appiah Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneural Development in Kumasi, Ghana. By doing so, the findings from this study would help shape institutional policies and support structures to promote balanced academic and entrepreneurial success. In relation to this study's aim the following research questions are examined."

1. Is there a statistical difference in the academic performance of students who engage in entrepreneur activities and those

who do not engage in entrepreneur activities?

2. What factors influence entrepreneurship intention among university students in Ghana?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical underpinning

This study is structured through the framework of Shapero and Sokol's (1982) Entrepreneurial Event (EE) Theory and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour. "According to Shapero and Sokol's (1982) Theory of Entrepreneurial Event, the desire to work for oneself is contingent upon an individual's assessment of the desirability and feasibility of entrepreneurship (Shapero & Sokol, 2002). That is, before developing an interest and consequently engaging in self-employment or entrepreneurship, a person must first consider it desirable. Desirability pertains to an individual's values and feelings, which are shaped by the social environment consisting of family, friends and colleagues. Conversely, a person's assessment of their own knowledge base, financial means, and level of expertise are all factors in feasibility (Shapero & Sokol, 2002)."

In the context of this study, desirability under Shapero and Sokol's Entrepreneurial Event (EE) Theory refers to how appealing students find entrepreneurship based on their personal values, goals, and the influence of their social environment (family, friends, and mentors). That is, if students perceive that engaging in entrepreneurship activities align with their aspirations and also supported by their social networks they are more likely to develop an interest and vice versa. This perception of desirability is influenced by their intention to start entrepreneurial ventures. For example, Osakede *et al.* (2017) examined entrepreneurial interest and academic performance in Nigerian university students and found that family business background significantly predicts students' interest in entrepreneurship. In addition, an exploratory study of entrepreneurial intention among university students in Ghana by Amanamah *et al.* (2018) found that by helping young individuals to overcome fear, lack of experience and various practical business challenges, access to role models have a positive influence on an individual's entrepreneurial intentions. Moreover, by examine the relationship between social support and entrepreneurship intention experienced by adolescents Khayru *et al.* (2021) report that adolescents who have entrepreneur relatives or friends are more like of starting their own entrepreneurial venture. These revelations support the Entrepreneurial Event (EE) Theory's assertion that if individuals perceive entrepreneurship as consistent with their aspirations and supported by their social networks, they are more likely to develop an interest in it (Shapero & Sokol, 2002). These findings collectively affirm Shapero and Sokol's claim that perceived social support strengthens entrepreneurial desirability. However, they largely overlook cultural variations and gender dynamics that may alter how desirability is perceived in different settings. Moreover, most of these studies focus on established entrepreneurs or business students, leaving limited evidence on how students in non-business disciplines perceive entrepreneurship as a career path. This study fills that gap by exploring desirability among a more diverse student population within the Ghanaian context.

From Shapero and Sokol's EE Theory, Feasibility encompasses university students' assessment of their capability to set up business ventures. This includes assessing their knowledge, financial resources and expertise required for launching a business. That is, when students believe they have the necessary skills, experience and the neccesary support, their confidence in pursuing entrepreneurship elevate. To support this, Khuong and An (2016) assert that students' ambition to pursue entrepreneurship in Vietnam was favourably influenced by their prior entrepreneurial experience, the external environment including availability of loan and target market access and their perception of the venture's viability. Also, Ayegba and Omale (2016) provide findings on factors that influence entrepreneurial development among small and medium scale business owners and found that entrepreneurship development in Nigeria depends on environmental factors such as power supply, access to credit facility as well as modern technology. These findings support the idea that if students believe they have the necessary skills, experience and support, their confidence in establishing business increases. While these studies highlight external and internal enablers, they often neglect the interaction between institutional conditions like entrepreneurship education and individual self-efficacy. This gap suggests that feasibility is not only about available resources but also about how students perceive institutional support, an aspect this study explores by examining the university ecosystem as part of perceived feasibility.

To understand the phenomenon in another context, the Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) opines that intent is dependent on three factors including attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 2011). "These factors determine the intention and hence engagement in a particular behaviour. As per the TPB attitude measures the value the individual places on a behaviour type encompassing the extent to which an individual has desirable or undesirable appraisal of the behaviour in concern (Ajzen, 2011; Davids, 2017). Regarding subjective norm, TPB explains that social pressure or influence from one's parents, peers and other respected relatives to engage or not to participate in an act or behaviour influence their actions and inactions. Perceived behavioural control captures the individual's perception of his or her ability to perform the behaviour and if there are resources to do so (Ajzen, 2011; Davids, 2017)."

In the context of this study, attitude in Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) reflects students' positive or negative evaluation of entrepreneurship. "That is, if students perceive entrepreneurship as rewarding, valuable and beneficial to their career they are more likely to have a favourable attitude toward it which directly influences their entrepreneurial intentions. For instance, Zhang *et al.* (2015) used the structural equation modelling technique to examine the entrepreneurial intention of 275 university students in the USA. The study revealed that attitude and controlled behaviour are positively associated with entrepreneurial intention. Generally, an individual's desire for more income, independence and less risk in making a career decision determined interest in entrepreneurship (Zhang *et al.*, 2015; Osakede *et al.*, 2017)."

Furthermore, in the context of this study, subjective norm

in Ajzen's TPB refers to the influence of social pressure on students to pursue or avoid entrepreneurship. "If students feel that their peers, family, or mentors encourage entrepreneurship, they are more likely to develop intentions to engage in it. On the contrary, if they sense disapproval, this may discourage their involvement. For instance, using a quantitative approach, Utami (2017) examined impact of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behaviour, entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy towards entrepreneurial intention university student in Indonesia. The study provides that subjective norm and self-efficacy had a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention while entrepreneurial resistance caused by lack of funds, time, family support, business skills and entrepreneurship education negatively affect students' entrepreneurial intention. By employing descriptive statistics, Kume *et al.* (2013) found positive effects of subjective norm on entrepreneurial interest among undergraduate students in Albania. Thus students whose parents had entrepreneurial experience were more in the distribution of respondents who indicated interest in starting their own business after graduation. This supports arguments that prior exposure to entrepreneurship either directly or in directly through the family background influences the individual's attitude regarding entrepreneurship (Davids, 2017). Additionally, in an exploratory study of entrepreneurial intention among university students in Ghana, Amanamah *et al.* (2018) found that access to role models and friends' support have a positive influence on an individual's entrepreneurial intentions by helping them to overcome fear, lack of experience, and various practical business challenges. This also supports the assertion that encouragement and support from role models and peers influence entrepreneurship intent (Davids, 2017)." These studies collectively provide the social dimension of entrepreneurship, but they often assume positive influence. Contradictions exist such as in contexts where family expectations emphasize formal employment over self-employment, which may suppress entrepreneurial intent. This contradiction highlights a key empirical gap this study addresses: the dual role of social norms as both motivators and deterrents depending on cultural and economic contexts.

"To align with Ajzen's TPB, the element of perceived behavioural control in the context of this study is about students' belief in their ability to perform entrepreneurial activities including their perception of whether they have the necessary resources, skills and opportunities to successfully start a business. High perceived behavioural control enhances students' confidence and likelihood of entrepreneurial engagement. Perceived behavioural control, the third TPB component, captures individuals' belief in their capacity to engage in entrepreneurship given their skills and available resources. For instance, Wijayati *et al.* (2021) and Nguyen (2017) both demonstrated that entrepreneurship education and resource availability enhance perceived control and, consequently, entrepreneurial intention. However, few studies have tested how perceived control operates in resource-constrained environments, such as among university students in developing countries like Ghana. This study therefore fills that gap by assessing how students' sense of control interacts with institutional and economic barriers.

Beyond these theoretical constructs, several studies identify contextual factors like unemployment, poverty and job insecurity as drivers of entrepreneurship. Brownhilder (2014) and Amofah *et al.* (2020) noted that push factors, rather than intrinsic motivation, often determine entrepreneurship engagement in African settings. This raises a critical contradiction, while EE and TPB theories assume entrepreneurship is driven by internal attitudes and perceived control, empirical realities in developing contexts suggest that necessity entrepreneurship rather than opportunity entrepreneurship may dominate. Existing studies provide valuable insights into the psychological and social determinants of entrepreneurship intention, yet they often overlook contradictions between motivation and context. Most research emphasizes enablers while underreporting deterrents, focuses on individual traits rather than structural limitations, and rarely integrates multiple theoretical frameworks. This study filled these gaps by combining EE Theory and TPB to capture both psychological and contextual dimensions influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions within a developing-country university setting.

2.2. Students' entrepreneurship and academic performance

In the context of this study, students' entrepreneurship is defined as running a small business, providing services or selling products while attending school. "And academic performance is the measure of a student's success in their educational pursuits usually based on grades, tests and overall achievement in school (Mammadov, 2022). There is a mixed relationship between entrepreneurship and academic performance. On the positive side, studies suggest that engaging in entrepreneurship can improve students' practical skills, such as problem-solving, time management, and financial literacy, which may positively influence their academic performance (de Pablo Valenciano *et al.*, 2019). For instance, Laguador (2013) examined the correlation of personal entrepreneurial competency and the academic performance in operations management of business administration students. The study shows a positive correlation between entrepreneurship and academic performance. With this, Laguador (2013) explained that managing a business requires students to prioritize tasks and organize their time, skills that can translate into better academic outcomes."Conversely, other studies claim that engaging in entrepreneurship activities whiles studying can have negative effects on academic performance. "To support this, Osakede *et al.* (2017) in examining entrepreneurial interest and academic performance of undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria found a negative relationship between entrepreneurship engagement and academic performance. Also, Amofah *et al.* (2020) in examining entrepreneurial intentions among MBA students in Ghana found a negative correlation between students' entrepreneurship and academic performance. The studies assert that this occurs as students spend too much time on their businesses, leaving little time for studying or completing school assignments. Balancing schoolwork and business activities can be challenging, and some students may experience a drop in their grades as they struggle to manage both responsibilities (Osakede *et al.*, 2017;

Amofah *et al.*, 2020)."

The coexistence of these opposing findings reveals deeper conceptual and contextual contradictions. While positive studies often focus on structured entrepreneurship programs that integrate business learning into academic environments, negative associations tend to emerge from informal, self-initiated ventures pursued out of economic necessity. This suggests that the context and motivation behind entrepreneurship matter. Students driven by financial pressure may experience academic strain, whereas those participating in guided entrepreneurial training might gain cognitive and professional benefits. By critically examining both sides of the debate, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between entrepreneurship engagement and students' academic achievement within the higher education context.

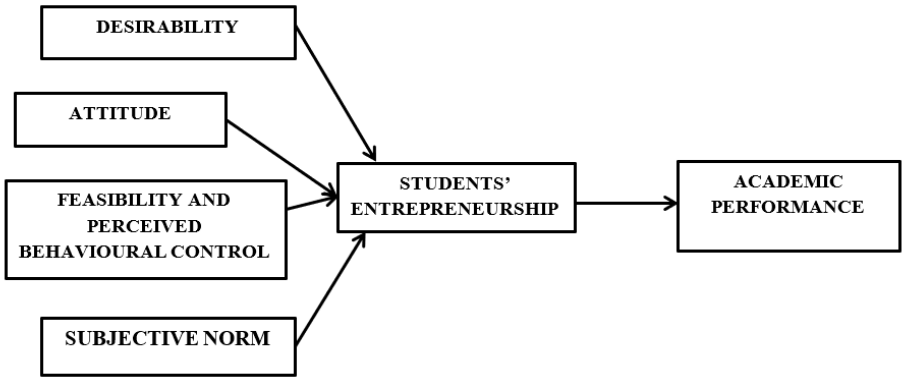

Figure 1. Factors that influence entrepreneurship intent among students and its effect on academic performance.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Method and sample

"This study is a cross-sectional quantitative research conducted among the undergraduates students of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED), where the prevalence of students' entrepreneurship practices and their implications on academic achievement of students is investigated. The population of the study consists of around 77,000 students (KNUST.edu.gh, 2023; Quansah, 2023). Stratified random sampling technique is used to determine the sample size of 398 students for this study. This sample is proportionately distributed among six colleges - Colleges of Science, College of Engineering, College of Arts and Built Environment, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and College of Health Sciences and College of Agric and Natural Resources. In each school, the students were stratified in colleges and in each college (strata), each student was assigned a unique number then randomly selected using a random number generator device with an available student list. This method ensured that each member within a department had an equal chance of being selected, thereby avoiding selection bias (Hair *et al.*, 2019)."

3.2. Data collection method

"Primary data was collected from the sample respondents using structured questionnaires, featuring closed-ended questions on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree). In this study, the independent variables consisted of factors that influence entrepreneurship intention and entrepreneurship. The dependent variables, on the other hand, are entrepreneurship intention and academic performance. This study utilized 21 items from the work of Amanamah *et al.* (2018) to measure factors that influence entrepreneurship intention of students; and in measuring entrepreneurship intention, a binary response question from the work of Liñán and Chen (2006) were employed. Finally, academic performance was measured using the Cumulated Weighted Average (CWA) of the Students. To enhance the accuracy of students' self-reported CWA, a follow-up question on their class of degree (first class, second class upper, second class lower, third class, or pass) was included to cross-check and minimize potential social desirability bias. Using a random number generator, a participant was assigned a questionnaire and returned upon completion."

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Variable Items

Variables/Items	Mean (95% C.I) (n=398)		Std. Dev
Feasibility and Perceived Behavioural Control			
Technical knowledge	4.1	(4.0, 4.3)	1.1
The skills and knowledge gained from entrepreneurship education	4.3	(4.2, 4.4)	1.0
Government policies and schemes	3.0	(2.9, 3.2)	1.5
Better market opportunities	4.2	(4.0, 4.2)	1.0
Motivation to earn more money	4.4	(4.3, 4.5)	1.0

Desirability			
Desire for time flexibility	4.1	(4.0, 4.2)	1.2
Expectation of career advancement	4.3	(4.2, 4.4)	0.8
Desire for social prestige	3.9	(3.9, 4.1)	1.1
Expectation of network and exposure	4.1	(4.0, 4.2)	1.0
Attitude			
Belief in financial independence	4.5	(4.4, 4.6)	0.9
Eagerness to realize business idea	4.4	(4.4, 4.5)	0.9
Intention to address social need	4.2	(4.1, 4.4)	1.1
Belief in financial security in old age	4.3	(4.3, 4.4)	1.0
Fear of unemployment	4.3	(4.3, 4.5)	1.0
Lack of job vacancies motivation	4.0	(3.9, 4.2)	1.3
Desire to continue working post retirement	3.9	(3.9, 4.1)	1.2
Subjective Norm			
Inspiration from successful entrepreneurs	4.2	(4.2, 4.4)	1.2
Encouragement from lecturers	4.0	(3.9, 4.2)	1.2
Encouragement from family and friends	3.5	(3.4, 3.7)	1.4
Family business influence	3.5	(3.4, 3.7)	1.3

Source: Researchers' Construct, 2025

3.3. Data analysis technique

"Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques are utilized to offer a thorough comprehension of the field data. The important variables under examination are summarized and made clear with the help of descriptive statistics, such as mean scores, standard deviations and percentages. To test for relationships, multivariate regression and independent sample t-test are utilized. These statistical techniques are applied to determine the strength and direction of the relationships and differences between variables, including entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurship and academic performance. Below is the multiple regression model for the predictors and outcome variable. In the correlation analysis age and sex had a significant relationship with the predicator variable. This revealed that age and sex are potential confounders. As such, these variables were adjusted for or controlled to determine the true relationship between the outcome variable and the predictor variables."

$$EI = \beta_0 + \beta_1(FPBC) + \beta_2(DES) + \beta_3(ATT) + \beta_4(SN) + \beta_5(AGE) + \beta_6(GEN) + \epsilon \quad ....(1)$$

Where,

EI = Entrepreneurial Intention (the dependent variable)

β_0 = the intercept (constant term)

β_1 = coefficient for Feasibility and Perceived Behavioural Control (FPBC)

β_2 = coefficient for Desirability (DES)

β_3 = coefficient for Attitude (ATT)

β_4 = coefficient for Subjective Norm (SN)

β_5 = coefficient for Age (AGE)

β_6 = coefficient for Gender (GEN)

ϵ = error term

This model estimates how feasibility and perceived behavioural control, desirability, attitude, and subjective norm predict the entrepreneurial intention of university students, while controlling for age and gender.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

In this study protecting individual participants was paramount. For example, key measures included obtaining informed consent by providing detailed information about the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits, ensuring voluntary participation without coercion. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing participants' information and securely storing data. Participants were free to withdraw at any time without penalty, and steps were taken to minimize potential harm through risk assessments.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Characteristics of the Respondents

The characteristics of the surveyed respondents are presented in Table 2, indicating the distribution of the outcome variable among the respondents.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Overall n (%)	Business Intention	
		Yes n (%)	No n (%)
Gender			
Male	290 (72.9)	264 (73.5)	26 (66.7)
Female	108 (27.1)	95 (26.5)	13 (33.3)
Academic Level			
Level 100	13 (3.3)	0 (0.0)	13 (33.3)
Level 200	52 (13.1)	52 (14.5)	0 (0.0)
Level 300	307 (77.1)	281 (78.3)	26 (66.7)
Level 400	26 (6.5)	26 (7.2)	0 (0.0)
Class of Degree			
First Class	121 (30.4)	115 (32.0)	6 (15.4)
Second Class Upper	182 (45.7)	165 (45.9)	17 (43.6)
Second Class Lower	59 (14.8)	50 (13.9)	9 (23.1)
Third Class	26 (6.5)	21 (5.8)	5 (12.8)
Up to Pass	10 (2.6)	8 (2.3)	2 (5.1)
Total	398 (100)	359 (100)	39 (100)
Business Ownership			
Yes	267 (67.1)		
No	131 (32.9)		
Total	398 (100)		
Business Type			
Freelancing	52 (18.6)		
Buying and Selling	81 (28.9)		
Service-Based Business	15 (5.4)		
Online Business	41 (14.6)		
Manufacturing	39 (13.9)		
Agriculture	52 (18.6)		
Total	267 (100)		
	Mean (95 C.I)		
Age	26.87(26.40, 27.35)		
CWA	68.20 (67.12, 69.28)		
Total	398 (100)		

As presented in Table 2, the study involved 398 respondents with no missing data. Out of the 398 students surveyed, 72.9% were males while 27.1% were females. In terms of business intention, 73.5% of males and 26.5% of females expressed interest in starting a business. Regarding academic level, most respondents were in Level 300 (77.1%), followed by Level 200 (13.1%) while Level 100 students were the least represented (3.3%). Interestingly, all respondents without business intention were concentrated in Level 100 (33.3%) and Level 300 (66.7%), whereas all Level 200 and 400 students expressed interest in entrepreneurship. Majority of the respondents are in second class upper (45.7), while minority are having up to pass (2.6%). In terms of business ownership, about 67.1% of respondents already owned a business, while 32.9% did not. Among those owning businesses, buying and selling (28.9%) was the most common type, followed by freelancing (18.6%) and agriculture (18.6%), with service-based businesses (5.4%) being the least common. Respondents with First Class (32.0%)

and Second Class Upper (45.9%) degrees made up the majority of those with entrepreneurial intentions. The mean age of respondents was 26.87 years (95% CI = 26.40–27.35), and the mean cumulative weighted average (CWA) stood at 68.20 (95% CI = 67.12–69.28).

4.2. Difference in Academic Performance of Students who Engage in Entrepreneur Activities and Those Who Do Not Engage in Entrepreneur Activities

To understand the difference in academic performance among students who engage in entrepreneur activities and those who do not engage in entrepreneur activities, an independent sample t-test was utilized with result presented below.

Table 3. Difference in Academic Performance of Students who Engage in Entrepreneur Activities and Those Who Do Not

Entrepreneurship intention	Mean (95% CI)	Overall Mean Difference (95% CI), n=398	p-value
Yes	69.81 (68.72 – 70.91)	4.91 (2.644– 7.18)	< 0.001
No	64.90 (52.54 – 67.26)		

Dependent Variable = Academic Performance

The results in Table 3 provide that there is a statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students who engage in entrepreneurial activities compared to those who do not with a mean difference of 4.91 and p<0.001, suggesting that participation in entrepreneurial activities is positively associated with better academic outcomes. Students with entrepreneurial engagement reported a higher mean academic performance score of 69.81 (95% CI: 68.72–70.91), while their counterparts who do not engage in entrepreneurship had a lower mean score of 64.90 (95% CI: 52.54–67.26).

4.3. Factors Influencing Entrepreneurship Intention among University Students

By using multivariate regression analysis, this study examined factors that influence entrepreneurship intention among university students.

Table 4. Univatiate and Multivariate Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors that Influence Entrepreneurship Intention Among University Students

Variable	Univariate Regression		Multivariate Regression	
	Coef. (95% CI)	p-value	Coef. (95% CI)	p-value
Feasibility and Perceived Behavioural Control	0.24 (0.21, 0.29)	0.000	0.04 (0.30, 0.50)	0.000
Desirability	0.04 (0.03, 0.04)	0.000	0.01 (−0.00, 0.02)	0.204
Attitude	0.32 (0.30, 0.37)	0.000	0.01 (0.31, 0.40)	0.007
Subjective Norm	0.04 (0.04, 0.05)	0.000	0.02 (0.01, 0.03)	0.000
Gender				
Male	0		0	
Female	-0.03 (-0.10, 0.04)	0.361	0.20 (0.15, 0.26)	0.000
Age (years)	0.01 (0.00, 0.02)	0.003	0.01 (0.00, 0.01)	0.001

As shown in Table 4, the univariate analysis revealed that all determinants, thus feasibility and perceived behavioural control, desirability, attitude, and subjective norm had a statistically significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial intention among university students. For instance, an increase in feasibility and perceived behavioural control was associated with a 0.24 expected mean increase in entrepreneurial intention (β = 0.24; 95% CI = 0.21–0.29, p < 0.001). Similarly, desirability (β= 0.04; 95% CI = 0.03–0.04, p < 0.001), attitude (β = 0.32; 95% CI = 0.30–0.37, p < 0.001), and subjective norm (β = 0.04; 95% CI = 0.04–0.05, p < 0.001) each showed significant associations with students' entrepreneurial intention in the univariate model. These results indicate that when examined separately, students with stronger beliefs in their capability, more positive attitudes, greater social support and higher perceived desirability of entrepreneurship are more likely to develop intentions to start a business.

However, after adjusting for all variables in the multivariate model including age and gender only feasibility and perceived behavioural control (β = 0.40; 95% CI = 0.30–0.50, p < 0.001), Attitude (β = 0.31; 95% CI = 0.31–0.40, p = 0.007), subjective norm (β = 0.02; 95% CI = 0.01–0.03, p < 0.001), gender (female) (β = 0.20; 95% CI = 0.15–0.26, p < 0.001), and age (β = 0.01; 95% CI = 0.00–0.01, p = 0.001) remained statistically significant. Desirability, although significant in the univariate analysis, lost its significance after controlling for other variables.

4.4. Discussion

4.4.1. Difference in Academic Performance of Students Who Engage In Entrepreneur Activities and Those Who

Do Not Engage in Entrepreneur Activities

"This study found that there is a statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students who engage in entrepreneurial activities compared to those who do not: students who engage in entrepreneurial activities perform better academically than those who do not. This indicates by contributing to improved academic performance, engaging in entrepreneurial activities enhances students' focus, discipline and problem-solving abilities. That is, engaging in business while schooling requires students to which contribute to improved academic performance manage time, make informed decisions and stay consistent which are traits that naturally strengthen academic habits (Osakede *et al*., 2017). This can be attributed to the fact that engaging in entrepreneurial activities demand critical thinking, resilience and creativity and these qualities are essential not only in business but also in academics. Therefore, by improving their academic performance, students who solve business challenges become more confident and strategic learners. Within the framework of Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), this finding can be interpreted through the lens of attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. Thus students who have a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship, perceive social support from family and peers and believe they have control over their entrepreneurial success tend to develop a sense of responsibility and self-discipline that extends into their academic life (Zhang *et al*., 2015; Utami, 2017). This behavioural consistency explains why entrepreneurial students often perform better academically."

This finding is supported by Laguador (2013) who found a positive correlation between entrepreneurial competency and academic performance among business students. "Same as Laguador (2013) who explained that entrepreneurship helps students learn to prioritize tasks and manage time effectively, improving their grades. De Pablo Valenciano *et al.* (2019) also confirm this finding where they found that entrepreneurship fosters skills such as innovation, teamwork and financial literacy, which translate into better academic outcomes. Contrary to this current study's findings Osakede *et al.* (2017) and Amofah *et al.* (2020) found that some students experience academic decline due to excessive time spent on business. This difference arises from how well students balance their studies and entrepreneurial commitments. In practice, this finding suggests that promoting entrepreneurship among students can have dual benefits, thus preparing them for self-employment while improving academic achievement."

4.4.2. Factors Influencing Entrepreneurship Intention among University Students

This study found that feasibility and perceived behavioural control, attitude and subjective norm are significant factors that determine entrepreneurial intention among university students. "This implies that including the influence of personal and demographic characteristics, students who believe in their ability to start and manage a business, have positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship, receive social encouragement are more likely to develop entrepreneurial intentions. Desirability, losing its significance after adjusting for other factors suggests that while finding entrepreneurship attractive matters, it is not sufficient without confidence, skills and social support. This reflects the idea that beyond mere interest, entrepreneurial intention is shaped more by internal capability and external reinforcement. In other words, students may admire entrepreneurship but it is their belief in their ability and the presence of supportive networks that truly drive them to act on that interest. In the context of the Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) which highlights that intention results from attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control, this current findings indicate that students with favourable attitudes, believing entrepreneurship is valuable, supportive social networks and strong confidence in their abilities are more likely to form entrepreneurial intentions. Similarly, within the framework of Shapero and Sokol's (1982) Entrepreneurial Event (EE) Theory these findings emphasize the importance of feasibility over desirability. That is, when desirability lost significance in the multivariate model, it suggested that the belief in one's ability to execute an entrepreneurial idea (feasibility) is more critical than simply finding it appealing. This resonates with Amanamah *et al.* (2018) and Osakede *et al.* (2017), who revealed that students' entrepreneurial engagement depends largely on their perceived readiness and resource availability."

"These current findings are also supported by Khuong and An (2016) who found that feasibility and self-efficacy significantly influence students' entrepreneurial intentions. Nguyen (2017) and Wijayati *et al.* (2021) also affirm these current outcomes with their findings that perceived behavioural control such as entrepreneurial education, access to resources and skills directly affects the likelihood of students engaging in entrepreneurial ventures. These studies confirm that the stronger an individual's belief in their own ability, the higher their entrepreneurial drive. However, the finding that female students exhibited higher entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = 0.20$) in this study contrasts with Wilson, *et al.* (2007) who found that women tend to have lower self-efficacy in entrepreneurship compared to men, which in turn reduces their entrepreneurial intention. Similarly, Sánchez-Escobedo *et al.* (2011) and Entrialgo and Iglesias (2016) observed that male students are typically more likely to pursue entrepreneurial ventures due to greater risk tolerance and perceived feasibility. The higher entrepreneurial intention among females in this study may reflect contextual and cultural shifts. In recent years, increasing female empowerment initiatives, entrepreneurship education and access to microfinance in Ghana and other African countries may have bolstered women's confidence and desire to engage in entrepreneurship (Amofah *et al*., 2020). In practice, our findings suggest that universities and policymakers should focus more on building students' entrepreneurial capacity rather than merely promoting its appeal."

5. CONCLUSION

This study sought to determine the influence of entrepreneurship activities on academic performance of university students and factors that influence entrepreneurship intention among university students. This study found that there is a statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students

who engage in entrepreneurial activities compared to those who do not, and that feasibility and perceived behavioural control, attitude and subjective norm are significant factors that determine entrepreneurial intention among university students. These imply that entrepreneurial participation enhances students' focus, discipline and problem-solving abilities, which contribute to improved academic performance. Moreover, students who believe in their ability to start and manage a business and have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, receive social encouragement and are influenced by personal and demographic characteristics are more likely to develop entrepreneurial intentions. This study therefore concludes that fostering entrepreneurial competence, supportive networks, and a positive mindset among students not only strengthens their intention to become entrepreneurs but can also enhance their academic and personal growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study revealed that students who engage in entrepreneurial activities perform better academically than those who do not. Therefore, it is recommended that universities should encourage students to participate in entrepreneurship programs, business clubs, and innovation hubs that allow them to apply knowledge to practical challenges. This study found that feasibility and perceived behavioural control are significant determinants of entrepreneurial intention; therefore, it is recommended that universities strengthen entrepreneurship education by providing practical training, mentorship programs and access to start-up resources to build students' confidence and capability to engage in entrepreneurship. This study finally found that attitude and subjective norm significantly influence entrepreneurial intention; it is recommended that universities and policymakers promote a positive culture toward entrepreneurship. This can be achieved through public lectures, seminars, and recognition of successful student entrepreneurs to motivate others. Family and community support systems should similarly be encouraged to nurture students' entrepreneurial ambitions.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study employed a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to establish causal relationships between entrepreneurship engagement and academic performance. As such, future research should utilize a longitudinal design to better explore this causal links. Furthermore, this study relied solely on a quantitative approach, which did not fully capture the deeper dad insights, perceptions and experiences of students regarding entrepreneurship and learning. As such, future researchers should employ mixed-methods to combine statistical trends with qualitative perspectives for a more in-depth understanding. Furthermore, the use of self-reported Cumulative Weighted Average (CWA) as a measure of academic performance is inherently prone to recall bias as participants may not have accurately remember their exact scores and may overstate their performance to present themselves more favorably. Future research should therefore consider using objective academic records obtained directly from university databases or transcripts which would provide a more reliable and unbiased assessment of students' academic performance allowing for stronger conclusions about the relationship between entrepreneurship and academic outcomes.

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