

**ATTITUDES, SUBJECTIVE NORMS AND PERCEIVED  
BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL ON ENTREPRENEURIAL  
INTENTION OF NIGERIAN POSTGRADUATES IN  
UUM**

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BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL ON ENTREPRENEURIAL  
INTENTION OF NIGERIAN POSTGRADUATES IN UUM**

**By**

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**Thesis submitted to  
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business,  
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in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree Master  
of Science (Management)**



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## **ABSTRACT**

The study used descriptive quantitative survey in order to examine the entrepreneurial intention among Nigerian postgraduate students of Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) in relation to attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Data of the study were collected through a survey questionnaire of 156 Nigerian postgraduate candidates, covering masters (50) and PhD (106) students who are studying under the College of Business, College of Arts and Sciences and College of Legal, Government and International studies. Descriptive analysis has been used to give an insight on the respondent profiles, while inferential statistics have been used to make conclusions. Then, reliability test was performed using the cronbach Alpha method which shows all variables are reliable with a value of  $> 0.80$ . Later, correlation and VIF analysis were derived with result of Pearson correlation having  $< 0.9$  value and VIF having  $< 10$  indicating that the data is free from multicollinearity issue. Regression analysis was also used to determine the relationship and predictive capability of the variables to entrepreneurship intention. The findings showed that attitude towards entrepreneurship ( $\beta = .475$ ,  $p < .000$ ), and perceived behavioral control ( $\beta = .349$ ,  $p < .000$ ) are positively and significantly related to entrepreneurial intention among UUM Nigerian postgraduate students. However, subjective norm, is insignificant to entrepreneurial intention ( $\beta = .112$ ,  $p > .051$ ). Considering the Beta values, attitude is the strongest factor that influences the entrepreneurial intention among UUM Nigerian postgraduate students. The Nigerian government is therefore recommended to make more effort in redesigning its entrepreneurship development policies to fit the findings of this study.

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menggunakan kajian kuantitatif deskriptif untuk mengkaji niat keusahawanan di kalangan pelajar sarjana Nigeria dari Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) berhubung dengan sikap, norma subjektif dan kawalan tingkahlaku dilihat. Data kajian ini dikumpulkan melalui soal selidik dari 156 calon pascasiswazah Nigeria, meliputi pelajar sarjana (50) dan kedoktoran falsafah (106) di bawah Kolej Perniagaan, Kolej Sastera dan Sains, dan Kolej Undang-undang, Kerajaan dan Pengajian Antarabangsa. Analisis deskriptif telah digunakan untuk memberi pandangan tentang profil responden, manakala statistik inferensi telah digunakan untuk membuat kesimpulan. Kemudian, ujian kebolehpercayaan telah dilakukan dengan menggunakan kaedah Alpha cronbach yang menunjukkan semua pembolehubah boleh dipercayai dengan nilai  $> 0.80$ . Selepas itu, analisis korelasi dan VIF diperoleh dengan hasil korelasi Pearson yang bernilai  $< 0.9$  dan VIF bernilai  $< 10$ , menunjukkan bahawa data bebas dari masalah multikolinearitas. Analisis regresi juga digunakan untuk menentukan hubungan dan keupayaan ramalan pembolehubah untuk tujuan keusahawanan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa sikap terhadap keusahawanan ( $\beta = 0.475$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) dan kawalan tingkahlaku yang dilihat ( $\beta = 0.349$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) secara positif dan signifikan mempengaruhi kecenderungan keusahawanan di kalangan pelajar pascasiswazah Nigeria di UUM. Walau bagaimanapun, norma subjektif didapati tidak signifikan untuk tujuan keusahawanan ( $\beta = 0.112$ ,  $p > 0.051$ ). Berdasarkan nilai Beta, sikap merupakan faktor yang kuat mempengaruhi niat keusahawanan di kalangan pelajar pascasiswazah Nigeria di UUM. Oleh itu, kerajaan Nigeria disyorkan untuk membuat lebih banyak usaha dalam mereka bentuk semula dasar pembangunan keusahawanan yang bersesuaian dengan hasil kajian ini.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
EIN	Entrepreneurial Intention
ATT	Attitude
SN	Subjective Norms
PBC	Perceived Behavioural Control
SEE	Shapero Entrepreneurial Event Model
UUM	Universiti Utara Malaysia
COB	College of Business
OYAGSB	Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business
CAS	College of Arts and Sciences
COLGIS	College of Legal, Government and International Studies
MBA	Masters in Business Administration
DBA	Doctor of Business Administration
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
NDE	National Directorate for Employment
NAPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
SURE-P	Subsidy Reinvestment Programme
YOUWIN	Youth Enterprise with Innovation
EIQ	Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Entrepreneurship plays a vital role in economic advancement and economic changes of all countries. Innovation and job creation are some of the contributions of entrepreneurship (Koe, Sa'ari, Majid, & Ismail, 2012). Venture creation is, therefore, a significant source of employment in many countries, this assertion is applicable to both developed countries like the United States (Harris, 2013), and the developing countries like Bangladesh (Uddin & Bose, 2012) as well as Nigeria (Owoseni, 2014). Thus, entrepreneurship has an important position in the global fast changing socioeconomic environment (Ali, Topping, & Tariq, 2010).

Policy makers, institutions, government and other agencies are increasingly becoming interested in entrepreneurial development (Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010; Davey, Plewa, & Struwig, 2011; Karabulut, 2014; Owoseni, 2014). The field of entrepreneurship has been highly considered as a significant generator of economic growth, innovation and the creation of jobs (Badulescu & Badulescu, 2013; Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010; Uygun & Kasimoglu, 2013). This is evidenced from the efforts made by government, universities and related institutions to stimulate venture creation (Karabulut, 2014).

Nevertheless, the creations of new enterprises are difficult beyond expectations. This is because the creation of a new venture or entrepreneurship is a voluntary process with conscious intention (Linan, Nabi, & Krueger, 2013). According to Krueger, Reilly, and Carsrud (2000) entrepreneurial intention is the best predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour or action of creating a new business.

It is obviously known that individual personality traits are not good predictors of entrepreneurial behaviour, but in the past twenty years, these individual traits were used to ascertain entrepreneurial behavior (Thompson, 2009). Attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are the antecedents of intention (Ajzen, 1991). Entrepreneurship involves the activities of human beings and their intentions to create a venture. This is because, business organizations cannot miraculously emerge; there must be an individual behind its emergence. This person or individual must first feel the creation of the new venture is personally desirable to him (attitudes), socially desirable and acceptable by people around him (subjective norms) and assumed the creation of the new venture is within his competence and feasible (perceived behavioural control). Having fulfilled these three conditions the intention to create venture will emerge. Indeed, venture creation, action or behaviour is unlikely to occur without intention (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010).

## **1.2 Background of the Problem**

The level of unemployment is a reflector of the state of the economy in every nation. Nigeria has a severe unemployment rate among the youths. The youths are about 80 million people accounting for about 60% of the Nigerian population with their ages between youth years. Out of this figure, 64 million are unemployed while 1.6 million are underemployed (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010). People between the ages of 15 and 24 are regarded as youths by the United Nations. However, each country has its own discretion, to define the ages that will be regarded as youths. For instance, Nigeria and Bangladesh define its youth as those between the ages of 18 and 35 years. Youth therefore, could be referred to as the life cycle stage before starting the adult life which is affected by the mean age that the young people complete their education (ILO, 2005).

Though the number of educated youths is positively increasing, many countries are unable to accommodate them for employment (ILO, 2007). Despite the blessings of human capital and other natural resources such as oil, mineral deposits and agriculture, the majority of the Nigerian population is suffering from unemployment (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010).

In the bid to tackle and reduce the level of unemployment, various policies, programmes and agencies were initiated which includes the creation of the National Directorate for Employment NDE (Egunsola, Dazala & Daniel, 2012; Fasoranti, Akinrinola, & Ajibefun, 2006), National Poverty Eradication Programme NAPEP (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010; Egunsola et al., 2012) Subsidy Reinvestment Programme (SURE-P), YOUWIN business plan competition programme, and the recent introduction of mandatory entrepreneurship courses to all university students.

The advantages of government support programmes are very clear, but nevertheless, the issue of unemployment in Nigeria remains a challenge (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010). In some cases, the financial assistance given to the youths are reported to have been diverted by the beneficiaries to other private gains other than that which it is initially designated. This is likely to do with the negative entrepreneurial intention of the beneficiaries. Lack of adequate knowledge and studies of the entrepreneurial intention of different groups of Nigerians might be the greatest reason for the failure of employment support programmes in Nigeria.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The rate of unemployment has been mounting all over the world, especially with the recent global meltdown. This has an effect on law and order, crime, and a lot of social issues (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010; Owoseni, 2014). Among the most



chosen alternative solution to unemployment issues is entrepreneurship (Duze et al., 2010; Egunsola et al., 2012; Sandhu, Sidique, & Riaz, 2011;). Through the process of innovation, entrepreneurship help in improving the standard of living for people (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010).

The field of entrepreneurship have been increasingly considered as a significant generator of economic growth, innovation and creation of jobs (Agbim, Oriarewo, & Ijie, 2013b; Badulescu & Badulescu, 2013; Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010; Nwankwo, Marire, Kanu, Balogun & Uhiara, 2012; Uygun & Kasimoglu, 2013). Entrepreneurial carriers are, therefore, becoming an area of more concern by governments, students and the universities (Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010; Davey et al., 2011; Karabulut, 2014; Ogundipe, Kosile, Olaleye, & Ogundipe, 2012; Owoseni, 2014). Despite the fact, the creation of a new venture or entrepreneurship is regarded as a voluntary process with conscious intention (Linan et al., 2013). This implies that governments and universities must work together to support students in developing entrepreneurial career intentions through financial or entrepreneurial education.

In the previous decades, Nigerian universities focused solely on academic excellence that will prepare graduates to be employed, rather than being self-employed. By realizing the inability and challenges of graduate employability, a national policy was promulgated on education in 1977 to introduce vocational courses in the Nigerian education curriculum (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010).

It is only recently that, Nigeria made it mandatory for all universities to teach entrepreneurship courses (Akpan & Etor, 2013; Egunsola et al., 2012; Ekpe & Mat, 2012; Ekpoh & Edet, 2011) and introduced a financial support programme called the Youth Enterprise with Innovation (YOUWIN) which is designed to support graduate

students that are willing to set up a new business. This programme is designed in collaboration with the Ministries of Finance, Youth, Communication and Technology, Women Affairs and Social Development with the main aim of aiding young entrepreneurs that are innovative through a free grant (not loan) to the interested candidates (YOUWIN official website, 2014). The grant ranges from N1, 000,000 to N1, 000,000 (Nigerian Naira) which is equivalent to \$6,060 - \$60,606 (U.S Dollars). However, the main problem of the program is it did not consider the differences of graduates in terms of level of education (Postgraduate or fresh graduate) and the intensity of intention between them. These two criteria, if known, will help in designing the programme to better fit each group of both fresh graduates and postgraduates. Lack of consideration to differences in the level of education, intensity of entrepreneurial intention and areas to improve training, might be the possible reason for cases of diversion of the support funds to other personal purposes by the beneficiaries, rather than that which it was given for. The findings of this research will help, to shed more light on whether postgraduate students need any further entrepreneurial training to enhance their entrepreneurial intentions before benefiting from any entrepreneurship development programme.

According to Agbim, Oriarewo, and Owocho, (2013a) a lot of contemporary studies revealed the average entrepreneur to be more educated than the ordinary people. Thus, studies on entrepreneurial career intentions are numerous on higher education students, nevertheless, only a few are conducted on graduate schools and alumni (Karabulut, 2014).

Sandhu et al. (2011) states that despite the academic contributions of many studies in the field of entrepreneurial intention, most of the studies conducted focused on the developed countries, [see for instance, Linan, Rodriguez-Cohard, &

Rueda-Cantuche, 2011; Vidal-Sune, & Lopez-Panisello, 2013 (Spain); Linan & Chen, 2006 and 2009 (Spain and Taiwan); Linan et al., 2013 (Britain and Spain); Kolvereid & Isaken, 2006 (Norway); Souitaris, Zerbinati, & Al-Laham, 2007 (UK and France); Mueller, 2011 (Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland); Davey et al., 2011 (included Germany, Finland, Ireland and Portugal); Iakovleva, Kolvereid, & Stephan, 2011 (included Australia, Canada, Czech, France, Germany, Norway, Spain and Netherlands); Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010, (Croatia); Kautonen, Marco, & Erno, 2012 (Finland); Badulescu & Badulescu, 2013; Piperopoulos, 2012; Sahindis, Giovanis, & Sdrolias, 2012; Zampetakis, Anagnosti, & Rozakis, 2013 (Greece); Wang, Lu, & Millington, 2011 (USA and China); Autio, Keeley, Klofsten, Parker, & Hay, 2001 (Finland, Sweden, USA, and UK); Angriawan, Connors, Furdek, & Ruth, 2012; Krueger et al., 2000; Kerrick, 2008; Harris, 2013 (USA); Lee, Wong, Foo, & Leung, 2011 (Singapore); Luthje & Franke, 2004 (Austria, Germany and USA); Kuttim, Kallaste, Venesaar, & Kiis, 2014; (17 innovation and efficiency driven European countries)].

Among the few studies conducted in the developing countries include [for example, Gerba, 2012 (Ethiopia); Samuel, Ernest, & Awuah, 2013 (Ghana); Malebana, 2014; Fatoki, 2010 (South-Africa); Davey et al., 2011 (involving South-Africa, Kenya and Uganda); Kibuka 2011; Ngugi Gakure, Waithaka, & Kiwara, 2012; Otuya, Kibas, Gichira & Martin, 2013 (Kenya); Owoseni, 2014; Agbim et al., 2013a; Agbim et al., 2013b; Ayodele, 2013; Ekpe & Mat 2012; Ogundipe et al., 2012; Egunsola et al., 2012; Ekpoh & Edet, 2011; Izedonmi & Okafor 2010; Okafor et al., 2008 (Nigeria); Astuti & Martdianty, 2012 (Indonesia); Uddin & Bose, 2012 (Bangladesh); Rasli, Khan, Malehifar, & Jabeen, 2013; Koe et al., 2012; Abdul Kadir, Salim & Kamarudin, 2011; Sandhu et al., 2011 (Malaysia); Brancu,

Munteanu, & Gligor, 2012; Badulescu & Badulescu, 2013 (Romania); Devonish, Alleyne, Charles-Soverall, Marshal & Pounder, 2010 (Caribbean); Wu & Wu 2008 (China); Karabulut, 2014; Sesen, 2013; Turker & Selcuk, 2009 (Turkey); Iakovleva, Kolvereid, & Stephan, 2011 (involving Brazil, Mexico, Romania, Russia and Ukraine)]. However, none of the listed studies above focused purely on the entrepreneurial intention of postgraduate candidates other than that of Sandhu et al., (2011) in Malaysia, Nadanamoorthy, (2013) in India, and Badulescu and Badulescu, (2013) in Romania.

Therefore, there is a need for more studies in the developing countries because only few studies relating to this context are available (Nabi & Linan, 2011; Sandhu et al., 2011) even among the developing countries, studies observing the African countries are more specifically lacking. Thus, this study will focus on purely the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate candidates of Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) especially those that have attended at least one Nigerian university in their lifetime.

In a similar development, Izedonmi and Okafor, (2010) and Okafor et al., (2008) stated that, there is a lack of empirical studies on entrepreneurial intention in Nigeria. This study, however, made the same observation, that only a few studies have been conducted on entrepreneurial intention in Nigeria, such as the Izedonmi and Okafor, (2010); Ekpoh and Edet, (2011); Ogundipe et al., (2012a); Egunsola et al., (2012); Ekpe and Mat (2012); Nwankwo et al., (2012); Ayodele, (2013); Agbim et al., (2013a); Agbim et al., (2013b); and Owoseni, (2014). While all these listed studies were conducted on a sample of Nigerian university and/or tertiary institution students, none of the studies purely focused on the postgraduate candidates and to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the current study is the first of its kind to

examine the entrepreneurial intentions of purely the Nigerian postgraduate candidates.

On the other hand, the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) appears to be the most highly comprehensive of all competing models in entrepreneurial action (Ogundipe et al., 2012) and also described as one of the most recognized, reliably validated, and prominent of the theories of entrepreneurial intention that offer the well-developed theory based (Owoseni, 2014). Nevertheless, this study observed the scarcity of the application and validation of the antecedents of the TPB model in the entrepreneurial intention studies that have been conducted in the whole of Africa. It implies that the antecedents of the TPB model are not well-tested nor validated in Africa compared to other developed countries. The few studies that are found to have applied and tested the antecedents of the TPB on African samples are that conducted by Malebana, (2014) in South-Africa, Ogundipe et al., (2012a) in Nigeria and Kibuka (2011), in Kenya. All these studies are, however, limited to the undergraduate samples rather than the postgraduate sample. In the words of Iakovleva et al., (2011) using other types of students in different nations to explore the evincing strength of the TPB is a future gap. Therefore, understanding entrepreneurial intention and the validity or otherwise of the antecedents of the TPB for entrepreneurial intention is needed in the African countries. Testing the theory will add to the existing literature of entrepreneurial intention, while the results will aid and guide the development of entrepreneurial intervention programmes to effectively stimulate entrepreneurship in the continent.

Furthermore, the lack of entrepreneurial intention studies on the postgraduates is a general issue for both developed and the developing countries. According to Badulescu and Badulescu, (2013) there are few studies on the link

between entrepreneurship and the highest level of academic excellence. Very few studies have been conducted on postgraduate candidates, and even the few are found less comprehensive and covered only the developed countries (Sandhu et al., 2011). This is despite the assertion that postgraduate candidates that have higher job experience and more matured are most likely to have an entrepreneurial intention (Mohamed, Rezai, Shamsudin, & Mahmud, 2011). For instance, out of the eighteen (18) entrepreneurial intention studies reviewed and listed by Davey et al., (2012) none of them focused their study purely on the entrepreneurial intention of postgraduate students. Five (5) of the eighteen (18) studies combined postgraduate and undergraduate samples, one (1) study combined high school and MBA students while the rest twelve (12) focused only on undergraduate student. Referring to the limited studies, which combined both undergraduate and postgraduate samples, observation found that the studies focus more on the undergraduate student samples (i.e. The sample is dominated by undergraduates). For example, Viviers, Solomon, and Venter, (2013) stated clearly that it is uncertain whether the international respondents are postgraduate students. This conclusion is drawn by a tentative statement made by the researchers, that the international students involved as sample is “likely” to be postgraduate.

Candidates of the highest level of academic excellence (doctoral and other postgraduate candidates) are equipped with better scientific expertise in their field, but little is known on their personal and entrepreneurial skills (Badulescu & Badulescu, 2013). This thus, is another reason why this study needs to know the entrepreneurial intention of purely the postgraduate candidates as it is done on the undergraduate students by many other researchers.

In addition, Davey et al. (2012) stated that the late education stage is the right and apt way to measure or determine entrepreneurial behaviour. This reason further justifies the choice of the postgraduate student sample for the fact that they are on the late education stage and at the same time continuously learning subject matter extensively and repeatedly add in their knowledge.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study is to identify the cause of the entrepreneurial intention for Nigerian postgraduate candidates whom are studying in UUM and have at least studied in one Nigerian university. Therefore, the following questions are generated:

1. What is the relationship between attitudes and the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate students that are studying in UUM Malaysia?
2. What is the influence of subjective norms to the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate students who are studying in UUM Malaysia?
3. What is the influence of perceived behavioural control on the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate students that are studying in UUM Malaysia?
4. What is the factor that have the strongest influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate students that of UUM.

#### **1.5 Research Objectives**

The aim of this research is to examine the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate candidates that are studying in UUM based on the Ajzen's TPB (Ajzen 1991). This study is however based on the following objectives:

1. To carefully examine if there is a significant relationship between attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control with the entrepreneurial intention of the respondents.
2. To determine whether the TPB model on the entrepreneurial intention is valid and applicable to Nigerian postgraduate context.
3. To find the factors that influences the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduates.

The expectation of the study is therefore, to have a significant relationship between postgraduate studies or enrollment and the intense of entrepreneurial intention and to find the applicability of the Ajzen's (1991) TPB model in the context of Nigerian international postgraduates. These expectations are due to the level of challenges ranging from unemployment to industrial actions (in certain sectors) that affect the Nigerian working age. Thus, the study expects a positive shift in the need for self-reliant employment. Furthermore, the exposure to knowledge both within and outside the postgraduate's country, culture and within their field of study will be another reason for these positive expectations.

The sample is taken from the population of Nigerian postgraduate students in UUM, and the Ajzen's TPB model (1991) is adapted for the study purpose. The choice of UUM is for the combination of students from different parts of Nigeria (North & South), diversity in religion and culture, and the fact that UUM has a very significant number of Nigerian postgraduates especially the PhD candidates which is difficult to find even in Nigeria. Most students are studying business related courses.

Findings will contribute both academic and policy implications through revealing the factors that account to entrepreneurial intention among Nigerian



international postgraduate students. Findings intend to improve entrepreneurial action, and facilitate the design for entrepreneurial support policies to students of different level of education especially regarding the Nigerian context.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is to add to the existing knowledge in the area of entrepreneurial intention. Many studies have been conducted on the entrepreneurial intention of undergraduate students while only few studies have been conducted on candidates of high academic excellence. Thus, the study will academically and empirically contribute to knowledge by revealing whether there is any positive entrepreneurial intention among students of the highest academic excellence, also the applicability of TPB to the Nigerian postgraduate sample. Because, the theoretical foundation and propositions of entrepreneurial intention are still in demand for empirical validation (Krueger et al, 2000).

Furthermore, most of the studies on entrepreneurial intention models and entrepreneurship in general have been conducted in the developed countries. Therefore, studying the entrepreneurial intention in developing countries will be important (Krueger et al., 2000).

The future of every country is its youth. Thus, future entrepreneurs are expected to be drawn from today's university students (Ali et al., 2010; Indarti, Rostiani, & Nastiti, 2010; Zeffane, 2013), but there are few studies on the entrepreneurial intention of postgraduate students in Nigeria and Africa in general. Therefore, studying the antecedents of their entrepreneurial intention will be significant by filling the literature gap that is lacking.

In addition to the academic contributions of this study, the study will also practically facilitate the design and implementation of entrepreneurial policies, as well as training and support programmes through identification of entrepreneurial intention, and the observation of the antecedents of entrepreneurial intention of purely postgraduate candidates that was not available before. The result will facilitate the direction of the entrepreneurial intention syllabus for the universities and other concerned agencies.

The study will, however, assist Nigerian international postgraduates in knowing their entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities and help them in choosing a career in entrepreneurship through utilizing such talents and capabilities.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The study focused on conducting a survey of the population of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates that are studying in UUM. There are three colleges in the University which are the COB, COLGIS and CAS. These three colleges host a population of 240 Nigerian Postgraduate Candidates that are either studying Masters, PhD. or DBA programmes. The most prominent entrepreneurial intention models i.e. Ajzen's (1991) TPB model and Shapero and Sokol (1982) Entrepreneurial Event model (SEE) have been discussed and considered to measure the entrepreneurial intentions of the candidates under study, which will help to give more insight on how the Nigerian government will enhance the existing entrepreneurship programmes and or create new ones that can focus on people (postgraduate candidates) whom are highly knowledgeable and equipped with the practical and theoretical knowledge in various fields of studies.

## **1.8 Definition of Key Terms**

**Theory of Planned Behaviour:** a theory, which was developed by Ajzen (1991).

The theory assumed that intention is the antecedent of a planned behaviour.

**Intention:** a person's entrepreneurial intention, interest or mindset

**Attitude:** the personal desirability of entrepreneurial behaviour

**Subjective Norms:** the social desirability of entrepreneurial behaviour

**Perceived Behavioural Control:** it is a person's perceived feasibility or perceived competence to engage in entrepreneurial activity.

**SEE:** the Shapero Entrepreneurial Event Model, which was developed by Shapero and Sokol (1982).

**Postgraduate Candidates:** those people that continue to study in a field after they completed their first or second degree successfully.

**NDE:** National Directorate for Employment an agency established in 1986 by the Nigerian government to support and foster entrepreneurship.

**NAPEP:** National Poverty Eradication Programme, a programme that was designed to eradicate poverty from Nigeria.

**SURE-P:** Subsidy Reinvestment Programme, a programme that was designed by the Nigerian government after the removal of the fuel subsidy to reduce the rate of unemployment.

**YOUWIN:** Youth Enterprise with Innovation, a business plan competition programme by the federal republic of Nigeria to support indigenous entrepreneurs financially.

**EIQ:** Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire an instrument and standard questionnaire that was developed by Linan and Chen, (2009) to ease the measurement of entrepreneurial intentions.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter entails the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, research questions, objectives, significance and the scope of the study. The second chapter is the literature review, which discussed some of the theories for understanding entrepreneurial intentions and actions, discusses the study variables both conceptually and in relation to previous research findings. The third chapter describes the research methodology, design, population, sample, measurement, procedure for the collection of data and the method of analysis. Analysis of data and discussion were conducted in the fourth chapter. Finally, the results, contributions, recommendations, and conclusion are discussed in Chapter Five.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The significance of studying cognitive factors to entrepreneurial intention has been illuminated by many researchers (Linan et al., 2013; Thompson, 2009). Yet, there is no standard construct for determining entrepreneurial intention, thus, it is a challenge that is evidenced in the inconsistent results in studies that employ different variables (Thompson, 2009). Entrepreneurial intentions are the state of mind guiding and directing the actions of a person towards the development and execution of behaviour (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010).

In the past two decades, personalities were used to ascertain behaviour, but it is obvious that not all people with certain traits will commit to setting a new venture (Thompson, 2009). The most basic problem of the personality trait studies is the strong determinism assumption which describes the expected causal link between personalities and entrepreneurial behaviour. If the personality approach will truly work smoothly, then people must be prisoners of their personal traits, social situations, and with fewer personal expectations. In short, people need to behave like programmed robots (Autio et al., 2001).

It is believed that every human action is a result of intention, and then intention implies a planned behaviour (Uygun & Kasimoglu, 2013). Intention in psychology has been proven the best predictor of a planned behaviour, particularly when the behaviour is difficult to observe or when it involves an unintentional interval of time (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012). Action or behaviour is unlikely to occur without intention (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Small, Medium and Multinational

enterprises cannot miraculously emerge, they must be created by human beings who develop such intention. Thus, people with entrepreneurial capabilities and skills were believed to at various levels of the society create benefits (Davey et al., 2011). Entrepreneurship among highly qualified people can be very significant in nurturing the economy; entrepreneurial intention will, therefore, further, help in organizing and commercializing the result of the studies made by highly qualified people into a new venture (Badulescu & Badulescu, 2013).

The term entrepreneur is ambiguous and imprecise as it has been defined and operationalized differently by scholars with respect to intention, a person can franchise, or buy an existing business without following the business formation processes. With this respect Thompson (2009), define a person's entrepreneurial intention as self-proclaimed conviction of an individual, that he intended to create a new business and consciously planned to do as he intended in the yet to be experienced momentous. Here, comes to the difference between a mere desire and nascent entrepreneur. People that just have a desire to set a new venture are different from nascent entrepreneurs. While the entrepreneurial intention is necessary for nascent entrepreneurs, it is not necessary for everyone that has entrepreneurial intention to be a nascent entrepreneur.

According to Astuti and Martdianty, (2012) graduates are more job seeking than becoming entrepreneurs. In contrast, Badulescu and Badulescu, (2013) in their study revealed that, PhD candidates (the highest level of academia) have a high entrepreneurial intention with sixty three percent (63%) of them having an interest in starting a new venture, and with one third (1/3) already engaged in a new business, however, there is no direct relationship between the entrepreneurial intentions and the study field of the respondents. On the other hand, Davey et al., (2012) points that

no relationship between student year level and entrepreneurial intention in some studies. The question now is whether academic and scientific expertise of the highly qualified people (postgraduates) has any effect in their entrepreneurial intention (Badulescu & Badulescu, 2013).

## **2.2 Entrepreneurial Intention Models**

Personality traits and demographic variables have been applied in the past decades to measure entrepreneurial intentions. These variables are nowadays under criticism for various reasons, part of which includes giving little and unreliable information on intentions (Autio et al., 2001; Owoseni & Akambi, 2010; Uygun & Kasimoglu, 2013). The entrepreneurship intention models include, among others the SEE model by Shapero and Sokol (1982); the TPB model by Ajzen, (1991); and the Entrepreneurial intention model by Bird, (1988). However, the two most prominent of the intention models in entrepreneurship are the SEE model by Shapero and Sokol (1982); and the TPB model by Ajzen, (1991) (Davey et al., 2011; Samuel et al. 2013; Uygun & Kasimoglu, 2013).

Despite the criticism, personality traits, demography, and perceptions have been used to determine the entrepreneurial intention of respondents in the studies of Nadanamoorthy (2013), Karabulut, (2014) as well as Uygun and Kasimoglu, (2013).

The SEE model of Shapero and Sokol (1982) has been applied and validated by Ngugi et al, (2012) as well as Wang, Lu and Millington (2011). While Krueger et al., (2000) combine and compare both the TPB and the SEE models. Miralles, Riverola, and Giones, (2012) found a partial validation of the SEE due to the insignificant result that was found on the propensity to act variable which is one of the three antecedents of intention in the SEE model.

As described earlier above, the most prominent and validated entrepreneurial intention theory among all is the Ajzen's TPB (1991), which was applied and validated in the work of AbdulKadir et al., (2010) Angriawan et al., (2012) Astuti and Martdianty, (2012) Autio et al., (2001) Iakovleva et al., (2011) Kautonen et al., (2012) Linan and Chen, (2006 and 2009) Linan et al., (2011) Linan, et al., (2013) Mohamed et al., (2012) Malebana, (2014) Mueller, (2011) Nishimura and Tristan, (2011) Owoseni and Akambi, (2010) Otuya et al., (2013) Sahindis et al., (2012) Souitaris et al., (2007) and Zampetakis et al., (2013). Despite of this long list, none have tested the validity of the TPB model with regards to the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduates.

The model developed by Bird, (1988) is one of the oldest models, but it has not been validated as SEE and TPB models, though all the three models are similar in some extent. For the purpose of this study the TPB and the SEE will be more elaborated in the literature due to their well-tested validity.

### **2.2.1 Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour Model (1991), TPB.**

The Theory of Planned Behaviour TPB originates from social psychology, which was laid on the assertion that intention is an important predictor of behaviour while at the same time intention serves as a function of perceived behavioural control that connect a behaviour to certain results (Kautonen et al., 2012). Ajzen (1991), based the theory of planned behaviour on attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control as the antecedents of behaviour (Linan et al., 2013).

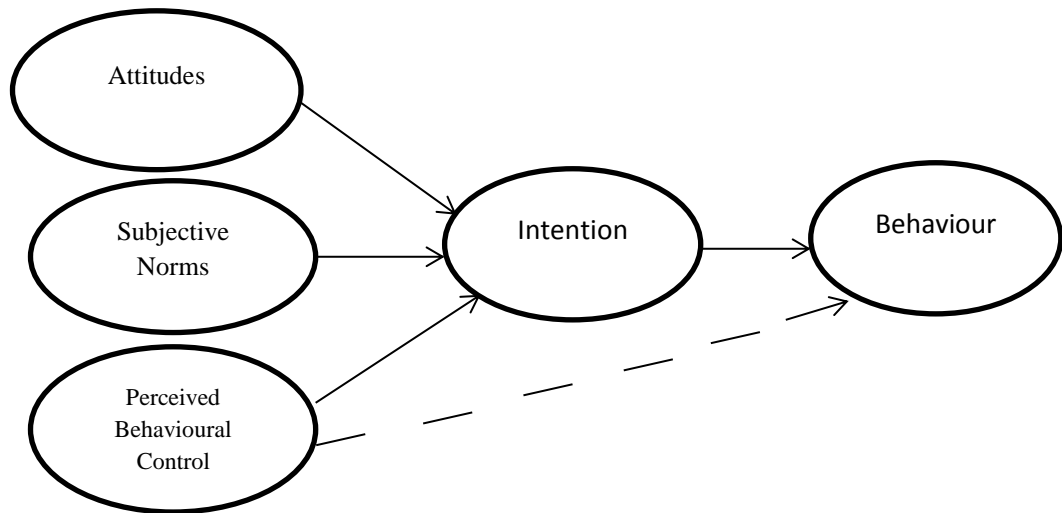
The individual assessment, either positive or negative towards a specific behaviour or action is referred to attitudes. Attitudes are relatively fickle compared to personal traits since they can change depending upon the circumstance and time.



Hence, people's attitudes towards entrepreneurship can be altered through education or any other means (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012). Entrepreneurial attitudes are the differences between the perceived desirability to be employed or create self-venture (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Individual entrepreneurial attitudes are also referring to the extent of positive valuation towards starting a new business (Linan et al., 2013).

Subjective norms mirror the pressure and approval from important others for starting a new business, hence, it considers the personal, social context (Linan et al., 2013). Subjective norms are the perceived social pressure to execute a given behaviour. These norms, measure social support of certain behaviours through family background, role models and peers (Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010). Subjective norms are found to be the weakest in predicting entrepreneurial intentions by some studies (Linan et al., 2013) nevertheless, they are found to be significant in some cases (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012).

The ease or difficulty of performing a given behaviour is the perceived behavioural control, it is thus, the perceived control that a person has on how comfortable he is to perform an action (Linan et al., 2013; Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Attitudes have been studied more than perceived behavioural control (self-efficacy). For instance, attitudes towards risk have an effect on entrepreneurial intention compared to attitudes towards income and work which is not (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012). Perceived behavioural control plays a vital role in the TPB (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). TPB has been generally provided with support in the context of entrepreneurship (Linan et al., 2013). The study of Ajzen's TPB (1991) is summarized in Figure 1 below:



*Figure 1: Ajzen Theory of Planned Behaviour TPB Model (Source: Ajzen, 1991)*

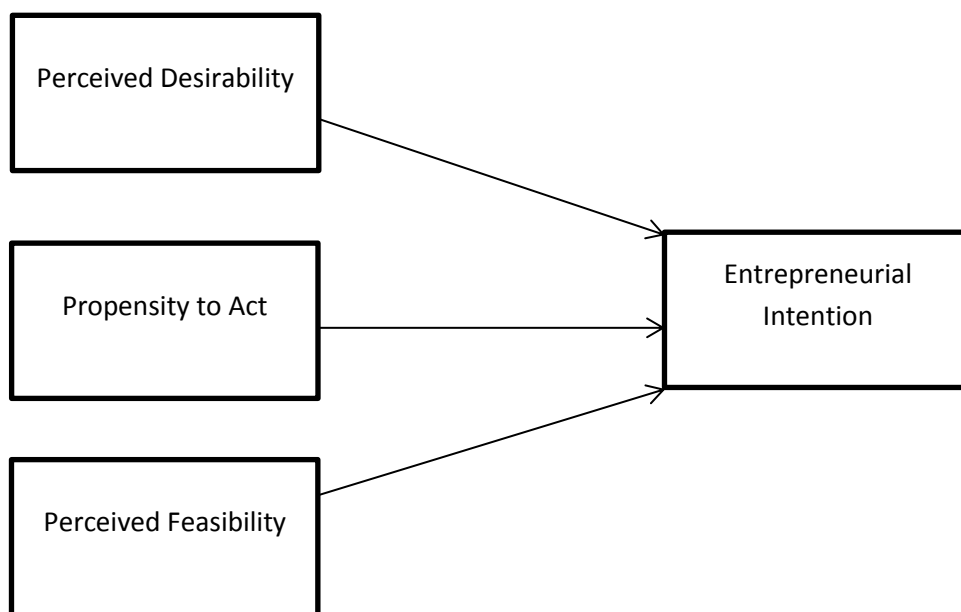
### **2.2.2 Shapero Environmental Event Model (1982), SEE.**

According to Wang, Lu and Millington (2011), SEE model assumes that human actions are guided by sloth and idleness till the appearance of a displacement. Such displacement might either be negative (losing a job), positive (winning a lottery) or neutral like graduation. Displacement hastens the transmogrification of behaviour and push the person that is making the decision to start a study on picking the behaviour that produce the best return among all possibilities. Job displacement events are reported to be the most frequent trigger event to be observed (Shapero & Sokol 1982).

According to Autio et al. (2001) SEE model predicts perceived desirability and feasibility to be influenced by extent previous entrepreneurial experience. Shapero and Sokol (1982) based the SEE model on three variables that determine the entrepreneurial intention which are; the perceived desirability, the perceived feasibility and the propensity to act. These three variables are those that affect an individual's entrepreneurial intention (Malebana, 2014). Perceived feasibility is referring to the mental acceptance of how competent a person is to start a new

venture. On the other side, perceived desirability is the attractiveness or the attitude of a person towards starting a new venture. Finally, the propensity to act stands as the tendency or inclination to behave toward one's choice.

Shapero and Sokol (1982), described the perceived desirability and the perceived feasibility to be the products of social and cultural environment that will appear through family, social and financial support, education and cultural values (Wang et al, 2011). Though Krueger et al., (2000) found a validating and supportive result for the three SEE variables, Miralles et al., (2012) revealed an insignificant finding on the propensity to act. The study of Shapero and Sokol, (1982) is summarized in figure 2 below:



*Figure 2: Shapero Environmental Event Model (Source: Shapero & Sokol, 1982)*

### **2.2.3 Comparison Between Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour Model (1991) and the Shapero Environmental Event Model (1982)**

The key difference between the TPB and the SEE is the presence of the propensity to act in the SEE model which is replaced by the subjective norms in the TPB model (Uygun & Kasimoglu, 2013). TPB stress on the prevalent role of subjective norms more than the SEE model, which stress the features and previous experience of the entrepreneur (Autio et al., 2001). Nevertheless, both TPB and SEE models are confluent, valid, and perform the same function of predicting entrepreneurship intentions (Krueger et al., 2000; Autio et al., 2001).

The TPB model is generally developed for human behaviour and then adapted later in the field of entrepreneurship while the SEE model is developed only within the field of entrepreneurship (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994). The tabular presentation of the differences between the TPB and the SEE models are summarized below in Table 1.1:

<b>TPB Ajzen (1991) Model</b>	<b>Shapero (1982) SEE Model</b>
Emphasis on the subjective or social norms	Emphasis on the propensity to act
Developed for general behaviour	Developed purposely for entrepreneurial behaviour

*Table 1.1: Tabular description of the differences between the TPB and the SEE*

*models (Source-: self-research)*

#### **2.2.4 Similarities between Shapero Environmental Event Model (1982) and the Ajzen Theory of Planned Behaviour Model (1991)**

There is a good similarity between the Shapero and Sokol, (1982) SEE model and the Ajzen, (1991) TPB model. In a comparison made by Krueger and Brazeal, (1994) it was found that there is a significant overlap between the TPB model and SEE model.

The constructs of perceived desirability and perceived feasibility in the SEE model are also similar to the constructs of attitudes and perceived behavioural control in the TPB model (Autio et al., 2001). In fact, Wang et al., (2011) used the attitude scale to measure perceived desirability while the perceived feasibility was measured by the self-efficacy measurement. According to Uygun and Kasimoglu (2013), both TPB and SEE models have a perceived desirability factor and a perceived feasibility factor (self-efficacy) being part of the intention process to behave entrepreneurially.

Both the SEE and TPB models are designed towards predicting the intention and actions of the entrepreneur. According to Autio et al., (2001) and Krueger et al. (2000), both the TPB and SEE models have at least some face of validity and that they both help in better understanding the entrepreneurial behaviour of people.

According to Linan et al. (2011), as well as Uygun and Kasimoglu (2013), attitudes and subjective norms of the TPB model are confluence with the perceived desirability of the SEE model. Although Autio et al., (2001) try to separate the subjective norms of the TPB model from the perceived desirability of the SEE model, looking deeply at both the subjective norms and the perceived desirability will show a strong similarity as both attitudes and subjective norms of the TPB

model will affect a person's desire or desirability to the entrepreneurial intention and actions.

### **2.3 Research Framework**

Previous experience, personal background, and personality traits like the need for control and achievement as well as abilities, are the factors that affect entrepreneurial intentions in the Bird, (1988) Entrepreneurial Intention Model. While personality is seen as a weak factor in assessing entrepreneurial intention (Autio et al., 2001) previous experience and personal background are used as control variables in both the TPB and SEE models in addition to the perceived desirability and the perceived feasibility variables that affect entrepreneurial intention. Thus, the TPB and SEE incorporates the elements of Bird, (1988) and will be richer and more reliable in predicting entrepreneurial intention than the Bird Entrepreneurial Intention Model.

However, combining the TPB and the SEE models together will be something similar to the TPB model, especially if taking into consideration the findings of Miralles et al. (2012), which revealed the propensity to act variable for the SEE model as insignificant. This is because according to Miralles et al. (2012), the only difference between the SEE and the TPB constructs is the propensity to act. Thus, when the propensity to act is removed for been an insignificant construct, SEE will remain nothing other than a similar version of the TPB model that contains only the perceived desirability (attitudes and social norms) and the perceived feasibility or self-efficacy.

Since inception, TPB has been tested and validated in many studies including entrepreneurial intention and behaviour by Astuti and Martdianty (2012), Autio et al. (2001), Kautonen et al. (2012), Krueger et al. (2000), Linan and Chen (2009), Linan

et al. (2013), Malebana (2014), Nishimura and Tristan (2011), Wu and Wu (2008), Zampetakis et al. (2013). Nevertheless, there are few studies that applied TPB in entrepreneurial intentions and motivation of students and graduates in the developing countries (Nabi & Linan, 2011).

Kautonen et al. (2012) empirically proved the argument of TPB that, intention is an important predictor of behaviour which link the behaviour to certain results and thus, TPB helps to predict a forthcoming behaviour even before it is performed. Bakotic and Kruzic, (2010) also argue that TPB is the most successful and widely used theory in predicting behaviour, thus, the robust model to predict entrepreneurial behaviour remains in TPB model. The TPB therefore, has the most predictive capability to behaviour than demography or trait features (Autio et al., 2001).

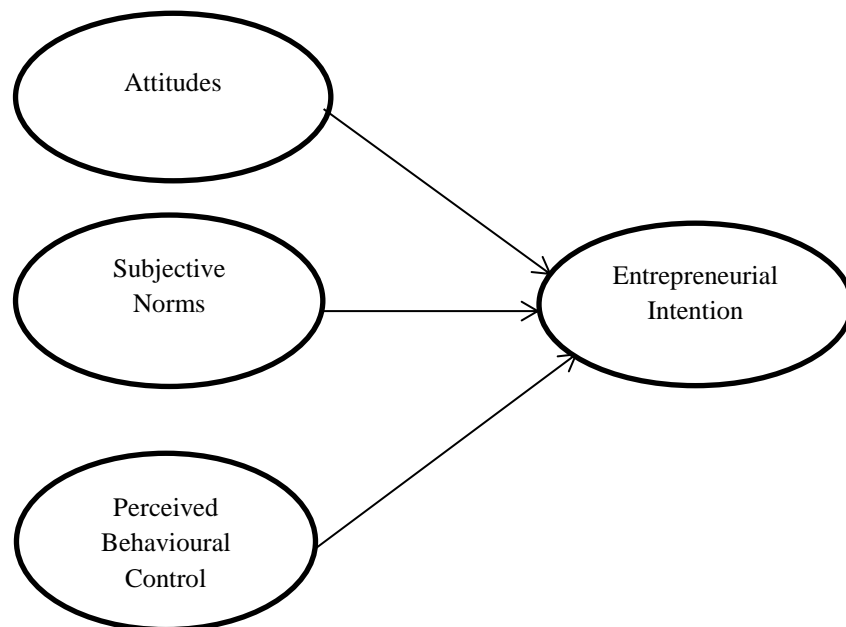
According to Bakotic and Kruzic (2010), academicians in the field of entrepreneurship are able to apply and benefit from TPB to grasp the entrepreneurial intentions and motivations of trainees and students. For this reason, Ajzen's (1991) TPB model is considered for the study. Another reason is due to the reputable validity of TPB (Ajzen, 1991; Kautonen et al., 2012; Linan et al., 2013), parsimony (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012; Zampetakis et al., 2013), and its confluence with the outcomes of other theories of entrepreneurial intention (Iakovleva et al., 2011) like the results of SEE in the work of Krueger et al., (2000). Moreover, the development and validity of TPB are general to all fields of human intention rather than being restricted only to the field of entrepreneurship, which is the case of SEE.

The framework of this study is therefore, based on the TPB in entrepreneurship, (Ajzen, 1991) which holds that attitude, subjective norms and

perceived behavioural control are the antecedents of entrepreneurial intention. In most previous studies, all the antecedent variables of entrepreneurial intention have been found strong with the exception of some few which found subjective norms to be weak (Autio et al., 2001; Krueger et al., 2000). However, it cannot be refuted that perceived social pressure has a significant effect on student entrepreneurial choices (Wu & Wu, 2008).

According to Ajzen, (1991) a planned behaviour is a result of intention, and entrepreneurial behaviour is kind of the behaviour, which can apply TPB (Krueger et al., 2000). The expectation of an individual to start a new business can, therefore, be predicted from his entrepreneurial intention (Kautonen et al., 2012).

Figure 3 below describes summarily the relationship between the antecedents of entrepreneurial intention (attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control) and the entrepreneurial intention itself.



*Figure 3: The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Source: Ajzen, 1991)*



## **2.4 Variables of the Research**

Rather than creating jobs, university graduates are more job seeking, this situation/phenomenon, requires the attention of government and other related parties (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012). Understanding entrepreneurial intention antecedents will help researchers, policy makers and students themselves in getting more transparent picture of the way intentions are formed and the way new business founder's motives, perceptions and beliefs impact the intention to start a new business (Wang et al., 2011).

The antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions in TPB model are attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control or self-efficacy (Ajzen, 1991). This theory is increasingly being recognized as a useful and significant framework in new business creation as it expound the complex and complicated cognitive processes that result in the creation of new venture (Autio et al., 2001; Krueger et al., 2000)

### **2.4.1 Entrepreneurial Intention**

Intention is an anticipated result that is guided by a planned action, which is able to predict a behaviour that is deliberate since behaviour is capable of being planned (AbdulKadir et al., 2012). Action is unlikely in the absence of intention (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Intentions typify the belief that a person will perform behaviour and the belief that a person will act, it is also the state of mind that directs an individual's mental focus, experience, and performance of a given goal to achieve an objective (Bird, 1988). Intention, however, represents the individual motivation to choose among alternative courses of action or make a decision (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012). Intention is the cognitive representation of an individual and it is the moments that

reflect and direct the acts of an individual towards establishment of a new concept. It further refers to the cognitive representation of the readiness of an individual to do a given behaviour, and regarded as a close antecedent of behaviour (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Intention is a function of behavioural, mental acceptance or beliefs that connects certain behaviour to give results or outcomes (Kautonen et al., 2012) and it is the immediate antecedent of behaviour in TPB (Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010; Kautonen et al., 2012). The intention is also regarded as the best and apt predictor that anticipates a planned behaviour in psychological literature, particularly when the behaviour is uncommon, involves unpredictable time lags or difficult to observe (Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010; Krueger et al., 2000).

Entrepreneurial intention is, thus, the conscious conviction that a person intends to invent a new venture and planning for that in the future time (Thompson, 2009). Entrepreneurial intention serves as the dependent variable for this study. The key factor of the TPB is a person's intention to perform or execute a given behaviour (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010).

Entrepreneurship is precisely the kind of behaviour that intention models will ideally suit (Krueger et al., 2000). For this reason, the entrepreneurial intention has been significantly considered as the one and strongest predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour (Krueger et al., 2000 and Autio et al., 2001). The process of inventing a new venture can therefore be considered as volitional with conscious intention (Linan et al., 2013). In the entrepreneurial context, the more positive a person's evaluation to engage in entrepreneurial activity, the greater the entrepreneurial support perceived by important others and the greater they feel to be capable of starting a new business, the stronger their intention will be to start a new business all things being equal (Kautonen et al., 2000).

People that have the intent to create new businesses have certain precursor attitudes, values, interests and talents concerning entrepreneurship, which form part of the composition of their intention in entrepreneurial activity. The evolution of intention in TPB, is the result of attitudes (the extent to which an individual has positive or negative assessment of entrepreneurial action or behaviour), subjective norms (the perception of others on an individual to be an entrepreneur, the fortitude and motivation to acquiesce to them, and social support to behave as an entrepreneur) and perceived behavioural control or perceived capability to behave as an entrepreneur (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010).

In a study that was conducted on a sample of the working age population in Western Finland, Kautonen et al. (2012), prove the assertion of TPB that entrepreneurial intentions are positively and significantly related to the entrepreneurial behaviour.

In a study conducted on final year Nigerian undergraduate students, Egunsola et al. (2012), found that 58% of the students prefer to be self-employed after graduation while 70% of the students believe to have the intention of being self-employed because they are exposed to entrepreneurship education.

Ekpoh and Edet (2011) in a study of the entrepreneurial intention of undergraduate students of business related courses at two universities in the South-South of Nigerian states found that only 26.8% of the students intended to be self-employed despite the entrepreneurship courses they studied in their universities.

In another study conducted in Lagos State University in South-West Nigeria, Ogundipe et al. (2012), found that the skills and knowledge derived from entrepreneurship and career guidance courses affect the entrepreneurial intention of

both graduating business education and the career guidance students. However, students of career counselling have higher entrepreneurial intention compared to business education students.

Hunjra, Ahmad Kashif-Ur-Rehman and Safwan, (2011) conducted a study on the factors that influence the entrepreneurial intention of university students in Islamabad and Rawalpindi of Pakistan. These researchers concluded that young students have more motivation towards entrepreneurship signalling that the entrepreneurial intention level possessed is higher.

In another study, Agbim et al., (2013a) found that entrepreneurial intention increases together with an increase in age, with fresh graduates at the age range of between 29 and 31 having the highest entrepreneurial intention. However, students who studied Science, Technology and Engineering are the most inclined to entrepreneurship. But the situation is not favourable in describing students who studied Social and Management Sciences as they have the least entrepreneurial intention. Looking into different perspectives, fresh graduates from the South-East of Nigeria showed the highest entrepreneurial intention followed by the South-West, South-South, North-West, and the North-East while the North-Central of Nigeria showed the lowest level of entrepreneurial intention.

On the issue of whether higher education programmes, structure and culture suppress the entrepreneurial intentions of students. Piperopoulos, (2012) found that the desire and entrepreneurial intentions of students worsen in their four years of stay at the universities in Greece.

### **2.4.2 Attitudes**

The utilization of entrepreneurial opportunity lies upon the perception of entrepreneurs on the expected value of such opportunity (Malebana, 2014). Attitudes are the extent to which an individual has a favourable or otherwise assessment or appraisal of a given behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). It is also referred to as perceived desirability, and it is formed by the evaluative implications of the relevant information or beliefs that were being kept in the memory (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Attitude towards behaviour are either positive or negative evaluation of individuals towards a specific behavioural performance that is influenced by total behavioural beliefs (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012). Attitudes are the degree to which people perceive the allurements or attractiveness of a given behaviour (Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010). Entrepreneurial attitudes thus refer to the extent or degree of one's positive valuation of inventing and starting a new business (Linan et al., 2013). Attitudes are closely unstable compared to personal characteristics for the reason that it is able to be altered or modified. Entrepreneurial attitudes can be influenced by educators and practitioners, but finding specific entrepreneurial attitudes demand further modelling and investigation (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012).

Linan and Chen (2009), found that attitudes have a positive and significant influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish and Taiwanese student samples. Linan et al. (2011), also corroborated the findings by revealing that, attitudes have a positive significant influence in determining the entrepreneurial intention of final year Spanish university students. Similarly, Linan et al. (2013), revealed that attitudes are positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish and British university undergraduate students and that attitude

are stronger in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of the Spanish sample compared to the British sample.

In a survey of Business Administration students of Athens in Greece, Sahindis et al. (2012) also found that attitudes are positively significant in predicting entrepreneurial intentions. In fact, attitudes have the strongest influence on entrepreneurial intentions. However, Zampetakis et al. (2013) found attitudes to be strong, positive and significantly related to the entrepreneurial intentions of the agricultural students of Greece at the Agricultural University of Athens.

Krueger et al. (2000), found attitude to be an influential affecting factor to the entrepreneurial intention of university students in the United States. In a survey of the entrepreneurial intentions of potential equine entrepreneurs in Indiana State of the United States, Angriawan et al. (2012), revealed that attitudes have a positive significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention.

Autio et al. (2001), conducted a survey of university students in Scandinavia and USA whom were mostly studying technology and found attitudes to be the second most significant factor to affect the entrepreneurial intention in both the combined samples and in the country specific sample. These findings were further validated in their London Business School sample using an improved scale.

Kuttim et al., (2014) revealed that attitudes are strongly positive and significant to the entrepreneurial intention of students in a combined result of 17 European countries which includes the efficiency and the innovation driven countries. Similarly, Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006), found that entrepreneurial attitudes are the strongest significantly positive variable that predicts the entrepreneurial intentions of Norwegian owners of new businesses start-up. In a

study of the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour of the working age population in Western Finland, Kautonen et al. (2012), found that attitudes are important, positive and significant predictor of entrepreneurial intention. Mueller (2011), also found that attitudes towards entrepreneurship have a positive significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions for a sample of university students in Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland. In a sample of students in German speaking universities and one American university, Luthje and Franke (2004), also discover the relationship between entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial intentions to be positive and strong. However, the result of the effect of entrepreneurship programmes on the entrepreneurial intentions of Science and Engineering students at two universities, one each in the UK (London) and France by Souitaris et al. (2007), revealed that greater attitudes are positively and significantly related to entrepreneurial intention.

In another study of the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in five developed and eight developing countries, Iakovleva et al. (2011), found that attitudes have the strongest positive and significant influence on the entrepreneurial intention of students, but students from the developing countries record the highest attitude than those of the developed countries.

In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students in South Africa, Malebana (2014) revealed that entrepreneurial attitudes are positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students. The study found attitudes to be the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial intention. Otuya et al. (2013) have also studied the entrepreneurial intention of university students in Kenya and found attitudes to be significantly and positively related to the entrepreneurial intentions of students.

In a study of graduating students from the business education and career counselling departments in the Lagos State University of Nigeria, Ogundipe et al. (2012), found a significant positive though weak relationship between attitudes and the entrepreneurial intentions of graduating students of the business education department. On the other hand, the graduating students of guidance and counselling department have an insignificant relationship between attitudes and entrepreneurial intention.

In the Asian context, AbdulKadir et al. (2012), found attitudinal factors to be positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of Diploma students of Kolej Professional MARA, Malaysia. In a further development Astuti and Martdianty (2012), found three out of the six Indonesian universities in their studies have a significant entrepreneurial intention through attitudes while the remaining three universities are insignificant. This depicts a balance of the attitude variable between the universities while pointing it as the weakest compared to the perceived behavioural norms and subjective norms variables.

Generally, individuals that believe the performance of certain behaviour will, with greater probability, lead to positive or favourable results will tend to have a positive attitude towards such behaviour (Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010).

#### **2.4.3 Subjective Norms**

Subjective norms are the social-environmental influence that pushes an individual towards having the intent to act and or behave in a certain way. It is the perceived social pressures to perform a given behaviour or otherwise (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms are other people's perception, opinion, or view of a given behaviour, which are termed as perceived social desirability (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Subjective



norms are the perceived social pressure to execute a given behaviour, it also measures social support of certain behaviour through family background, role models and peers (Bakotic & Kruzic 2010). Subjective norms are formed by two components, the normative beliefs and the motivation to comply. Normative beliefs are personal perceptions that significant referents require a person to behave in a specific manner, while motivation is to comply a person's behaviour as motivated by the desire to join or clinch with the referents (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012). Subjective norms reflect the force or influence, as well as the commendation or approbation of others that are important for becoming an entrepreneur (Linan et al., 2013).

The work of Krueger et al., (2000) was one of the early studies that tested the validity of TPB. The study was conducted in the United States, which finds that the perception of social norms is not directly affecting entrepreneurial intentions.

Linan and Chen (2009), in a study of the Spanish and Taiwanese samples, corroborated the findings of Krueger et al., (2000) which was conducted in the United States and discovered that subjective norms have an indirect effect on entrepreneurial intention through perceived behavioural control and personal attraction. Subjective norms were similarly found to have an indirect effect on the entrepreneurial intention of Spanish and British undergraduate students through the effect of attitudes and perceived behavioural control by Linan et al., (2013). Subjective norms were thus, found to be the weakest predictor of entrepreneurial intention in both the British and Spanish samples in Linan et al., (2013).

In addition, another study conducted on a university student sample in Scandinavia and the United States by Autio et al., (2001) revealed that subjective norms have a weak effect on the entrepreneurial intention of students in U.S and

Scandinavia, and for the London Business School sample of MBA students, an insignificant effect of the subjective norms to entrepreneurial intentions was found.

Kuttim et al., (2014) revealed that subjective norms are significant, but having a negative effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of students in 17 European countries which include the efficiency and the innovation driven countries. In a similar study of the entrepreneurial intentions of agriculture students in Greece at the Agricultural University of Athens, Zampetakis et al., (2013) found that subjective norms are significantly but negatively related to the entrepreneurial intentions of students.

In contrast, Sahindis et al. (2012) found that social norms and valuations are positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of students in a survey of Business Administration students in Athens of Greece. In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of potential equine in Indiana State of the United States, Angriawan et al. (2012) reveals that subjective norms are positively significant in predicting entrepreneurial intentions.

Astuti and Martdianty (2012), found subjective norms to be a significant predictor of the entrepreneurial intention and behaviour to the undergraduate student sample in four of the six universities that were studied in Indonesia. Subjective norms were even the most influential in predicting entrepreneurial intentions in the study.

In another study of graduating students for business education students and career counselling student in the Lagos State University of Nigeria, Ogundipe et al. (2012) also found a positive and significant relationship between subjective norms and the entrepreneurial intention of graduating students of business education. But

the graduating students of guidance and counselling have an insignificant relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention. However, the regression analysis for both samples shows that subjective norms have an inverse relationship with the entrepreneurial intention of the students.

Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006), found that subjective norms are significant and positive in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of Norwegian registered owners of new businesses. On the effect of entrepreneurship programmes for the entrepreneurial intentions of Science and Engineering students Souitaris et al. (2007), study one university each in the UK (London) and France and the result reveals that subjective norms are the strongest positively and significantly related variable to the entrepreneurial intentions of Science and Engineering students. In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour of the working age population in Western Finland, Kautonen et al. (2012), found that subjective norms are positively and significantly related to entrepreneurial intentions. Mueller, (2011) also revealed that subjective norms have a positive and significant influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of students for a sample of university students in Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland.

In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of twelve (12) countries that represent the global-regional cluster, Engle et al. (2010), found that social norms are positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of business students in universities. The social norm is the only variable that appears to be positively significant to the entrepreneurial intentions of each and every country that was included in the sample. In a similar study of the entrepreneurial intentions of students in developed and developing countries, Iakovleva et al. (2011), found that social norms have a positively significant influence on the entrepreneurial intention of

students but the students in developing countries score higher social norms than those of the developed countries.

The study of Malebana (2014), also found that subjective norms are positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students in South Africa. Additionally, Otuya et al. (2013), studied the entrepreneurial intention of university students in Kenya, which reveals that subjective norms are significantly and positively related to the entrepreneurial intentions of students.

#### **2.4.4 Perceived Behavioural Control (Self-Efficacy)**

Perceived behavioural control is the perceived ease or impediment of performing a given behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavioural control measure the ken of ease or hardship for becoming an entrepreneur (Linan et al., 2013). The perception of one, on the ease to behave in conformity with certain behaviour is termed as the perceived behavioural control (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012). Perceived behavioural control or perceived feasibility (self-efficacy) as it is also known is the perception that an activity is within one's competence. It is also the personal and individual perception that one has about the ease or otherwise to perform the behaviour in question (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Owoseni and Akambi, (2010) also argued that the concept of perceived self-efficacy by Bandura (1982), is comparable with the perceived behavioural control. A person that views himself to be competent will be more likely to take starting a new venture as feasible (Krueger et al., 2000). Perceived behavioural control therefore, plays a vital role in TPB, and it is generally obvious, that perceived competence strongly affect one's perception on whether or not a situation is controllable (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010).

Some studies revealed that entrepreneurial intention is the strongest significant factor that influences entrepreneurial intention. For instance, Krueger et al. (2000), reveals that the effects of perceived behavioural control are stronger on the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in the United States. In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of potential equine in Indiana of the United States, Angriawan et al. (2012) found perceived behavioural control as the strongest positive and significant factor that influences entrepreneurial intentions.

In Europe, Linan et al. (2013) revealed that perceived behavioural control is positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish and British university undergraduate students and that the perceived behavioural control are stronger for the on the entrepreneurial intentions of the British sample. Autio et al. (2001), found perceived behavioural control as the strongest variable that affects entrepreneurial intention of university students in the London Business School sample. Sesen (2013), also found that perceived behavioural control is the most significant factor in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of Turkish University students. In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions in the Caribbean, Devonish et al., (2010) discovered that perceived desirability or self-efficacy is the strongest factor that positively and significantly affects the entrepreneurial intentions for students in the university Barbados.

In Africa, Ekpe and Mat (2013), in a study of the entrepreneurial intention of female university undergraduate students in Nigeria, found perceived behavioural control to be the strongest and most influential in predicting entrepreneurial intention both directly to entrepreneurial intention, and also through the moderating effect of social environment. Ogundipe et al. (2012), also found a significant positive relationship between perceived behavioural control and the entrepreneurial intention

of both graduating students of business education and the graduating students of guidance and counselling of the Lagos State University of Nigeria. The perceived behavioural control was also found to record the highest variance in predicting the entrepreneurial intention of the students. Thus, the greater the level and intensity of the perceived behavioural control the greater the entrepreneurial intention will be.

Iakovleva et al. (2011), also established that perceived behavioural control is positive and significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intention of students in five developed and eight developing countries, but the students from the developing countries have a higher perceived behavioural control than those of the developed countries.

Other studies have found that, perceived behavioural control is positively significant, though not the strongest factor that influence intention. For instance, in Africa, Ayodele, (2013) in a study of adolescent entrepreneurial intention in Ogun State of Nigeria, found a positive and significant relationship between the perceived behavioural control (self-efficacy) of adolescent students in secondary schools with the entrepreneurial intention. Owoseni, (2014) also found a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and the entrepreneurial intentions of the students at a private university in Oyo state South-West of Nigeria. Similarly, Nwankwo et al., (2012) conducted a study on the entrepreneurial intention of university undergraduates at the Enugu State University of Science and Technology in Nigeria, which found a positive and significant correlation between Self-efficacy (perceived behavioural control) and the student's entrepreneurial intention. Malebana (2014) also found that perceived behavioural control is positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students in South Africa. Otuya et al. (2013), studied the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in Kenya,

which reveals that perceived behavioural control is the strongest significant and positively related factor to the entrepreneurial intentions of students.

Kuttim et al. (2014), found that perceived behavioural control has a significant positive effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of students in 17 European countries, which include the efficiency and the innovation driven countries of Europe. Kautonen et al. (2012), also found that perceived behavioural control is positively and significantly related to the entrepreneurial intention and behaviour of the working age population in Western Finland. Mueller, (2011) also reveals that perceived behavioural control has a positive and significant impact in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of students in a sample that include universities in Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland. Souitaris et al. (2007), in a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of Science and Engineering university students in the UK (London) and France, found that perceived behavioural control is significantly strong and positively related to the entrepreneurial intentions of Science and Engineering students.

Linan and Chen (2009), also found that perceived behavioural control positively and significantly influences the entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish and Taiwanese student samples. Linan et al. (2011), similarly found that perceived behavioural control has a positive significant impact on determining the entrepreneurial intentions of final year Spanish university students. Similarly, Vidal-Sune and Lopez-Panisello (2013) found the perception of self-efficacy to positively and significantly affects the entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish regions.

In a similar study, Zampetakis et al. (2013), found that perceived behavioural control is positive, significant and strongly related to the entrepreneurial intentions of

agriculture students in Greece at the Agricultural University of Athens. However, Sahindis et al. (2012), in a survey of Business Administration students in Athens in Greece, reveals that perceived behavioural control has a positive and significant influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of students.

In Asia, AbdulKadir et al., (2012) found that behavioural factors are positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intention of Malaysian Diploma students in Kolej Professional MARA, Malaysia. Indarti et al. (2010), also found that self-efficacy has a positive significant impact on the entrepreneurial intentions of Asian university undergraduate students. Hunjra et al. (2011), conducted a study on the factors that influence the entrepreneurial intention of university students in Islamabad and Rawalpindi of Pakistan and reveals that entrepreneurial capability or self-efficacy play a significant role on the entrepreneurial intention of final year university students in Pakistan.

In a study of undergraduate students' entrepreneurial intention in Indonesia, Astuti and Martdianty, (2012) found perceived behavioural control to be positively significant to entrepreneurial intention in the four out of the six universities studied.

In contrary to previous findings, Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006) found that the perceived behavioural control is insignificant to the entrepreneurial intentions of Norwegian owners of new businesses start-up.

## **2.5 Research Hypothesis**

Attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control, have been described as the antecedents of an intentionally planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). As a kind of behaviour that intention models can serve, entrepreneurship can thus adopt and utilize these antecedents of intention (Krueger et al., 2000).



The first in the Ajzen's TPB (1991) antecedents of intention is the attitude. Attitudes are the extent to which an individual has a favourable assessment, appraisal or otherwise of a given behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Entrepreneurial attitudes are the extent or degree of our positive valuation of inventing and starting a new business (Linan et al., 2013). Studies have been more specific on attitudes in entrepreneurship and found attitude towards risks to have more effect on entrepreneurial intention, while attitude towards work load and income has no effect on entrepreneurial intention (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012).

Krueger et al., (2000) found that attitude is influential to the entrepreneurial intention of United States university undergraduate students. In a survey of the entrepreneurial intentions of potential equine in Indiana State of the United States, Angriawan et al., (2012) reveals that attitudes have a positive significant relationship with entrepreneurial intentions.

In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour of the working age population in Western Finland, Kautonen et al., (2012) found that attitudes are important, positive and significant predictor of entrepreneurial intentions. Luthje and Franke, (2004) also found the relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention as positive and strong. Additionally, Kolvereid and Isaksen, (2006) found entrepreneurial attitude as the strongest significantly positive variable that determines entrepreneurial intentions for owners of new businesses in Norway.

In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students in South Africa, Malebana (2014), reveals that entrepreneurial attitudes are positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students.

The study, however, found attitudes to be the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial intention.

In a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in five developed and eight developing countries, Iakovleva et al., (2011) found that attitudes have the strongest positive and significant influence on the entrepreneurial intention of students but the students in the developing countries record higher attitudes than those of the developed countries. Thus, the study hypothesizes that:

**H01** - There is a positive relationship between attitudes and entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate students studying in UUM Malaysia.

Additionally, the perceived social pressures to perform a given behaviour or otherwise, can influence people's intention (Ajzen, 1991). Entrepreneurial career intentions are believed to be influenced by the support received from the environment (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010). Friends, family, colleagues and institutional setting are all part of the subjective norms or social pressures that affect intention (Autio et al., 2001).

Though some studies do not support the influence of subjective norms to entrepreneurial intentions (see for instance, Kreuger et al., 2000; Autio et al., 2001; Linan & Chen, 2009; and Linan et al., 2013), many studies have found the supportive influence of the subjective norms to entrepreneurial intentions and these include (Angriawan et al., 2012; Ogundipe et al., 2012; Engle et al., 2010; Iakovleva et al., 2011; Mueller, 2011; Malebana, 2014; Kolvereid & Isaken, 2006; Kautonen et al., 2012; Otuya et al., 2013; Souitaris et al., 2007).

Therefore, the greater the approval of family, friends and colleagues, the higher the entrepreneurial intention will be (Ogundipe et al., 2012a) and vice-versa. Thus, the study's second hypothesis is stated as:

**H02** - There is a positive relationship between subjective norms and the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate students studying in UUM Malaysia

Perceived behavioural control is another important factor in determining entrepreneurial intentions, it is the perceived ease or impediment of performing a given behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). The concept of perceived self-efficacy by Bandura (1982), is similar to the perceived behavioural control and it plays a vital role in TPB by strongly affecting one's perception on whether or not a situation is controllable (Owoseni & Akambi, 2010).

Kuttim et al. (2014), found that perceived behavioural control has a significant positive effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of students in 17 European countries, which include the efficiency and the innovation driven countries of Europe. Kautonen et al. (2012), also found that perceived behavioural control is positively and significantly related to the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour of the working age population in Western Finland. Mueller, (2011) also reveals that perceived behavioural control has a positive and significant impact in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of students in a sample that include universities in Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland.

In Greece, Sahindis et al. (2012), revealed that perceived behavioural control has a positive and significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions in a survey of Business Administration students in Athens. In a study of the entrepreneurial

intentions of agriculture students in Greece, at the Agricultural University of Athens, Zampetakis et al. (2013), found that perceived behavioural control is significantly positive, and strongly related to the entrepreneurial intentions of agricultural students.

In Africa, Ayodele, (2013); Nwankwo et al. (2012); and Owoseni, (2014), also found a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy (perceived behavioural control) and the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in Nigeria. Malebana (2014), also found a significant positive relationship between perceived behavioural control and the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students in South Africa. Otuya et al. (2013), discovered that perceived behavioural control strongly influence the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in Kenya.

According to Owoseni and Akambi, (2010) perceived behavioural control plays a vital role in the theory of planned behaviour. Therefore, the third hypothesis is stated as:

**H03** - There is a positive relationship between perceived behavioural control and the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate students that study in Malaysia.

According to Autio et al. (2001), entrepreneurial intention decisions have more important consequences compared to other intentional decisions such as intention to lose weight, intention to stop smoking, intention to vote, etc. hence, perceived behavioural control will be more important in entrepreneurial intention. Many studies have found that perceived behavioural control is the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial intentions.

For instance, in a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of potential equine entrepreneurs in Indiana of the United States, Angriawan et al. (2012), found perceived behavioural control as the strongest positive and significant factor that influences entrepreneurial intentions. Similarly, Krueger et al. (2000), revealed that the effects of the perceived behavioural control are stronger on the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in the United States.

Autio et al. (2001), found perceived behavioural control as the strongest variable that affects entrepreneurial intention of university students in the London Business School sample. Otuya et al. (2013), also found that perceived behavioural control is the strongest predictor of the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in Kenya. Thus, the fourth hypothesis is stated as:

**H04** – Perceived behavioural control is the strongest predictor of the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

In the past two decades, personalities were used to ascertain behavior, but it is obvious that not all people with certain traits will commit to setting a new venture (Thompson, 2009). The most basic problem of the personality trait studies is the strong determinism assumption that describes the expected causal link between personalities and entrepreneurial behaviour. If the personality approach will truly work smoothly, then people must be prisoners of their personal traits, social situations, and with fewer personal expectations. In short, people need to behave like programmed robots (Autio et al, 2001). TPB was used as the basic foundation of the intentional theory for this study, because the significance of studying cognitive

factors to entrepreneurial intention has been clarified by many researchers (Linan et al., 2013; Thompson, 2009).

This chapter presented the literature review on entrepreneurial intentions. The prominent intention models, i.e. TPB model and SEE models have been discussed, compared and contrasted, the framework was designed, the relationship between the independent variables (attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control) and the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention) were reviewed and finally, hypothesized.

The next chapter will discuss about the design and methodology of the research, population, sample, data collection procedure, measurement of variables, and method of analysis.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This research is designed to study the relationship of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate students in UUM. This chapter will, therefore, discuss the research design and methodology that will be employed in conducting the study such as the measurement of variables and instrumentation, data collection, data collection procedures, study sample, data analysis techniques, and operational definition of terms.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The descriptive quantitative survey design was used to conduct this study and to measure the extent of which attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control influences the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate candidates of UUM. The questionnaire was used as the study instrument. Descriptive quantitative survey design method with the use of the questionnaire have been justified and used in similar studies by AbdulKadir et al. (2012); Angriawan et al. (2012); Autio et al. (2001); Brancu et al. (2012); Gerba, (2012); Iakovleva et al. (2011); Kautonen et al. (2012); Krueger et al. (2000); Linan and Chen (2009; 2006); Linan et al. (2013); Malebana, (2014); Nadanamorthy, (2013); Nishimura and Tristán, (2011); Fatoki, (2010) and many more. Therefore, the causal effect of entrepreneurial intention will be discovered in this study by using similar design and methods that have been tested, validated and relied upon by the above mentioned researchers.

### 3.2.1 Source of Data and Unit of Analysis

The data are collected from the Nigerian postgraduate students in UUM via adapted questionnaires, while the actual number of the postgraduate candidates is collected from the Academic Affairs Unit of the university. The unit of analysis is the targeted samples of the study.

### 3.2.2 Population Frame

The total population of the study is comprised of all the postgraduate candidates studying in UUM who are from Nigeria. The population data are collected from the Academic Affairs Department of the university, which currently host 240 Nigerian postgraduate candidates. This comprises 180 PhD candidates, 59 Masters candidates, and 1 DBA candidate. Of the 180 PhD candidates; 127 were studying at COB/OYAGSB, 29 studying at CAS, and 24 studying in COLGIS. For the Masters Candidates; 29 were studying under COB, 20 under CAS, and 10 studying in COLGIS. Table 3.1 below shows the distribution of students with their respective colleges of study.

**Table 3.1**  
*Postgraduates - Nigerian Postgraduate student enrollment in UUM*

College	PhD	DBA	Masters	Grand Total
UUM CAS	29		20	49
UUM COB/OYAGSB	127	1	29	157
UUM COLGIS	24		10	34
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>240</b>

Data Date: 10<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
Date of Report: 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
Data Source: Academic Affairs Unit, UUM



All in, the COB/OYAGSB has the population of 157 for both Masters and PhD candidates, CAS have 49, while COLGIS has 34. This population data was collected during the time, which the study was on process in August 2014.

### **3.2.3 Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample for this study is taken from the population of Nigerian postgraduate students in UUM, which include the Masters and PhD candidates. The respondents are thus drawn from the three graduate colleges of the university, which are the College of Business (COB), College of Legal, Government and International Studies (COLGIS) and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). Though the convenient sample is utilized, the study, however, ensure the representativeness of the sample by making reference to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) which calculated the representative sample of a population of 240 to be equal to 148. Candidates from all the three Colleges of the university are also included in the survey. See the sampling table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) in appendix C.

The choice of postgraduate students as the research sample is apt for the study. This is because future entrepreneurs are expected to be captured from students (Zeffane, 2013) and that, individuals at the youth age with high level of education are likely to be more attracted towards entrepreneurship (Linan et al., 2011). Indarti et al., (2010) also termed students as potential entrepreneurs. However, the efforts of the Nigerian government to foster graduate entrepreneurship through, for example, YOUWIN programme and the likes of it also justify the appropriateness of the sample. The validity of using the student as samples for entrepreneurial intentions has been justified by many studies (see for instance; Autio et al., 2001; Indarti et al., 2010; Krueger et al., 2000; Linan et al., 2013; Malebana, 2014; Nadanamoorthy,

2013; Ngugi et al., 2012; Owoseni, 2014; Wu & Wu, 2008; Zampetakis et al., 2013; Zeffane, 2013).

### **3.3 Measurement of Variables/Instrumentation**

The variables of the study are based on Ajzen's (1991) TPB. These include attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control as the independent variables while the entrepreneurial intention is the dependent variable. To measure these variables, instruments from previous studies are adopted. This is parallel with Harris, (2013) who argued that adopting a well-tested existing survey instrument would increase the research validity. The study, therefore, adopted the Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) instrument from Linan and Chen, (2006 & 2009) and with only one question adapted from Autio et al. (2001), to measure the study constructs. Both Linan, and Chen (2006 & 2009) and Autio et al. (2001) developed their instrument's base on the constructs in the Ajzen (1991) TPB model in entrepreneurship.

Although, empirical studies on entrepreneurial intentions are growing more common, the comparison between them is quite difficult due to the substantial differences among their constructs (Linan & Chen, 2009). Thus, the study adopted all the instruments in the Linan and Chen, (2006 & 2009) EIQ because it has been developed as a standard instrument for measuring entrepreneurial intentions and it has been tested and validated in both developed and the developing countries (see, for instance, Angriawan et al., 2012; Ogundipe et al., 2012; Gerba, 2012; Iakovleva et al., 2011; Linan & Chen, 2006; 2009; Malebana, 2014; Otuya et al., 2013; Sesen, 2013; Zampetakis et al., 2009). According to Linan et al. (2011) testing the validity of the EIQ on samples of different cultural and social setting is obviously a line for

future research. This study, therefore, meets the requirements of Linan et al., (2011) for further research due to the fact that, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the current study is the first of its kind to test the validity of the EIQ on purely the postgraduate student sample.

The instrument for this study, therefore, contains two sections. The first section will record the respondent's demographic background, such as age, gender, college of study, programme of study, the number of semesters spent in the University, work experience, self-business or entrepreneurship experience, entrepreneurial family experience and role model. The programme of study, and number of semesters spent are self-constructed to effectively capture the demographic features of the sample, but age, gender, work experience, self-business experience and role model were taken as in Linan and Chen, (2006 & 2009) while entrepreneurial family experience was used by Malebana, (2014). This section is based on categorical answers.

The second section of the instrument will record responses on the degree of attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention. This second part of the instrument will be based on questions that have been adopted from Linan, and Chen, (2006 & 2009) and Autio et al, (2001). All questions from the Linan and Chen (2006 & 2009) EIQ were retained and used, but the 3 questions in the subjective norm variable were rephrased for easy understanding after the pilot test. However, only one question was taken from Autio et al., (2001) which was added to the perceived behavioural control measurement. All in, there are 21 questions in the second section of the questionnaire; 5 questions under the attitude variable, 3 questions in the subjective norm variable, 7 questions in

the perceived behavioural control and 6 questions in the entrepreneurial intention measurement. This section applied the 7-point Likert scale of measurement.

According to Thompson, (2009) determining whether or not an individual has the entrepreneurial intention is not just a yes or no question. It is rather an issue of ranging from a lower, effectively zero, to a higher level of individual, conscious conviction and planning to kick start a new venture. Thus, each variable in the questionnaire will have certain items under it and are measured by using the Likert scales of measurement from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. Likert scale is opted because it allows the respondents to express not only the direction but also the strength of their opinion (Kerrick, 2008). The 7 point scale was however due to acquire a more in-depth result (Mohamed et al., 2012).

The purpose of using the questionnaire is to limit the influence of the researcher on the respondents' feedback on the questions in the instrument (Koe et al., 2012). Many studies, however, utilized the questionnaire instrument to measure entrepreneurial intention, among many are; Astuti and Martdianty, (2012); Autio et al. (2001); Gerba, (2012); Iakovleva et al. (2011); Kautonen et al. (2012); Krueger et al. (2000); Linan and Chen (2006 and 2009); Linan et al. (2013); Malebana, (2014); Zampetakis et al. (2013); Zeffane, (2013).

To ensure the clarity, validity and reliability of the measurement instrument, a pilot study has been conducted through which some of the questionnaires have been distributed to the targeted population and tested before the final questionnaire was made available for the collection of data.

### **3.3.1 Pilot, Pretest and Posttest of the Instrument**

A pilot, as well as the pretest and posttest have been conducted to validate the instrument. The aim of conducting such tests for the instrument is to reduce the probability of error and to improve the data quality. After these tests, the three questions of the subjective norm variable have been rephrased.

### **3.3.2 Reliability and Validity of the Instrument**

Reliability of the adopted questions for the instrument was measured using the Cronbach alpha method. This is to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings. According to Sekaran, (2003), Cronbach alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items are positively correlated to one another. The closer Cronbach alpha is to 1, the greater the internal consistency. Moreover, Sandhu et al., (2011) states that the purpose of calculating the Cronbach alpha coefficient values in reliability analysis was to determine the internal consistency of the scale that was utilized for all the factors generated.

During the pilot study, a five-point scale was used for simplicity. This is because according to Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran, (2001) a five point scale is as good as any and that an increase from five to seven or nine point scale does not improve the reliability of the ratings (Elmore & Beggs, 1975). However, the rationality of using the 7-point scale in the final data collection stage was due to obtaining a more in-depth result (Mohamed et al., 2012).

### **3.3.3 Data Collection**

Primary survey data were collected from the Nigerian postgraduate students of University Utara Malaysia through adapted questionnaire, which is designed on a 7-

point Likert scale of measurement. The total number of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates as of August 2014 was collected from the Academic Affairs Department of UUM and the period of the data collection was the month August/September 2014.

Secondary data were also used in the form of review of the literature, which was observed from previous studies by researchers in similar study area.

It is important to note that, participation of respondents is purely voluntary in order to have the true picture of the respondents' view of the study.

#### **3.3.4 Data Collection Procedures**

The data for this study was collected by the use of distributed questionnaires, which was developed with 9 questions in section one about the demographic background of the respondents, and 21 questions in the second section which measure the variables of the study at a 7 point Likert scale of measurement. Questionnaires were chosen against other options like the Internet and mailbox based survey, as usually potential respondents view it as junk email or the potential fear of confidentiality issues (Harris, 2013).

The researcher explains the purpose of the study in the first page of the questionnaire and it was verbally restated that, there are no preferred responses, in order to convince the respondents of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses.

The questionnaires were randomly distributed to the available respondents. According to Cavana et al. (2001), distributing questionnaires to the available respondents is the best method of collecting information faster and efficiently. This

method was justified by (Astuti & Martdianty, 2012; Davey et al., 2011; Malebana, 2014; Nadanamoorthy, 2013; Samuel et al., 2013; Uddin & Bose, 2012).

### **3.4 Data Analysis Techniques**

The study data was in quantitative form. Thus, after the collection of data, analysis of the data was conducted using the quantitative analysis techniques. The SPSS version 20 software package was used for this purpose.

Descriptive analysis was run to have an insight of the data like the percentages, mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. This will give more description of the respondents profile and background.

Inferential statistics were finally utilized to draw conclusions on the results by either rejecting or failing to reject the study hypothesis. The level of significance is 0.05 as it is usually used in social science researches.

### **3.5 Operational Definitions**

**Entrepreneurship:** entrepreneurship is the practice of starting a new business setting in response to identified opportunities (Uddin & Bose, 2012). It is, therefore, the process of identifying opportunities and taking advantage of the opportunities by creating a new business venture.

**Entrepreneur:** a person who identifies and utilizes opportunities, or the person who create a new business venture.

**Entrepreneurial Behaviour:** Venture Creation or the establishment of a new business (Thompson, 2009).

**Entrepreneurial Intention:** entrepreneurial intention is the propensity or proclivity to establish a new business (Uddin & Bose, 2012). Entrepreneurial intention is the conscious conviction that a person intends to invent a new venture and planning for that in the future time (Thompson, 2009).

**Attitudes:** the degree to which an individual has a favourable or an unfavourable assessment of (the behaviour in question) entrepreneurial behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Attitudes are the degree to which people perceive the allurements or attractiveness of setting a new enterprise (Bakotic & Kruzic, 2010). It is the extent to which an individual has a favourable appraisal of entrepreneurial behaviour (Autio et al., 2001).

**Subjective Norms:** the perceived social pressure to perform an entrepreneurial behaviour (Autio et al., 2001), or not to perform it (Ajzen, 1991). They are also the perceived social pressure to execute a new business venture; they measure social support of entrepreneurial behaviour through family background, role models and peers (Bakotic & Kruzic 2010). Thus, the constructs for this study were patterned to reflect the perceived social pressures to entrepreneurship of the respondent.

**Perceived Behavioural Control:** is the degree of the perceived ease of performing an entrepreneurial behaviour and control over it (Autio et al., 2001). It also includes not only the perceived ease to perform, but the perceived difficulty not to perform an entrepreneurial behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavioural control measures the sense of ease or hardship for becoming an entrepreneur (Linan et al., 2013). It is, in short, the perception of an individual that entrepreneurial actions or behaviour are within his personal competence.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSES AND FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter will show the findings for the result of this study by starting with the descriptive analysis for the demographic or personal background of the respondents, result of the reliability analysis for the measurement scales of attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intentions, results of correlation analysis for the independent and the dependent variables, results of regression analysis which will show how the antecedents of TPB can predict or determine the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates, summary of hypotheses testing and chapter conclusion.

#### **4.2 Findings**

The profile of the respondents, the goodness of measures, the issue of avoiding multicollinearity and the description of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables will be depicted here. Thus, this study revealed the following findings:

##### **4.2.1 Descriptive Analysis**

In a population of 240 postgraduate candidates, 190 questionnaires have been distributed and 156 of these questionnaires were returned indicating a response rate of 82%. The 156 respondents represent exactly 65% of the population and have fulfilled the requirements of a representative sample of the population, which was calculated to be not less than 148 of the 240 candidates by Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

The descriptive analysis was utilized to analyze the profile of the respondents. This includes gender, age, college of study, programme of study, semester of study, work experience, ownership of self-business, family members that run a business, and role model. The result as shown in Table 4.1 consists of 150 males (96.2%), 6 females (3.8%). For the whole respondents, 98 (62.8%) are between the ages of 20-35 years, 54 (34.6%) are between the ages of 36-45 years, 4 (2.6%) are 46 years and above. COB/OYAGSB has 109 (69.9%), COLGIS has 20 (12.8%) and CAS has 27 (17.3%). The respondents that study Masters are 50 (32.1%), PhD 106 (67.9%) and zero for DBA. Those in the first semester are 28 (17.9%), second semester has 45 (28.8%), third semester has 47 (30.1%), fourth semester has 17 (10.9%), fifth semester has 17 (10.9%) and the sixth semester has 2 (1.3%). The respondents that have work experience are 150 (96.2%) and those that have no work experience are 6 (3.8%). Those who have ever owned a business are 111 (71.2%) and those that do not are 45 (28.8%). Those whose family members run a business are 140 (89.7%) and those that do not are 16 (10.3%). The respondents that have a role model of self-business are 122 (78.2%) those that have no role model are 34 (21.8%).

**Table 4.1***Descriptive results for the respondent's profile*

<b>S/No</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Frequency (N=156)</b>	<b>Percentages (%)</b>
<b>1.</b>	Gender		
	Male	150	96.2
	Female	6	3.8
<b>2.</b>	Age		
	20-35	98	62.8
	36-45	54	34.6
	46 and above	4	2.6
<b>3.</b>	College of study		
	COB/OYAGSB	109	69.9
	COLGIS	20	12.8
	CAS	27	17.3
<b>4.</b>	Program of study		
	Masters	50	32.1
	PhD	106	67.9
	DBA	0	0
<b>5.</b>	Semester of study		
	1	28	17.9
	2	45	28.8
	3	47	30.1
	4	17	10.9
	5	17	10.9
	6	2	1.3
<b>6.</b>	Work experience		
	Yes	150	96.2
	No	6	3.8
<b>7.</b>	Ownership of self-business		
	Yes	111	71.2
	No	45	28.8
<b>8.</b>	Family members that run a business		
	Yes	140	89.7
	No	16	10.3
<b>9.</b>	Role model		
	Yes	122	78.2
	No	34	21.8

The descriptive statistics were also utilized to measure the mean and standard deviations of the study variables as depicted in table 4.2 below:

**Table 4.2**  
*Descriptive results for the study variables*

S/No	Variables	Mean	Standard deviation
1.	Attitude	5.88	1.061
2.	Subjective Norms	5.50	1.095
3.	Perceived Behavioral Control	5.40	0.938
4.	Entrepreneurial Intention	5.74	1.037

From the table above, attitude has a mean of 5.88 and standard deviation of 1.061, subjective norm has a mean of 5.50 and standard deviation of 1.095, perceived behavioural control has a mean of 5.40 and standard deviation of 0.938 while Entrepreneurial intention has a mean of 5.74 and standard deviation of 1.037.

#### **4.2.2 Reliability Analysis**

The reliability of a measure reveals the extent to which the measure is error free, and depicts the consistency, stability and goodness of the measure. The most widely used method for testing the reliability of a measure is the Cronbach Alpha coefficient (Cavana et al., 2001). In this study, all the values of the Cronbach Alpha are greater than 0.80, which means that the instruments that have been used are consistent for the purpose of this study; this is in line with the arguments of Sekaran, (2003) that if the Cronbach alpha is closer to 1 then the internal consistency is greater. The results of the reliability analysis are shown in table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3**

*Cronbach alpha values for Attitude, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioural Control and Entrepreneurial Intentions*

S/No	Variables	Items	Cronbach alpha Values
1.	Attitude	5	.883
2.	Subjective Norms	3	.845
3.	Perceived Behavioral Control	7	.864
4.	Entrepreneurial Intention	6	.861

#### **4.2.3 Correlation Analysis**

To ascertain the direction and strength of the relationship between the variables of this study, the Pearson correlation was utilized. This will help to understand whether there is a threat of multicollinearity or not. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) the issue of multicollinearity arises when the relationship between the independent variables is up to 0.9 and beyond. Multicollinearity will make the analysis weaker; this is because the interrelationship between two or more variables will grow the size of error terms as the interrelated variables will contain unnecessary information (Maiyaki & Moktar, 2011). The solution for multicollinearity issue is to delete the interrelated variable (Gorondutse & Hilman, 2014).

The Pearson Correlation analysis is depicted in Table 4.4 below:

**Table 4.4***Correlation between the study variables*

S/No	Variables	1	2	3	4
1.	ATT	1			
2.	SN	.607**	1		
3.	PBC	.707**	.519**	1	
4.	EIN	.789**	.581**	.743**	1

\*\*p<0.001 (1-tailed); ATT= Attitude, SN= Subjective Norms, PBC= Perceived Behavioural Control, EIN= Entrepreneurial Intentions

From the above table it can be seen that none of the variables is up to 0.9 thus, there is no any threat of multicollinearity in consideration to the arguments of Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) and Hair et al., (2010).

Another method for screening the multicollinearity issue is the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and the tolerance level, which can be conducted through Regression analysis in the SPSS (Gorndutse & Hilman 2014). According to Hair et al. (2010), the tolerance value must not exceed 0.10 while the VIF value must not go beyond 10. When the VIF is less than 10 the result is good enough (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Table 4.5 will show the VIF and the tolerance value for each of the independent variables.

**Table 4.5***VIF and Tolerance Values for Multicollinearity test*

S/No	Variables	Tolerance values	VIF
1.	Attitude	.421	2.374
2.	Subjective Norms	.615	1.625
3.	Perceived Behavioral Control	.487	2.052

Table 4.5 shows no threat of multicollinearity because the VIF for all the independent variables are less than 10 and the tolerance values are also more than 0.10.

#### **4.2.4 Regression Analysis**

The result of the regression analysis depicts the proportion to which attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control can predict the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM. It shows that the R square ( $R^2$ ) was 0.699 which is approximately 0.7 while the F value was 117.446. Thus, we can say that attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control can predict 69.9% or approximately 70% of the variance in entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM.

It can be seen in table 4.6 below that attitude has a significant positive relationship with the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM ( $\beta = .475$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). On the other hand, subjective norms have an insignificant relationship with the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM ( $\beta = .112$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). But the Perceived behavioural control has ( $\beta = .349$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) indicating a significant positive relationship with the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM.

**Table 4.6**

*Regression analysis of the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate candidates in relation to attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Beta (Standardized)</b>	<b>t value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
(Constant)		1.143	2.55
Attitude	.475	6.919	.000**
Subjective norms	.112	1.967	.051
Perceived behavioural control	.349	5.468	.000**

Note that \*\*p <.001 and  $R^2 = .699$ ,  $F = 117.446$  ( $p < 0.001$ ). Entrepreneurial Intention = Dependent Variable.

### **4.3 Summary of Hypotheses Testing**

The hypotheses for this study are:

**H01** - There is a significant positive relationship between attitudes and entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate students studying in UUM.

**H02** - There is a significant positive relationship between subjective norms and the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate students studying in UUM.

**H03** - There is a significant positive relationship between perceived behavioural control and the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate students that study in UUM.

**H04** – Perceived behavioural control is the strongest predictor of the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM.

Thus, with respect to the results of the regression analysis in table 4.6 the summary of the hypothesis testing is depicted in the table 4.7 below:



**Table 4.7***Summary of Hypotheses Testing*

Hypotheses	Statement of the hypothesis	Accept or Reject Hypotheses
<b>H01</b>	There is a significant positive relationship between attitudes and entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate students studying in UUM Malaysia.	Accepted
<b>H02</b>	Subjective Norms  There is a significant positive relationship between subjective norms and the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate students studying in UUM Malaysia	Rejected
<b>H03</b>	There is a significant positive relationship between perceived behavioural control and the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate students that study in UUM.	Accepted
<b>H04</b>	Perceived behavioural control is the strongest predictor of the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM.	Rejected

From table 4.7 above, it can be seen that attitude and perceived behavioural control has a positively significant influence on the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM but the subjective norm is insignificant. However, the attitude ( $\beta = 0.475$ ) has the strongest influence on entrepreneurial intention compared to perceived behavioural control ( $\beta = 0.349$ ) thus, rejecting the fourth hypothesis which states that perceived behavioural control has the strongest influence on the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter revealed the study findings using descriptive, reliability, correlation, and regression analysis. It was found that the three independent variables could jointly predict the entrepreneurial intentions for the Nigerian Postgraduate candidates of UUM with a total variance of approximately 70%. Two of the four hypotheses were accepted while the other two were rejected.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In this last chapter of the study, findings from the previous chapter are discussed. The contributions and limitations of the study are also discussed, conclusion and recommendations finalize the study.

#### **5.2 Discussion**

The purpose of this study is to examine the factors that influence the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate candidates in UUM by using Ajzen's (1991) TPB model. The result of the multiple regression shows that the  $R^2 = .699$  meaning that the three independent variables in this study are explaining 69.9% or approximately 70% of the variance in the entrepreneurial intentions of the Nigerian postgraduate candidates of UUM while 30.1% of the remaining variance to entrepreneurial intentions is determined by other factors. This finding is supportive to the past studies that applied the TPB as a valuable model in determining entrepreneurial intentions of different groups (Souitaris et al., 2007; Engle et al., 2010; Mueller, 2011; Angriawan et al., 2012; Otuya et al., 2013).

The  $R^2$  or predictive variance that was found in this study was very high, satisfactory and sufficient compared to previous studies like Krueger et al., (2000) which found 35% variance on intention; Malebana, (2014) 49% variance on intention; Kautonen et al., (2012) 41% variance on intention; Ogundipe et al., (2012) 31.5% variance on intention; Linan and Chen, (2009) 57.9% and 57.8% variance on intention for the Taiwanese and Spanish samples respectively and 55.5% variance on

intention for the combined sample; Sahindis et al., (2012) 56% variance in intention; Angriawan et al., (2012) 58.9% variance on intention; Otuya et al., (2013) 41.1% variance in intention; Iakovleva et al., (2011) 65% variance in intention for the combined data; 59% for the developed and 62% variance in intention for the developing countries data; Mueller (2011) 61% variance in intention; and Souitaris et al., (2007) 35% variance in intention.

For the three independent variables, attitude and perceived behavioural control are found to be positively significant in predicting the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate candidates while the subjective norm is not (please refer to table 4.6 page 63 for the regression results). The second and fourth hypotheses of the study are therefore rejected while the first and third are accepted (please refer also to table 4.6 page 63 for the regression results).

The result shows that attitude is a positive significant predictor of the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate candidates. This result corroborates the findings of Iakovleva et al., (2011) on the entrepreneurial intention of students from developed and developing countries; Krueger et al. (2001) on a United States university student sample; Angriawan et al. (2012) in Indiana State of the United States on potential equine entrepreneurs; Autio et al. (2001) on university students in Scandinavia and the United States.

In Europe the findings of significant positive attitude corroborates the work of Kuttim et al., (2014) on a sample of students in 17 efficiency and innovation driven European countries; Linan and Chen, (2009) on the entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish and Taiwanese student; Linan et al. (2011) on the entrepreneurial intentions of the final year Spanish university students; Linan et al. (2013) on the

entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish and British university undergraduate students; Zampetakis et al. (2013) on agricultural students of Greece in the Agricultural University of Athens; Sahindis et al. (2012) in a survey of Business Administration students in Athens of Greece; Souitaris et al. (2007) on Science and Engineering university students in UK (London) and France; Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006) on Norwegian owners of new businesses; Kautonen et al. (2012) on a sample of the working age population in Western Finland; Mueller, (2011) on a sample of university students in Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland; Luthje and Franke, (2004) on a sample of students in German speaking universities and one American university.

In Africa the findings of positively significant attitude corroborate the findings of Malebana, (2014) in a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students in South Africa; Otuya et al. (2013) on the sample of university students in Kenya.

In Asia the findings of positively significant attitude is congruence to findings of AbdulKadir et al., (2012) on Diploma students of Kolej Professional MARA, Malaysia; Astuti and Martdianty, (2012) on the entrepreneurial intentions of Indonesian students in three out of the six (3 out of the 6) Indonesian universities studied.

Contrarily, Ogundipe et al. (2012) found a weak positive, but significant relationship between attitudes on entrepreneurial intentions on a Nigerian university undergraduate sample of Business education and Career Counselling departments.

This study also further revealed that attitude is the strongest and important predictor of the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate candidates. This

is also in line with findings of other studies that attitude is the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial intentions. Among these findings are; Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006); Sahindis et al. (2012); Malebana (2014); Iakovleva et al. (2011); Linan et al. (2013); Kuttim et al. (2014); Linan and Chen (2009); Kautonen et al. (2012); Miralles et al. (2012).

The findings of this study rejected the assertion that subjective norms are related to the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate candidates in UUM. Thus, subjective norms are found to have an insignificant effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduates. This finding also corroborates that of Krueger et al. (2000); Autio et al. (2001) on the study of the entrepreneurial intentions for university students in the London Business School sample; Fini, Grimaldi, Marzocchi and Sobrero (2009); Sommer and Haug (2011); as well as Paco, Fereirra, Raposo, Rodrigues and Dinis (2011).

However, the results of the insignificant effect of the subjective norms on the entrepreneurial intentions is contrary to the findings of Angriawan et al. (2012); Ogundipe et al. (2012); Engle et al. (2010); Iakovleva et al. (2011); Mueller (2011); Malebana (2014); Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006); Kautonen et al. (2012); Otuya et al. (2013); and Souitaris et al. (2007) whom finds a significant positive relation between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intentions.

The significant positive influence of the perceived behavioural control to entrepreneurial intention was supported by this study. This, however, is congruent with the findings of researchers in Africa, for instance, Ekpe and Mat, (2013) on the entrepreneurial intention of female university undergraduate students in Nigeria; Ayodele, (2013) in a study of adolescent entrepreneurial intention in Ogun State of

Nigeria; Ogundipe et al. (2012) in the entrepreneurial intention of graduating students of Business education and the graduating students of Guidance and Counselling in Nigeria; Owoseni, (2014) on the entrepreneurial intentions of students of a private university in Nigeria; Nwankwo et al. (2012) on the entrepreneurial intentions of university undergraduates at the Enugu State University of Science and Technology in Nigeria; Malebana (2014) on the entrepreneurial intentions of rural university students in South Africa; Otuya et al. (2013) on the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in Kenya.

In Asia, perceived behavioural control is also found positive and significant by many, for example; AbdulKadir et al. (2012) on the entrepreneurial intentions of Malaysian Diploma students in Kolej Professional MARA; Indarti et al. (2010) on the entrepreneurial intentions of Asian university undergraduate students; Hunjra et al. (2011) in a study of the entrepreneurial intention of university students in Islamabad and Rawalpindi of Pakistan; Astuti and Martdianty (2012) in a study of undergraduate students entrepreneurial intention in Indonesia in four out of the six universities studied.

In Europe, the findings of the perceived behavioural control are also similar to this study in the work of; Kuttim et al. (2014) on the entrepreneurial intentions of students in 17 efficiency and innovation driven countries of Europe; Sesen (2013) in predicting the entrepreneurial intentions of Turkish University students; Iakovleva et al. (2011) in predicting the entrepreneurial intention of students in five developed and eight developing countries; Linan and Chen, (2009) in the entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish and Taiwanese student samples; Linan et al. (2011) on final year Spanish university students; Linan et al. (2013) in Spanish and British university undergraduate students; Vidal-Sune and Lopez-Panisello (2013) in the

entrepreneurial intentions of Spanish regions; Zampetakis et al. (2013) in a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of agriculture students in Greece; Sahindis et al. (2012) in a survey of Business Administration students in Athens of Greece; Kautonen et al. (2012) on the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviour of the working age population in Western Finland; Mueller, (2011) in a sample that include universities in Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland; Souitaris et al. (2007) in a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of Science and Engineering university students in UK (London) and France; Autio et al. (2001) in the London Business School sample.

In the United States, similar findings of the significant positive influence of the perceived behavioural control include; Angriawan et al. (2012) in a study of the entrepreneurial intentions of potential equine entrepreneurs in Indian of the United States, and Krueger et al. (2000) in a study of the entrepreneurial intention of university students.

Contrary to the findings of this study, Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006) reveal that the perceived behavioural control is insignificant to the entrepreneurial intentions of Norwegian owners of new businesses start-up.

The fourth and final hypothesis which state that the perceived behavioural control is the strongest predictor of the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate candidates is rejected. This because, attitude ( $\beta = .475$ ) is found to be the strongest determinant of the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduate candidates in this study while the perceived behavioural control ( $\beta = .349$ ) is the second.

In contrary to the findings of the fourth hypothesis, Iakovleva et al. (2011) finds that students from the developing countries have a higher perceived



behavioural control than those of the developed countries. Moreover, Angriawan et al. (2012); Autio et al. (2001); Krueger et al. (2000); and Otuya et al. (2013) reveal that the perceived behavioural control is the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial intention, which is contrary to the findings of this study.

### **5.3 Contribution of the Study**

The implication of this study is for both academicians in the field of entrepreneurship and non-academicians such as government and related institutions. This is because the findings will guide and facilitate government plans and decisions towards entrepreneurship while academicians will have more insight on the direction of the entrepreneurial intention of the postgraduate candidates, which is relatively lacking.

The academic contribution of this study includes the confirmation of the applicability of TPB in the context of Nigerian postgraduates, and the observation of some differences between the factors that influence the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerian postgraduates and that of the Nigerian undergraduates as well as the capacity of those factors in influencing the entrepreneurial intention to each of them. For instance, Ogundipe et al. (2012), finds that the perceived behavioural control is the strongest predictor of the entrepreneurial intentions of some Nigerian undergraduate student groups, but in contrary, this current study reveals that the strongest predictor of the entrepreneurial intention of Nigerian postgraduate candidates is the attitude. Additionally, the antecedents of TPB model are found more predictive to the entrepreneurial intentions of the postgraduates at 69.9% variance in intention compared to the 31.5% variance on intention that was found by Ogundipe et al. (2012).

Another contribution is the revelation of the factors that need to be considered to enhance the entrepreneurial intention of the Nigerian postgraduate candidates. The results indicated that the Nigerian postgraduate candidates are more inclined to entrepreneurship through attitudes and perceived behavioural control. Thus, the Nigerian government can tap and benefit from the skills and knowledge of its postgraduates by supporting them in creating new businesses. The result also indicated that the Nigerian postgraduates should be given proper consideration in the existing entrepreneurship incentive programmes.

The contributions of this study are also beneficial to the universities and other entrepreneurship training institutions as they can use the findings of this study to design or redesign their education and training curriculum to suit different groups of Nigerian students (undergraduates and postgraduates).

#### **5.4 Limitations and further Studies**

This study is limited to the Nigerian postgraduate candidates in UUM alone. Thus, there is a need for replicating the studies on other Nigerian postgraduate candidates in a different university. Another, limitation is the relatively higher number of male respondents and the higher number of PhD candidates in relation to that of the female and the Master candidates, therefore, further studies should try to seek for a balance so that a comparison can be made between both of them. Studying the PhD candidates alone will be another good area for further research, and this is due to the limited consideration of this group in the studies of entrepreneurial intention.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The TPB model is used to examine the entrepreneurial intentions of Nigerians that are at the highest level of academia (postgraduates), the study results reveal that Nigerian postgraduates are interested in entrepreneurial activities, and this intention can strongly be influenced and improved through their attitude and perceived behaviour control. The attitude is found to be the strongest predictor of their entrepreneurial intention followed by the perceived behavioural control. However, the subjective norm was found to have no significant influence on the entrepreneurial intention of the Nigerian postgraduate candidates.

The implication of this study is for government, academicians and the postgraduates themselves. Therefore, government, universities and other related institutions are recommended to redesign their efforts in developing the entrepreneurship with reference to the findings of this study. However, Nigerian postgraduate candidates are advised to make the best use of their attitude and perceived behaviour control to engage in to entrepreneurship. Academicians are also recommended to build upon this study by replicating it in other universities, comparing the findings with that of the previous studies, and to specifically examine the entrepreneurial intention of PhD candidates to fill the future study gap.

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