



Research Paper

## Political Skill and Entrepreneurial Intention Of Fresh Graduates In Nigeria

James Tersoo TSETIM<sup>1</sup>, Ochanya Blessing ADEGBE<sup>2</sup>, and Yaro Fatima ANTHONY<sup>3</sup>

1. Department of Business Administration, College of Management Sciences, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria.

2. Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria.

3.. SIWES Unit. Federal College of Education Gone, Nigeria.

**ABSTRACT:** This study sought to examine the relationship between political skill and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria. The specific objectives were to examine the relationship between networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria. The study which adopted the survey design was guided by Entrepreneurial Event Theory by Shapero and Sokol (1982) and the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991). The study targeted 1350 corps members of the 2021 Batch "A" compulsory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) during their orientation at the Wannune Orientation Camp in Benue State. A sample size of 400 was adopted using Taro Yamene's sampling formula. Then 40 corps members were randomly sampled from each of the 10 platoons. The questionnaire was used to gather primary data from the respondents. In order to cover up for perceived errors, 420 questionnaires were issued out to the respondents with the aid of the platoon commanders. Upon retrieval, the researchers were able to get 400 valid questionnaires to analyze. Multiple regression analysis was used to measure the extent of effect of independent variables on the dependent variable while Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the four hypotheses. The result of multiple regression analysis revealed that interpersonal influence is the most influential determinant of entrepreneurial intention of fresh graduates, followed by networking ability, apparent sincerity and finally social astuteness. While findings from Pearson correlation analysis revealed that networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness are all significantly related to entrepreneurial intention. The study therefore concludes that the possession of networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness will result in high entrepreneurial intention in fresh graduates in Nigeria. This clearly shows that when fresh graduates perceive that they possess these skills, there is the generation of strong feeling of aspiration to start a business or a desire to engage in entrepreneurship as a career choice. Since political skill is a set of improvable abilities, it is recommended that Nigerian fresh graduates should be committed to trainings for developing political skills. The study also enjoined graduating institutions to inculcate political skill training programs into entrepreneurship education programs.

**KEYWORDS:** Networking Ability, Interpersonal Influence, Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Entrepreneurial Intention, Attitude towards Behavior, Perceived Behavioral Control, Perceived Venture Feasibility, Subjective Norms and Fresh Graduates.

Received 25 May, 2021; Revised: 06 June, 2021; Accepted 08 June, 2021 © The author(s) 2021.  
Published with open access at [www.questjournals.org](http://www.questjournals.org)

### I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the economic realities of many nations with experiences of economic hardship, unemployment and poverty in recent time have made the role of entrepreneurs more recognized and the need for entrepreneurship development has been very greatly emphasized in all nations, particularly, in the developing countries (Abubakar, 2010 as cited in Asenge, Diaka & Tsetim, 2017). In response to the trend, the Nigerian government has over the years developed different programmes and schemes aimed at triggering entrepreneurial intentions in young Nigerians. These programmes and schemes include National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS), National Poverty Eradication

Programme (NAPEP), Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)(Agbim, Orareiwio & Owocho, 2013). However, the negative attitude of graduates towards self-employment appears not to have changed and graduate self-employment continues to decline while graduate unemployment keeps rising (Diaka & Tsetim 2018).

Further efforts by the government of Nigeria to harness the entrepreneurial intention in young Nigerians saw the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) making it mandatory that all tertiary institutions in Nigeria now have modules in entrepreneurship as part of their course structure irrespective of the students' course of study. To further push the entrepreneurial intention in graduates, the government put in place mandatory Entrepreneurship Training for graduates during the National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) programme (Ihugba *et al.*, 2013). The training during this period is focused on skills acquisition and the revolutionizing of their mind-set to embrace self-employment and to shield them from the menace of unemployment after the one year service (Abdullahi & Zainol, 2017).The foregoing initiatives come out of government's efforts at reducing graduate unemployment in the country by triggering entrepreneurial intentions in Nigerian graduates by making them see self-employment as an alternative to wage employment.

However, borrowing a cue from the theory of planned behavior, the intention to become an entrepreneur will depend on a graduate's personal attitude, their perceived control over the firm-creation behavior, and the perceived social pressure to become (or not) an entrepreneur (Ajzen 1991 as cited in Liñán, 2008). Similarly, personal skills are also found to have an effect on entrepreneurial intention (Chen *et al.* 1998 as cited in Liñán, 2008). Thus, an individual who holds the trust that he/she possesses a higher level of some skills is likely to feel he/she can create a firm. Such skills include entrepreneurial skill, emotional intelligence skill, political skill and networking skill. This study will however dwell on the effect of political skill on entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduate in Nigeria. This study is divided into 6 main sections: the first being introduction which encompasses background to the study, objectives and hypotheses of the study is followed by theoretical/conceptual framework. The third discusses the methodology employed in carrying out the research. Result and findings is fourth while practical implications is fifth then conclusion, implication and recommendations come last.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study seeks to examine the relationship between political skill and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria. In specific terms, the study pursues the following objectives:

- i. To examine the relationship between networking ability and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.
- ii. To examine the relationship between interpersonal influence and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.
- iii. To examine the relationship between apparent sincerity and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.
- iv. To examine the relationship between social astuteness and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

## **II. THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Two theories sufficiently attempt an explanation of this phenomenon; The Entrepreneurial Event Theory by Shapero and Sokol (1982) and the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991). The Entrepreneurial Event Theory focuses on the phenomenon of the entrepreneurial event, which is affected by perceptions of desirability (individual value system and social system that the individual is part of) and feasibility (financial support and would-be partners). These perceptions are the product of cultural and social environments and they determine personal choice (Shapero & Sokol 1982). This model was used or adapted empirically by Krueger *et al.* (2000) and also by Peterman and Kennedy (2003) and others.

The theory of planned behaviour by (Ajzen, 1991) states that intentions are the immediate antecedent of behaviour. That intentions to act are determined by three variables: attitude toward the specific behaviour (only specific attitudes toward the behaviour can be expected to predict that behaviour); subjective norms (beliefs about how people, the decision-maker cares about, will view the behaviour in question); and perceived behavioural control (which refers to people's perceptions of their ability to perform a given behaviour) (Ajzen, 2012). In combination, attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norm, and perception of behavioural control lead to the formation of a behavioural intention (Ajzen, 2002). From this point of view, (Liñán, 2008) revealed that both theories overlap in two elements: Shapero's construct of perceived venture desirability is equivalent to Ajzen's determinants of attitude towards the behavior (personal attraction) and subjective norms; and perceived venture feasibility proposed by Shapero is similar to Ajzen's perceived behavioral control (Krueger and Brazeal 1994) or to the idea of perceived self-efficacy (Bandura 1997).

### **Political Skill**

Political skill is the positioning or the social astuteness that encompass high purposive attempts to influence individuals at a personal level (Huang, 2017). Political skill represents social perceptiveness and the ability to adjust an individual's behavior to different and changing situational needs in order to influence others (Chelagat & Korir, 2017). Politically skilled individuals possess a sense of belonging which helps to improve business performance, personal commitment and motivation (Sharma & Hussain, 2013). As such, politically skilled individuals combine social astuteness with the capacity to adjust their behavior to different and changing situational demands in a manner that appears to be sincere, inspires support and trust, and effectively influences and controls the responses of others in a manner that is beneficial to them. Davis & Peake (2014) proposed that developing political skill of undergraduate students may benefit those students who are considering entry into the entrepreneurial process.

Ferris *et al.*, (2005) contended that there were four dimensions that adequately represented the underlying structure of the political skill construct. These are: networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness.

**Networking ability** is defined as the ability of entering easily into a new environment, making new friends, and building partnerships in order to achieve individual and organizational goals (Ferris *et al.*, 2005 in Konakli (2016). Individuals with strong political skills are adept at using diverse networks of people by easily developing friendships and building strong and beneficial alliances and coalitions (Chatterjee & Krishnan, 2007). Further contributing to their interpersonal acumen, individuals in possession of political skill are adept at developing, maintaining, and bridging important social connections; additionally, they are calculating and purposeful networkers with a knack for conflict negotiation (Wihler *et al.*, 2015).

**Interpersonal influence** is about the manager's seeing the details in cases that cannot be noticed easily by everyone and his/her strong ability to persuade (Ferris *et al.*, 2005 in Konakli (2016). Politically skilled individuals demonstrate a sophisticated yet subtle and effective communication style that allows them to accurately determine and subsequently display the most situationally effective behaviors (Ferris *et al.*, 2009). They have a strong and convincing personal style that tends to exert a powerful influence on those around them (Chatterjee & Krishnan, 2007).

**Apparent sincerity** dimension refers to perception as honest, sincere, and reliable by individuals. Those with this ability demonstrate effective listening skills (Ferris *et al.*, 2005 in Konakli (2016). Politically skilled individuals are able to present themselves as genuine, trustworthy, and well-intentioned (Wihler *et al.*, 2015). Tactics of politically skilled individuals are seen as subtle and their motives do not appear self-serving. They appear to others to be congruent, sincere, and genuine (Chatterjee & Krishnan, 2007).

**Social astuteness** is about observing the employees' behavior and interpreting it successfully (Ferris *et al.*, 2005 in Konakli (2016). Those high in this skill are keenly aware of their own and others' motivations, are sensitive to the needs of others, and are skilled at interpreting the complexities of the social environment and those within it (Wihler *et al.*, 2015). Individuals possessing political skill are astute observers of others and keenly attuned to diverse social situations and are prone to risk taking (Ferris *et al.*, 2007).

### **Entrepreneurial Intentions**

Entrepreneurial intentions refer to tendencies to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour (Ajzen, 2012). Entrepreneurial intent is most concisely defined as a self-acknowledged conviction by an individual about themselves, that they intend to set up a new business venture and consciously plan to do so at a particular point in the future (Thompson, 2009 as cited in Ebewo, Shambare, & Rugimbana, 2017). Peng, Lu and Kang (2012) define the entrepreneurial intention as a mental orientation such as desire, wish and hope influencing their choice of entrepreneurship. It is also seen as the growing conscious state of mind that a person desires to start a new enterprise or create new core value in existing organization (Remeikiene & Startiene (2013).

While the vast majority of existing measures of entrepreneurial intent are in fact reflective, and many use continuous variables, several use categorical measures. Bulk of categorical measures previously propounded in the literature reflect significant heterogeneity, confounding comparability of findings. Researchers in measuring entrepreneurial intention relied on whether or not individuals have membership in a chamber of commerce or an association of aspiring entrepreneurs (Brandstätter, 1997), to some it is about whether or not they have attended a business startup information day (Korunka *et al.*, 2003), and an individuals who consulted small business development centers (Chrisman, 1999). To some it is observed in whether have ever thought of starting a business (Rajman, (2001) and whether or not subjects have any intention to found a business venture (Lee & Wong, 2004; Lee, *et al.* 2004). Though these measures are neat and clear, they have a tendency to oversimplify the distinction between those who do and do not possess entrepreneurial intention (Thompson, 2009).

Another set of entrepreneurial intent scholars argued for the use of continuous measures in studies of entrepreneurial intent (Krueger *et al.* 2000; Mueller & Thomas, 2001; Schmitt-Rodermund & Vondracek (2002). However, they fully recognize and acknowledge the lapses of reliability and validity of their single-item

measure and suggest that for improved design in entrepreneurship research, it might be valuable if future studies would employ multiple-item measures of key constructs to reduce measurement error (Thompson, 2009). To this end this study adopts the multiple scale measure reconciling Davidsson (1995) 3-item scale used by Kennedy *et al.* (2003) and the Audet (2004) 2-item scale, though with obvious modifications to the original wordings, both for items and interval measures.

### **Political Skill and Entrepreneurial Intentions**

Politically skilled individuals enjoy a sense of personal security that allows them to perceive control over the processes and outcomes of interpersonal interactions within organizations (Chelagat & Korir, 2017). Politically skilled individuals enjoy a favorable social identity and hence earn significant and tangible benefits such as gaining favorable reactions to their ideas, enhanced access to important information, and increased cooperation and trust (Baron & Markman, 2000). Ferris, *et al* (2007) found that people with strong political skills viewed interpersonal interactions as opportunities rather than threats. Political skills helped deal with ambiguity and turbulence. Individuals who are high in political skill exude self-confidence in a manner that conveys a strong sense of security and clarity. Such calm, self-confidence draws others toward the highly politically skilled individual and provides those that are drawn in a sense of comfort and security (Ferris *et al.*, 2005). This skill makes the individual recognize that they should not back away from wanting to start a business because they can convince others to invest in the form of committed financing or purchased products (Davis & Peak, 2014). That is to say the ability to skillfully influence others in a sincere manner (apparent sincerity) gives the entrepreneur confidence in his or her ability to act upon the intentions of creating a new business.

When considering an entrepreneurial opportunity, political skill is the “when” (choice of timing), “where” (best environment to achieve desired results) and “how” (means of influencing) of the consideration (Ferris *et al.*, 2005). From this perspective, individuals who may have low knowledge of how to start and manage businesses maybe because their area of study is not business related may exhibit low intentions to start a business, because they cannot envision themselves understanding who their customers are or what they may want (Davis & Peak, 2014). On the other hand, individuals who possess high political skill can understand how and where to make the sale, which may compensate for not fully understanding who they will sell to or what they may sell (Blickle, Oerder & Summers, 2010). An individual will be better equipped to influence another individual (investor or employee) than someone who does not possess these. Knowledge of this ability will influence an individual’s entrepreneurial intent because the individual is aware of his or her ability to influence others (Sharma & Hussain, 2013). Since the process of launching a firm requires a combination of skill, motivation, and confidence to succeed, individuals lacking such confidence are not likely to be motivated to influence others that they are capable of starting and running a business (Davis & Peak, 2014). Thus the proposed the following hypotheses:

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between networking ability and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between interpersonal influence and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

**H0<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between apparent sincerity and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

**H0<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between social astuteness and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

The study used a survey design. The study targeted 1350 corps members of the 2021 Batch “A” compulsory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) during their orientation at the Wannun Camp in Benue State. The choice of this group is guided by the fact that these graduates are actually fresh and are just at the verge of being certified to enter the labour market. This choice is also informed by the reality that every NYSC orientation camp in Nigeria has virtually graduates from every state of the Federation and from every graduating institution in Nigeria. Suffice to say that collecting data from this source gets a fair cut across the whole nation. A sample size of 400 was adopted using Taro Yamene’s sampling formula. Then 40 corps members were randomly sampled from each of the 10 platoons. The questionnaire was used to gather primary data from the respondents. In order to cover up for perceived errors, 420 questionnaires were issued out to the respondents with the aid of the platoon commanders. Upon retrieval, the researchers were able to get 400 valid questionnaires to analyze.

### **Measurement of Variables**

To measure the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intentions of corps members), the modified version of Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) developed by Liñán and Chen (2009) is used in this study. The instrument has 20 relevant items that measure the four central constructs of Entrepreneurial Intention (attitude towards the behavior, perceived behavioral control, perceived venture feasibility and subjective norms) as prescribed in Entrepreneurial Event Theory by Shapero and Sokol (1982) and the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991). The entrepreneurial intent questions consisted of items that assessed an individual's aspiration to start a business or an individual's desire to engage in entrepreneurship as a career choice. We used a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) and the Cronbach's alpha is 0.88.

To measure the independent variable of the study (political skill of corps members), the Political Skill Inventory (PSI) developed by Ferris *et al.* (2005) was adopted. The 18-item scale represents the following four dimensions of political skill: networking ability, interpersonal influence, social astuteness, and apparent sincerity. To be in keeping with the other operationalized measures, we used a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) to measure political skill. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.91.

**Data Analysis Techniques**

Quantitative data collected is analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques; frequencies, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics such as multiple regression and Pearson correlation are used to test the four hypotheses and to show the relationships that exist between the variables.

**IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

**Table 1: Regression model**

R	R Square			Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate	
.796	.634			.630	3.8777	
<b>ANOVA</b>						
Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
Regression	7360.350	4	2453.450	163.165	.000	Sig.
Residual	4255.351	395	15.037			
Total	11615.707	399				

Source: Researcher's Computations, 2021.

Table 1 shows a simple linear regression of the joint contribution of the four independent variables (networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness) to the prediction of the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intention). The model summary in Table 1 reveals a coefficient of multiple correlation ( $R = .796$ , multiple  $R^2 = .634$  and adjusted  $R^2 = .630$ ). This means that 63.0% of the variance in entrepreneurial intention was accounted for by four predictor variables when taken together and the rest of 37% may be attributed to other factors. Furthermore, the analysis of variance for the regression yielded F-ratio of 163.165 (significant at 0.05 level), implying that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

**Table 2: Regression Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.612	1.337		1.206	.229
Networking ability	.342	.063	.287	5.450	.000
Interpersonal influence	.383	.068	.343	5.597	.000
Apparent Sincerity	.281	.068	.251	4.159	.000
Social Astuteness	.265	.065	.247	3.977	0.00

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intention

Source: Researcher's Computations, 2021.

Table 2 revealed the relative contribution of networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness on entrepreneurial intention as shown by the beta weights in the descending order: Interpersonal Influence ( $\beta = .343$ ,  $t = 5.597$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), Networking Ability ( $\beta = .287$ ,  $t = 5.450$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), Apparent Sincerity ( $\beta = .251$ ,  $t = 4.159$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and Social Astuteness ( $\beta = .265$ ,  $t = 3.977$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). The above results in Table 3 showed that interpersonal influence was the most influential in determining entrepreneurial intention of fresh graduates, followed by networking ability, apparent sincerity and finally by social astuteness. From Tables 1 and 2 above, results showed that there was significant, strong and positive relationship between networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness and

entrepreneurial intention of fresh graduate in Nigeria. It is therefore seen that when fresh graduates perceive that they have high political skill (networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness), they will nurse higher intentions to undertake entrepreneurial activities.

**Test of Hypotheses**

The four hypotheses of the study are tested using correlation analysis as shown in Table 3- 6.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between networking ability and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

**Table 3: The relationship between networking ability and entrepreneurial intention**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	K	P	Remark
Networking Ability	28.5854	5.3551	400	.697	.000	Sig
Entrepreneurial Intention	30.5122	6.3729				

**Source:** Researcher’s Computations, 2021.

From Table 3, it is shown that there was significant relationship between networking ability and entrepreneurial intention ( $r = .697, n = 400, P < .05$ ). The result shows that networking ability influenced entrepreneurial intention of fresh graduates in the study. The null hypothesis is hereby rejected. This means that graduate who have perception of high networking ability in them have high entrepreneurial intention. This finding is in support of Ferris, *et al* (2007) found that people with strong political skills viewed interpersonal interactions as opportunities rather than threats. Political skills helped deal with ambiguity and turbulence.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between interpersonal influence and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

**Table 4: Relationship between interpersonal influence and entrepreneurial intention**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	K	P	Remark
Interpersonal Influence	29.0174	5.7162	400	.739	.000	Sig
Entrepreneurial Intention	30.5122	6.3729				

**Source:** Researcher’s Computations, 2021.

The test result shown in Table 4 indicates that there was significant relationship between interpersonal influence and entrepreneurial intention ( $r = .739, n = 400, P < .05$ ). The result shows that interpersonal influence correlated positively with entrepreneurial intention among fresh graduates in Nigeria. Thus, the Null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, this finding suggests that fresh graduates who score high in interpersonal influence will as well highly desire to take entrepreneurship as a career. This finding is in agreement with the finding by Davis and Peak (2014) that interpersonal influence makes the individual recognizes that they should not back away from wanting to start a business because they can convince others to invest in the form of committed financing or purchased products.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between apparent sincerity and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

**Table 5: The relationship between apparent sincerity and Marketing of Agro-allied Products**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	K	P	Remark
Apparent sincerity	28.5122	5.6937	400	.715	.000	Sig
Entrepreneurial Intention	30.5122	6.3729				

**Source:** Researcher’s Computations, 2021.

It is shown in Table 5 that there was significant relationship between apparent sincerity and entrepreneurial intention ( $r = .715, N = 400, P < .05$ ). The result shows that apparent sincerity correlated positively with entrepreneurial intention in the study. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that fresh graduates with high apparent sincerity will have high aspiration to start a business instead of going in search of paid jobs. This finding agrees with Davis and Peak (2014) who found that the ability to skillfully influence others in a sincere manner (apparent sincerity) gives the entrepreneur confidence in his or her ability to act upon the intentions of creating a new business.

**Ho<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between social astuteness and entrepreneurial intentions of fresh graduates in Nigeria.

**Table 6: Relationship between social astuteness and entrepreneurial intention**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	K	P	Remark
Social Astuteness	27.0174	5.5762	400	.689	.000	Sig
Entrepreneurial Intention	30.5122	6.3729				

**Source:** Researcher's Computations, 2021.

The result of the correlation test shown in Table 6 above revealed significant relationship between social astuteness and entrepreneurial intention of fresh graduates in Nigeria ( $r = .689$ ,  $n=400$ ,  $P < .05$ ). The result shows that social astuteness correlated positively with entrepreneurial intention among fresh graduates in Nigeria. Thus, the Null hypothesis is rejected. This finding implies that high social astuteness in fresh graduate will propel in them the desire to engage in entrepreneurship as a career choice. This finding corroborates Ferris, *et al* (2007) who sates that individuals possessing social astuteness are astute observers of others and keenly attuned to diverse social situations and are prone to risk taking.

#### **PRATICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

One basic finding of this study is that fresh graduates who perceive they possess high political skill have deeper desire to start a business or to engage in entrepreneurship as a career choice (entrepreneurial intentions). By implication, it will be logical if business organisations may evolve strategies to trigger the awareness and level of political skill in students on industrial attachment with them. More also, the findings from this research present an opportunity to graduating institutions, entrepreneurship training centers in Nigeria and the NYSC to institute programs that will enhance graduates/trainees' social skills outside basic entrepreneurship skills.

#### **V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings of the study revealed that networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness are related to entrepreneurial intention. The study further found that interpersonal influence is the most influential determinant of entrepreneurial intention of fresh graduates, followed by networking ability, apparent sincerity and finally social astuteness. From findings of the research it is ascertained that political skill increased entrepreneurial intention. This clearly shows that when fresh graduates perceived that they possess this skill, there is the generation of strong feeling of aspiration to start a business or a desire to engage in entrepreneurship as a career choice. Therefore, is concluded that the possession of networking ability, interpersonal influence, apparent sincerity and social astuteness will result in high entrepreneurial intention in fresh graduates in Nigeria. Ferris *et al.*, (2005; 2007; 2009) stress that political skill is a set of improvable abilities. In this regard, it is recommended that Nigerian fresh graduates should be committed to trainings for developing political skills. Graduating institutions are also enjoined to inculcate political skill training programs into entrepreneurship education programs.

#### **REFERENCES**

- [1]. Abdullahi, A. I. & Zainol, F. N. (2016). The Impact of Socio-cultural Business Environment on Entrepreneurial Intention: A Conceptual Approach. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 6(2): 80-94.
- [2]. Ahearn, K. K., Ferris, G. R., Hichwarter, W. A., Douglas, C., & Ammeter, A. P. (2004). Leader political skill and team performance. *Journal of Management*, 30, 309-327.
- [3]. Ajzen I (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organ. Behav. Human Decision Proc.* 5(2):179-211.
- [4]. Ajzen I (2012). The theory of planned behaviour. In: Lange, P.A.M, Kruglanski, A.W., & Higgins, E.T. (Eds.). *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, London, UK: Sage, 1:438-459
- [5]. Ajzen, I. (2002). Perceived behavioral control, self-efficacy, locus of control, and the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 32(4), 665-683.
- [6]. Asenge, E. L., Diaka, H. S. & Tsetim J. T. (2017). Entrepreneurship development and socio-cultural factors among Tiv People of Benue State, Nigeria. *Scientific Research Journal* 4(7): 41-48
- [7]. Audet, J. (2004). A longitudinal study of the entrepreneurial intentions of university students. *Academy of Entrepreneurship Proceedings. Allied Academies International Conference*, April 7-10, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- [8]. Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*, Freeman, New York, NY.
- [9]. Baron, R. (2000). Emotional and social intelligence: Insights from the emotional quotient inventory. In R. Baron & J. D. A. Parker (Eds.), *Handbook of Emotional Intelligence* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- [10]. Blicke, G., Oerder, K., & Summers, J.K. (2010). The impact of political skill on career success of employees' representatives, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 77, 383-390.
- [11]. Brandstätter, H. (1997). Becoming an entrepreneur: A question of personality structure? *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 18, 157-177.
- [12]. Chatterjee, A. & Krishnan, V.R. (2007). Impact of spirituality and political skills on transformational leadership. *Great Lake institute of Management*, 1(1): 20-38.
- [13]. Chelagat, L. J. & Korir, M. K. (2017). Effect of employee political skills, organizational citizenship behaviour strategy on affective commitment in Kenyan public universities, *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 4(4): 28-42.
- [14]. Chrisman, J. J. (1999). The influence of outsider-generated knowledge resources on venture creation. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 37(4): 42-58.

- [15]. Davidsson, P. (1995). *Determinants of Entrepreneurial Intentions*. Jonskoping International Business School: Sweden. Retrieved from [http://eprints.qut.edu.au/2076/1/RENT\\_IX.pdf](http://eprints.qut.edu.au/2076/1/RENT_IX.pdf), accessed 22 March 2020.
- [16]. Davis, P. E. & Peake, W.O (2014). The Influence of Political Skill and Emotional Intelligence on Student Entrepreneurial Intentions: An Empirical Analysis. *Small Business Institute Journal*, 10(2): 19-34
- [17]. Diaka, H. & Tsetim, J. T. (2018). Entrepreneurial Intentions of University Undergraduates in Benue State, Nigeria; The Impact of Emotional Intelligence and the Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy. *Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences Conference Publication*, 7(2)
- [18]. Ebewo, P. E., Shambare, R. & Rugimbana, R. (2017). Entrepreneurial intentions of Tshwane University of Technology, Arts and Design Students. *African Journal of Business Management*, 11(9): 175-182.
- [19]. Ferris, G. R., Treadway, D. C., Perrewé, P. L., Brouer, R. L., Douglas, C. & Lux, S. (2007). Political skill in organizations. *Journal of Management*, 33,290–320.
- [20]. Ferris, G. R., Rogers, L., Blass, F. & Hochwarter, W. (2009). Interaction of job-limiting pain and political skill on job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 24: 584-608.
- [21]. Ferris, G. R., Treadway, D. C., Kolodinsky, R. W., Hochwarter, W. A., Kacmar, C. J., Douglas, C. (2005). Development and Validation of the Political Skill Inventory. *Journal of Management*, 31,126-152.
- [22]. Hochwarter, W. A., Ferris, G. R., Gavin, M. B., Perrewé, P. L., Hall, A. T., & Frink, D. D. (2007). Political skill as neutralizer of felt accountability-job tension effects on job performance ratings: A longitudinal investigation. *Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes*, 102(2), 226-239.
- [23]. Huang, K. (2017). Entrepreneurial Education: The Effect of Entrepreneurial Political Skill on Social Network, Tacit Knowledge, and Innovation Capability. *EURASIA Journal of Mathematics Science and Technology Education*, 13(8):5061-5072
- [24]. Ihugba, O. A., Odii, A., & Njoku, A. C. (2013). Challenges and Prospects of Entrepreneurship in Nigeria. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(5): 25.
- [25]. Kennedy, J., Drennan, J., Renfrow, P., & Watson, B. (2003). Situational Factors and Entrepreneurial Intentions. Paper for the Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand, 16th Annual Conference, Ballarat.
- [26]. Konakli, T. (2016). Effect of school administrators' political skills against organizational cynicism in educational organizations. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 4(3): 589-597.
- [27]. Korunka, C., Frank, H., Lueger, M., & Mugler, J. (2003). The entrepreneurial personality in the context of resources, environment, and the startup process—A configurational approach. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 28(1): 23–42.
- [28]. Krueger, N. F., & Brazeal, D. V. (1994). Entrepreneurial potential and potential entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 19(3): 91–104.
- [29]. Krueger, N. F., Reilly, M. D., & Carsrud, A. L. (2000). Competing models of entrepreneurial intentions. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 15(5–6): 411–432.
- [30]. Lee, L., Chua, B.L., Chen, J., & Wong, P.K. (2004). Antecedents for entrepreneurial propensity and intention: Findings from Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong. JIB/AIB Paper development workshops: Stockholm, Sweden.
- [31]. Lee, S.H. & Wong, P.K. (2004). An exploratory study of technopreneurial intentions: A career anchor perspective. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 19(1): 7–28.
- [32]. Li, J., Wu, S., & Wu, L. (2008). The impact of higher education on entrepreneurial intentions of university students in China. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 15(4): 752-774.
- [33]. Liñán, F. (2008). Skill and value perceptions: How do they affect entrepreneurial intentions? *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 4:257–272.
- [34]. Liñán, F., & Chen, Y. -W. (2009). Development and cross-cultural application of a specific instrument to measure entrepreneurial intentions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 33(3) (in press).
- [35]. Mueller, S.L. & Thomas, A.S. (2001). Culture and entrepreneurial potential: A nine country study of locus of control and innovativeness. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 16(1): 51–75.
- [36]. Peng, Z., Lu, G. & Kang, K. (2012). Entrepreneurial Intentions and Its Influencing Factors: A Survey of the University Students in Xi'an China, *Scientific Research*, 3, 95-100
- [37]. Peterman, N. E. & Kennedy, J. (2003). Enterprise education: Influencing students' perceptions of entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship—Theory and Practice*, 28(2): 129–144.
- [38]. Raijman, R. (2001). Determinants of entrepreneurial intentions: Mexican immigrants in Chicago. *Journal of Social-Economics*, 30, 393–411.
- [39]. Remeikiene, R. D. & Startiene, G. (2013). Explaining entrepreneurial intention of University students: The role of entrepreneurial education. *International Proceedings of the Management, Knowledge and Learning International Conference*, pp. 299-307.
- [40]. Schmitt-Rodermund, E. & Vondracek, F.W. (2002). Occupational dreams, choices and aspirations: Adolescents' entrepreneurial prospects and orientations. *Journal of Adolescence*, 25(1): 65–78.
- [41]. Shapero, A., & Sokol, L. (1982). Social dimensions of entrepreneurship. In C. A. Kent, D. L. Sexton, & K. H. Vesper (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of entrepreneurship*. Englewood Cliffs (NJ): Prentice Hall.
- [42]. Sharma M & Hussain A (2013). Political Skills and Professional Commitment Among Employees of Public and Private Sector Organisations. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*
- [43]. Thompson, E. R. (2009). Individual Entrepreneurial Intent: Construct Clarification and Development of an Internationally Reliable Metric. (eds.) *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice. A Publication of Baylor University*, Pp. 669- 694.
- [44]. Wihler, A., Frieder, R., Blickle, G., Oerder, K. & Schütte,N. (2015). Political Skill, Leadership, and Performance: The Role of Vision Identification and Articulation. In Vigoda-Gadot, E. & Drory, A. (Eds.) *Handbook of Organizational Politics: Looking Back and to the Future*.