

# Innovations

## Moderating Role of Entrepreneurial Education on Innovative Work Behaviour and Resilience of SMEs

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### Abstract :

**Objective:** The study's main objective is to examine how entrepreneurial education fosters innovative work behaviors and the resilience of SMEs in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. **Research Design:** The study utilized a quantitative research design. To calculate an appropriate sample size, 7,329 (74.8%) valid samples were chosen from a total of 9,800 questionnaires distributed using a non-probabilistic convenience sampling method. Straightforward regression is used in data analyses. **Findings:** The results show that innovative work behavior does not always translate into effective outcomes, resilience, or performance in SMEs. Yet, additional findings suggest that entrepreneurial education has positive combined effects on innovative work practices and the resilience of SMEs. This suggests that SMEs' adaptability and innovative work practices will decline in direct proportion to a lack of or any loss in entrepreneurial education. **Research Implications and Recommendations:** The study has established the contribution of entrepreneurial education and/or educators' behavioral dispositions toward the resilience and innovative work behaviors of SMEs by expanding the body of literature on this topic. A strong entrepreneurial education program at tertiary institutions and the establishment of training facilities that promote an entrepreneurial mindset while meeting industry demands are among the policy initiatives advised to spur economic growth. **Contribution/Value Added:** The study has illustrated its

*relevance and application in the context of SMEs' resilience by showing how the theory of planned behaviors can forecast innovative work behavior.*

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurial education; Innovation; Innovative behaviour; SMEs resilience.*

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## **Introduction**

In this age of globalization, there is an increasing concern about the number of young people who are unemployed in both developed and developing countries, but especially in the latter. Because governments cannot address this growing concern on their own, there is a need for entrepreneurial education to encourage innovative work behaviors and the resilience of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in order to deal with this unfavorable situation. Potential entrepreneurs are given business information and practical skills through entrepreneurship education, which motivates them to pursue their entrepreneurial interests (Uansa-ard & Wannamakok, 2022; Maheshwari & Kha, 2022; Court & Arikekpar, 2022). Studies by Elnadi and Gheith (2021) and Cong et al. (2022) argued that to encourage resilient SME activities, entrepreneurial education and small and medium-scale enterprise performance have to be promoted. Therefore, educating learners about entrepreneurship involves influencing their entrepreneurial interests, talents, and qualities as well as giving them the self-assurance they need to compete and succeed in the business world. A determined intervention on the part of the educator (Oyedele & Iember 2021) is what makes this happen.

According to Panigrahi and Joshi (2016), the rise in unemployment and underemployment in emerging nations is a major factor in the necessity of entrepreneurship education. Each year, universities generate thousands of graduates, but regrettably, they remain jobless owing to a lack of skills required by industry, making them a burden on society rather than an economic asset (Panigrahi & Joshi, 2016). Therefore, it is believed that a skill-based education system and the advancement of entrepreneurship awareness are urgently needed to establish an entrepreneurial environment that would support entrepreneurs in starting their own businesses and advancing the economy.

Shah et al. (2020) argues that personality, subjective norms, and attitude toward entrepreneurship are significant determinants of SMEs performance. However, factors like lack of power, education, knowledge, and skill; security; government policy; accessibility to credit facilities; exposure to modern technology; the condition of the infrastructure; and corruption have a negative impact on these traits

(Ayegba & Omale, 2016), which results in subpar innovative ideas and SME performance.

Innovative work behavior (IWB) refers to the desire of members of an organization to innovate, suggest, and implement new ideas into their work in the production processes and procedures based on their entrepreneurial knowledge. To be able to forecast and foster productive employee performance and SME resilience, organizational leaders must have a strong grasp of employee behavior. According to Karimi et al. (2023), innovative work behavior is any employee activity that is aimed at developing, recognizing, or implementing roles, groups, or organizations that incorporate concepts, processes, products, or procedures that are new to the relevant unit of adoption. According to this theory, innovation is only permitted when it is done consciously and results in new (Oyenuga et al., 2019), advantageous outcomes for the company (Khairunnisa et al., 2023).

According to the OECD (2017), small business enterprises are recognized globally as catalysts for socioeconomic development since they support income redistribution in both emerging and established economies by creating jobs and opportunities for wealth creation. However, as previously noted by Ayegba et al. (2016), there are other challenges that small enterprises in Nigeria must face, including a lack of resources, education, knowledge, and expertise; security; and government policy, among others. For the majority of small firms in Nigeria that are unable to handle these difficulties, the results are frequently disastrous, including market share losses, layoffs, and extinction (Babalobi, 2020; Oluwabunmi, 2020; Oyenuga et al. 2023). These difficulties that small enterprises in Nigeria face are indicative of an unfriendly business climate.

A variety of diverse elements influence the decision to start a new SME activity, which is considered the core of entrepreneurial development (Duong, 2022; Maheshwari & Kha, 2021; Civelek et al., 2021a; Nduji et al. 2023 ). Duong (2022) argues that, while some studies contend that entrepreneurship is driven by personal attitudes, such as the Big Five personality traits and entrepreneurial fear of failure, others contend that it is influenced by contextual and environmental factors, such as the entrepreneurial environment at universities (Calza et al., 2020), organizational and environmental factors (Meoli et al., 2020), and cultural values (Calza et al., 2020).

However, practically all recent studies claim that the most significant predictors of innovative work behavior are believed to be entrepreneurial mentality and intentions (e.g., Calza et al., 2020; Cui & Bell, 2022; Duong, 2022). Although recent studies (e.g., Duong, 2021; Maheshwari, 2022; Maheshwari & Kha, 2021) have taken into account the direct impact of entrepreneurship education on SMEs' attitudes and behaviors, we know very little about how it has a cumulative direct or indirect effect on innovative work behavior and SMEs' resilience. Also, despite the widely held

belief that entrepreneurship education and training foster future entrepreneurs, Ndofirepi (2020) claims that little is known about the mechanism by which this intervention achieves its intended effects.

The fundamental gap or issue with the literature, as shown above, is that the results of entrepreneurship education are evaluated at mostly separate levels, leaving them without a complete grasp of the mechanisms connecting the different intervening components. The motivation behind this study is the negative effects that these discrepancies have on SMEs' potential for innovation and resilience. To suggest methods in which the current practice may be improved, the study's main goal is to identify how entrepreneurial education fosters innovative work behaviors and the resilience of SMEs in the North Central Zone of Nigeria.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **A Theoretical Foundation**

Entrepreneurial education fosters the resilience of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), which is the process by which an individual worker, team, or organization acquires and employs the capacity to react to environmental changes in a way that it positively adapts and sustains positive functioning both before and after adversity (Williams, Eke, & Anyanwu, 2017). Accordingly, events that take place before, during, and after a crisis are a concern for organizational resilience. It also describes a company's capacity to manage disturbance in the workplace and continuously devise new operational strategies (Gilly, Kechidi, & Talbot, 2014). This study will apply Ajzen's late-20th-century theory of planned behavior, which evolved from the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen, 1991), to better understand the direct effects of entrepreneurial education on creative work behavior and SME resilience.

Ajzen contends that people's behavioral attitudes are influenced by their behavioral beliefs in both positive and negative ways. While control beliefs have a significant impact on perceptions of behavioral control, normative beliefs result in perceived social pressure or subjective norms (Zhong et al., 2020). According to Garca-Rodriguez, determining one's true motives and character traits is crucial when instituting entrepreneurial activities (Garca-Rodriguez et al., 2017). Behavioral attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are all significant influences on actual behavior and can be used to predict willingness to engage in various behaviors. Therefore, an individual's perceived behavioral control and willingness to engage in a particular behavior will be stronger the more positive the behavioral attitude and subjective norms are. There is still much to learn about the interactions between innovative work practices and entrepreneurial education that influence SMEs' capacity for resilience.

### **Entrepreneurial Education and SME Resilience**

One of the key components of economic growth is entrepreneurship, which has a substantial impact on increasing employment possibilities, expanding efficiency, and enhancing welfare at all levels of the economy and society (Hosseini et al., 2020a). Entrepreneurial education is a brief course of study that covers the skills needed to launch and establish a business so that its value can be realized quickly (Tkajpour et al. 2020b). According to a review of the literature on entrepreneurship, education in the field can enhance an entrepreneur's skills (Fayolle 2018). The major way that educational programs have a positive impact on people and teams is by giving incentives and changing attitudes (Aguinis & Kraiger 2009).

Additionally, entrepreneurship education is essential for addressing the issues of youth and adult unemployment (Sondari 2014). Youngsters might have a propensity to develop new business ideas using this strategy (Jaafar and Abdul Aziz 2008). Therefore, encouraging and assisting aspiring entrepreneurs to successfully launch a business is one of the most important goals of entrepreneurial education. Denhardt and Denhardt (2010) expressed that since resilience is the ability of business enterprises to recover from challenges to move beyond survival to organizational prosperity and success in the face of challenging conditions, managers of all organization must find means to promote it at all times. In a bit to promoting the organizational capability of resilience, there is a need for the organization to meet the needs of its stakeholders. We made the following predictions in light of these assumptions based on the discussion above:

**Hi<sub>1</sub>:** Entrepreneurial Education has a significant and positive consequence on the resilience of SMEs

### **Innovative Work Behaviour and Resilience and Performance of SMEs**

Innovative work behavior (IWB) is an efficient method for coordinating teamwork activities, according to Wijaya et al. (2022), Xu et al. (2022), Afsar et al. (2017), and Koroglu et al. (2021). IWB also improves an organization's capacity to attract and retain employees who perform at a high level, keeps the organization stable, and increases the motivation of those who can think creatively. According to Purwanto et al., (2021); Wijaya, (2018); and Riska et al., (2023), innovative work behavior refers to any employee activity that is focused on creating, introducing, or putting into practice fresh concepts, methods, products, or procedures for the benefit and adoption of pertinent units. The purpose of a person's endeavor to develop, present, and put into practice new ideas to improve team and organizational performance is then regarded as creative work behavior. In a nutshell, innovative work behavior is the goal that people have for their teams and organizations while they are at work. Since everyone can be innovative and resilient at work and that potential needs to

be supported by an appropriate organizational climate and environment, innovative work behavior and organizational resilience can be developed by any individual. The resilience of small and medium-sized businesses has been measured using several different metrics. Flexibility, motivation, and perseverance are the three qualities used by De Vries and Shields (2006) to measure resilience. Business resilience is a collection of traits that includes toughness, resourcefulness, and optimism, according to Ayala and Manzano (2014). These are all results of organizational culture knowledge acquired through entrepreneurship education (Omale, 2016). Based on the above discussion, we made the following predictions in light of these presumptions:

**Hi<sub>2</sub>:** Innovative work behaviour has a significant and positive outcome on the resilience and performance of SMEs

### **Entrepreneurial Education, Innovative Work Behaviour and Resilience of SMEs**

Innovative concepts are a key factor in the growth of SMEs, and entrepreneurship education encourages them. New requirements are placed on entrepreneurial education by innovation-driven development initiatives. However, the majority of past and present research and discussion in this area focuses on how to build a teaching staff in the entrepreneurial education ecosystem, how to develop curricula, and whether entrepreneurship education can affect an entrepreneur's intention to start a business (Ruskovaara and Pihkala, 2015; Falck et al., 2016). (Martin, Pittaway, and Cope, 2016). Entrepreneurship education is successful in promoting entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions, as demonstrated by Garca-Rodríguez et al. (2017) and Ratten et al. (2017). Additionally, the study revealed that the innovation and entrepreneurship courses enhanced students' entrepreneurial attitudes and ambitions (Muscio et al., 2019). Nevertheless, business model innovation requires entrepreneurial education, and individuals who have previously launched enterprises must use entrepreneurial behavior as a benchmark (Qiao & Huang, 2019). Numerous studies have shown a link between entrepreneurial education and the intention to start a business (Kariv et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2020). Another study also supported the idea that entrepreneurship education helps entrepreneurs develop the abilities they need to launch a business and motivates them to pursue entrepreneurship as a career (Chen, 2019; Marlous et al., 2021).

Resilience, on the other hand, is a topic that has previously been investigated in several academic disciplines. Organizational resilience, community resilience, and entrepreneurial resilience have all been studied in management research (Miles et al., 2016; Pérez-López et al., 2016; & Prayag, 2018). According to McNaughton and Gray (2017), an organization's resilience is its ability to handle shocks and downturns in the market environment by changing its organizational structures, operating models, and initiatives. Several metrics have been developed to assess an

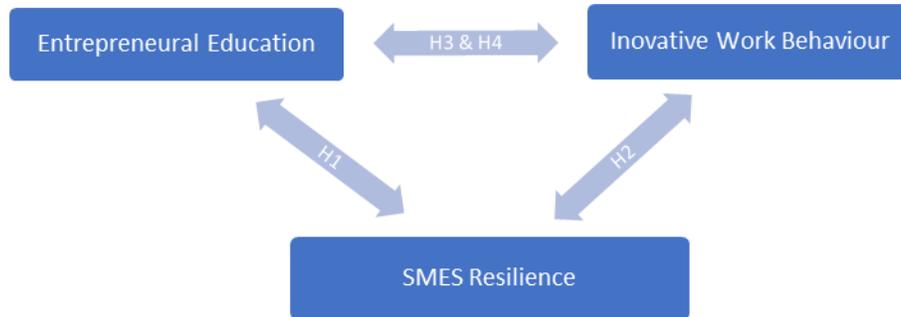
organization's resilience. Flexibility, motivation, and perseverance are the three qualities used by De-Vries and Shields (2006) to measure resilience. Recently, Ayala and Manzano (2014) introduced a new construct measuring business resilience as a collection of traits comprising tenacity, resourcefulness, and optimism. Prayag (2018) suggested that multichannel observation, as opposed to the oversimplistic assertion typically used in previous studies, could be used to observe business or organizational resilience. Adaptive resilience and planned resilience are the suggested dimensions for observing organizational resilience. The capacity of an organization to face dangers and difficulties in the business environment is known as adaptive resilience. The organization's leader, social capital, internal collaboration, organizational experience, and employee support all affect adaptive resilience. A prepared response to anticipated dangers or difficulties in the corporate environment is known as "planned resilience." According to Prayag's (2018) research, resilience has a significant impact on financial success. Based on the explanation above and these presumptions, we predicted the following:

**Hi<sub>3</sub>:** Entrepreneurial Education is positively related to innovative work behaviour

**Hi<sub>4</sub>:** Entrepreneurial Education moderates the relationship between innovative work behaviour and resilience of SMEs'

### **Research Model**

The conceptual model of this study demonstrates the relationship between the characteristics of entrepreneurial education and the adaptability of SMEs. This theory contends that innovative action or resilience in any form is a byproduct of education and training and that an educated, anointed professional often outperforms an ignorant, but anointed, professional. In this model, Routes H3 through H4 illustrate the impact of entrepreneurial education on innovative behavior in turn. These variables imply that entrepreneurial education has a favorable and significant impact on innovative behavior and SMEs' resilience, even though Routes H1 and H2 suggest that both entrepreneurial education and creative behavior can influence SMEs' resilience.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

**Source:** Researchers' Conceptualization

### **Research Design and Methodology**

This study focuses on the owners and employees of the chosen small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), utilizing a survey and quantitative research design to assess the mediating effect of entrepreneurial education on innovative work behavior and the resilience of SMEs in Nigeria's 19 northern states. This classification makes sense within the framework of SME resilience, which is the study's main focus. To help the researchers examine the impact of the predictor variables on the outcome variables, a deductive method for analyzing the offered hypotheses was also utilized. To ensure the trustworthiness of the results, the study's biases were removed with the help of a quantitative design (Avotra et al., 2021).

Based on a non-probabilistic convenience sampling method to select a sample from the population, the study determined the appropriate sample size. The researchers' ability to quickly and affordably collect data from widely accessible respondents was greatly aided by the implementation of a convenience sampling technique (Nawaz et al., 2020; Yingfei et al., 2021). Only 7,329, or 74.8%, of the 9,800 questionnaires that were distributed to these chosen SMEs were correctly filled out and returned using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagreed, 2 = disagreed, 3 = agreed, 4 = strongly agreed, and 5 = neutral). The questionnaires were developed in a precise and clear manner. Straightforward regression analysis was used in the study to examine the data collected from the respondents. Based on the t-statistics and p-values, the hypotheses are either accepted or rejected (Nawaz et al., 2022).

### **Analysis of Data and Test of Hypothesis**

#### **Data Analysis**

A measurable strategy that involves using organized instruments to examine the data collected from the respondents was utilized to establish the mediating role of

entrepreneurial education. The innovative behavior and resilience of SMEs are evaluated using a structural equation model and smart PLS.

**Characteristics of the Population**

The age and gender of the respondents, as well as their job description and educational qualifications, were determined using demographic factors.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>		<b>Incidences'</b>	<b>Percentages (%)</b>
Gender of the respondents	Male	3,449	<b>47.1</b>
	Female	3,880	<b>52.9</b>
Age of respondents	18-35	2210	<b>30.1</b>
	36-45	2286	<b>31.2</b>
	46-55	1111	<b>15.2</b>
	56 and above	1722	<b>23.5</b>
Job specification/position of respondents.	Top Executive	1,103	<b>15.0</b>
	Senior Mgt. Staff	905	<b>12.3</b>
	Middle Mgt. staff	2206	<b>30.1</b>
	Low Mgt. staff	3115	<b>42.5</b>
Educational Qualification	PGD, MBA/M.SC	606	<b>10.9</b>
	Degree	3221	<b>43.9</b>
	ND, HND NCE	3119	<b>42.6</b>
	Others	383	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Total:</b>		7329	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Researcher’s fields Survey, 2023

The job description or position of the respondents, their age, and their gender were used to determine the study's demographic makeup. Males and females were

divided into two groups: 3449 males and 3880 females. In that sequence, the percentages are 47.1% and 52.9%. The age ranges were 18–35, 36–44, 45–55, and 56 and beyond; the opinions were, in that order, 2210, 2286, 1111, and 1722. In that sequence, the percentages are 30.1%, 31.2%, 15.2%, and 23.5%. Top, senior, middle, and junior management job roles were categorized into four categories, with 1103; 905; 2206; and 3215 occurrences, respectively. In that sequence, the percentages are 15.0%, 12.3%, 30.1%, and 43.8%. According to the findings, 97.4% of respondents overall have some form of education, such as an MBA, M.Sc., HND, ND, or NCE, while only 2.5% of respondents lack any kind of education. This demonstrates unequivocally that the study's participants had entrepreneurship training at some point, making their contributions to the study valuable.

**Test of Hypotheses and Discussion of Results**

The researchers subjected this part to analyses and testing of the study's original hypotheses and used the straightforward regression analysis to evaluate the results.

**REGRESSION TABLE**

X1	X2	X3	X4
528	66	554	181
615	513	922	294
2581	3342	2984	3415
2674	2521	2241	2741
931	887	628	698

**Regression Analysis: X1 versus X2**

The regression equation is

$$X1 = 381 + 0.740 X2$$

Predictor	Coef	SE Coef	T	P
Constant	380.8	217.6	1.75	0.178
X2	0.7402	0.1129	6.56	0.007

S = 315.939 R-Sq = 93.5% R-Sq(adj) = 91.3%

**Analysis of Variance**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	1	4293307	4293307	43.01	0.007
Residual Error	3	299452	99817		
Total	4	4592759			

The regression tables

According to the first theory, entrepreneurship education significantly and favorably affects SMEs' capacity for resilience. This hypothesis was put to the test using the regression coefficient. R has a critical value based on calculations and signals. The P-value (0.007) is less than 0.05, indicating that SMEs benefit significantly and favorably from entrepreneurial education, which in turn promotes effective and efficient entrepreneurial education. The estimate is significant since the p-value at a 95% confidence level is smaller than the alpha of 0.05. As a result, the alternative hypothesis is accepted in place of the study's recommended null hypothesis. As a result, there are benefits associated with entrepreneurial education and SME performance. The results of Herlinawati et al. (2019), who examined the impact of entrepreneurial orientation on business performance, concur with this study. Innovativeness, proactivity, risk-taking, and aggression are used to gauge entrepreneurial orientation, whereas the balanced scorecard approach is used to gauge corporate performance. The findings revealed that entrepreneurial orientation generally tended to be low across all categories (innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, and aggression). Similar to how financial performance, customer satisfaction, internal business operations, learning, and growth are at a level that is often low, business performance is also at a low level, demonstrating how entrepreneurial approaches positively affect business performance.

The second theory contends that innovative work practices significantly and favorably affect SMEs' performance and resilience. This hypothesis was put to the test using the regression coefficient. R has a critical value based on calculations and signals. The hypothesis is therefore accepted. The analysis's correlation result,  $R = 93.5\%$ , suggests a significant positive link. The performance of SMEs is significantly and favorably impacted by innovative work behavior, according to the coefficient determinant  $R^2 = 91.3$ . The study finding is comparable to the finding of Fidelia and Onuoha (2023), who evaluated the association between entrepreneurial strategic planning and organizational resilience of SMES in Nigeria. An analysis of 600 SMEs in Rivers State using a cross-sectional survey yielded a sample size of 234 managers and supervisors. Utilizing Spearman's rank-order correlation, the data was analyzed. The analysis's findings showed a significant positive association between the characteristics of entrepreneurial strategic planning and the indicators of organizational resilience (adaptability and agility). It was determined that strategic planning positively impacts an organization's capacity for resilience.

**Regression Analysis: X1 versus X2**

The regression equation is

$$X1 = 428 + 0.708 X2$$

Predictor	Coef	SE Coef	T	P
Constant	428.0	172.4	2.48	0.089
X2	0.70803	0.08666	8.17	0.004

S = 260.538 R-Sq = 95.7% R-Sq(adj) = 94.3%

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	1	4531232	4531232	66.75	0.004
Residual Error	3	203641	67880		
Total	4	4734873			

The regression tables

The third claim makes a connection between entrepreneurial education and innovative workplace behavior. This hypothesis was put to the test using the regression coefficient. R has a critical value based on calculations and signals. The P-value (0.004) is less than 0.05, indicating that the effectiveness and efficiency of entrepreneurial education are positively correlated with innovative work behavior. The estimate is significant since the p-value at the 95% confidence level is smaller than the alpha of 0.05. As a result, the alternative hypothesis is accepted in place of the study's recommended null hypothesis. Therefore, there are benefits associated with entrepreneurial education and innovative work behavior. The results are consistent with those of Hadi et al. (2022), who describe in their study the effects of entrepreneurial leadership (EL) on innovative work behavior (IWB). By assessing the mediating roles of knowledge sharing (KS) and person-job fit, they also enhance perceptions of the paths to better innovative work behavior. The results show that KS mediates EL's impact on creative work behavior. Additionally, depending on the degree of person-job fit, KS has various effects on different components of innovative work behavior.

The final hypothesis proposes that the relationship between innovative work behavior and SMEs' resilience is mediated by entrepreneurial education. This hypothesis was put to the test using the regression coefficient. R has a critical value based on calculations and signals. R = 95.7%, which represents a significant positive correlation, is the correlation value in the analysis. Entrepreneurial education acts as a mediator in the association between innovative work behavior and the resilience

of SMEs, according to the coefficient determinant  $R^2 = 94.3\%$ . According to Garca-Rodriguez et al. (2017) and Anggadwita et al. (2017), entrepreneurship education is effective in fostering entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. The study also showed that students' entrepreneurial attitudes and desires were improved by the innovation and entrepreneurship courses (Muscio et al., 2019). However, those who have previously started businesses must utilize entrepreneurial conduct as a standard, and entrepreneurial education is necessary for business model innovation (Qiao & Huang, 2019).

### **Implications and Contribution to Knowledge**

This work offers numerous theoretical and practical advances. The study has first established the contribution of entrepreneurial education and/or educators' behavioral dispositions toward the resilience and innovative work behaviors of SMEs in general by increasing knowledge about entrepreneurial education and expanding the body of literature on this topic, which has recently become a global issue. Previous research has shown that entrepreneurship education can help SMEs become more resilient, which would enhance their overall performance. Finding a link between entrepreneurial education and innovative work behavior as well as the resilience of SMEs has received some attention in this study. An educated, anointed professional typically performs better than an uneducated, anointed professional. So, it appears that SME owners and prospective SME owners who have received extensive training to complete organizational projects are more likely to be resilient, creative, and willing to go above and beyond the call of duty to maintain relevance and boost productivity at their company.

The study has also illustrated its relevance and application in the context of SMEs' resilience by showing how the theory of planned behaviors can forecast innovative work behavior. Hence, promoting innovative behavior and SME resilience through entrepreneurial education would be beneficial. A strong entrepreneurial education program at tertiary institutions and the establishment of training facilities that promote an entrepreneurial mindset among unemployed, literate youths while meeting industry demands are among the policy initiatives advised to spur economic growth. Top executives and decision-makers will be able to ensure the survival of the economy by shifting focus to entrepreneurial education.

Practically speaking, by ensuring that learners recognize the advantages of entrepreneurship education, this study will help practitioners and educators perform better. This study may help government agencies and commercial entities take creative approaches to problems involving national development. According to this study, organizational leaders need to have a firm grasp on employee behavior and equip them with the proper and essential entrepreneurial skills to be successful

if they are to predict and nurture entrepreneurial education, new ideas, and SME resilience.

### **Limitations and suggestions for future study**

Regardless of a study's successful conclusion or significant contributions, there are still some restrictions. As a result, the sample's first flaw is that it only contains respondents from one developing nation, specifically Nigeria, as opposed to two or more for a more comprehensive sample. Future scientists might think about conducting comparable experiments in various climates and, when appropriate, a comparative study, since it might produce enlightening results.

Second, the study used a survey research strategy that aimed to collect data from participants via a questionnaire; future studies should take into account the option of analyzing in-depth secondary data on the components, as it may yield intriguing results. The overall impact of entrepreneurial education on the four independent variables was the last thing we looked at. To pinpoint the specific effect of each independent variable on other variables, it may one day be possible to investigate how independent variables regulate other factors. Notwithstanding its clear limits, this study offers a comprehensive empirical analysis that advances the goal of the study's research design.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Researchers from all over the world have been particularly interested in addressing the challenges of entrepreneurship; however, there has not been much focus on the need to address this challenge through entrepreneurial education as a measure to ensure innovative work behavior and SME resilience. And even in those cases where it does exist, we do not know much about how it affects these issues in the long run, either directly or indirectly. This study filled in that gap, coming to the conclusion that entrepreneurial education has a favorable overall impact on creative work practices as well as the resilience and performance of SMEs. This suggests that a lack of or any loss in entrepreneurial education will directly correlate to a decline in SMEs' ability to adapt and use innovative work practices. In order to encourage innovative work behavior, SME resilience, and economic growth, this article recommends that an effective education system is in place that encourages an entrepreneurial mindset among unemployed literate adolescents and complies with market expectations.

New ideas are one of the most important sources of performance and competitive advantage for SMEs and are essential to their sustainability. Yet, effective outcomes, resilience, or performance in SMEs are not necessarily directly correlated with

creative work behavior. Organizational leaders need to have a firm understanding of employee behavior in order to foresee and develop creative ideas that are effective and efficient and increase the resilience of SME firms. They also need to equip employees with the required entrepreneurial skills to be successful, for instance, they may have to integrate digital marketing and virtual reality ( Alam et al., 2024; Oyenuga et al., 2023) into their plans since these affect the behaviour of consumers.

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