

# DETERMINANTS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION AMONG PRISON INMATES IN NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*This study examined the determinants of entrepreneurial intention among prison inmates in Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive research design using the survey method of which questionnaires were administered to a sample of (176) inmates in Kirikiri and Kuje prison, Abuja. The responses were analyzed using smart PLS. It was found that need for achievement and risk-taking have positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. It was recommended that there should be a provision to expose inmates who are aspiring entrepreneurs through interactions with successful business mentors and role models. Personal guidance from experienced entrepreneurs can provide valuable insights, inspire, and instill a strong need for achievement and finally. Inmates should be trained to embrace a mindset that views challenges and uncertainties as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles and understand that calculated risks are often necessary for entrepreneurial success.*

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurial intention, need for achievement, risk-taking and inmates.*

## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has been accorded overwhelming support by development experts and scholars over the years. This is in recognition of the role entrepreneurship plays in economic development. Many governments place priority on entrepreneurship simply because no state can employ all its citizens due to the complex unemployment problems they face (Saraih *et al.*, 2018). Entrepreneurship job creation is responsible for the strong economic base of both advanced and emerging economies. It is safe, therefore, to say that entrepreneurs are the strength of economies across the globe. Entrepreneurship stimulates the economy and drives the industry of the country (Nian *et al.*, 2014). They provide the needed wealth creation through risk-taking. Entrepreneurs, as risk takers, utilize resources (both human and material) through innovation, to provide products and services needed by the people using the people. Social, sustainable and environmental entrepreneurship have solved many societal and environmental issues including hunger, poverty and global warming (Vuorio *et al.*, 2018).

Overdependence on the government to create jobs for all is the sole culprit for frustrations especially among the youth. In developing countries, therefore, there is the growing need to encourage youth to embrace entrepreneurship in order to curb restiveness that results from unemployment. When people are unable to create jobs for themselves their nation is held under the heavy weight of the circle of poverty because it is difficult for the nation to rise above the creative ability of its citizens. The growth and development of the advanced economies is evident from the “quality and efficiency” of their entrepreneurs (Afolabi *et al.*, 2015). Higher level of entrepreneurship propels economic growth. Entrepreneurs create jobs, distribute wealth and increase happiness through the promotion of the needed exchange.

The issue of entrepreneurship among prison inmates in Nigeria is a complex and multifaceted problem that requires a comprehensive investigation. Prison inmates in Nigeria face a multitude of socio-economic and psychological challenges that hinder their successful reintegration into society upon release. One potential avenue for addressing these challenges could be through the promotion of entrepreneurial intention and activities. However, there is a significant gap in our understanding of the determinants that influence entrepreneurial intention among prison inmates in Nigeria. This knowledge deficit hampers the development of effective rehabilitative and reintegration programs, thereby impeding the chances of successful reintegration and contributing to the perpetuation of the cycle of crime and recidivism. This has remained worrisome to many stakeholders including researchers and hence motivated this study which examined the effect of need for achievement and risk-taking on entrepreneurial intention among inmates in Nigeria.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Concept of Entrepreneurial Intention**

Drnovsek et al. (2021) define entrepreneurial intention as a mental orientation such as strong desire, dreams, and hope to influence their choice of entrepreneurial activities. In general, 'interest' can be interpreted as a relatively sedentary tendency for a person to feel attracted to a particular field and to feel happy engaging in various activities related to that field; thus, the individuals who are interested in becoming entrepreneurs are generally interested and tend to be happy with their entrepreneurial profession. Individuals who are interested in becoming entrepreneurs cognitively have sufficient understanding of the benefits, challenges and risks to be faced, feel good about their choices (affective), and will act (cognitive) as he believed.

Ananda and Djatmika (2020) describes entrepreneurial intention as the degree of commitment directed towards the performance of the entrepreneurial endeavor of putting up a business for self-employment. Hence, to understand why individuals pursue business ownership, it is critical to understand the nature as well as precursors of the intention of putting up such business venture.

Tahir and Ahmad (2020) opined that entrepreneurial intention is a state of mind that directs and guides the actions of the entrepreneur toward the development and implementation of a business concept. Entrepreneurial intention is the desire of an individual to establish a private business. The desire for entrepreneurship among individual were borne out of the desire to be one's own boss, financial autonomy, avoidance of unemployment syndrome, and retrenchment in work place.

Farooq et al. (2020) stated that entrepreneurial intention is a representation of a future course of action to be performed; it is not simply an expectation of future actions but a proactive commitment to bringing them about. Intentions and actions are different aspects of a functional relation separated in time. Intentions center on plans of actions. Absent intention, action is unlikely. Intentions represent the belief that one will perform certain behavior. Logically, intent precedes action. The term entrepreneurial intentions have affinity with other frequently used terms designating the same meaning; e.g. entrepreneurial awareness, entrepreneurial potential, aspiring entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial proclivity, entrepreneurial propensity, and entrepreneurial orientation -EO (more concerned with the entrepreneurial process, with recent research suggesting that the sub-dimensions of EO may vary independently).

Kolbre and Piliste (2019) defines entrepreneurial intention as a commitment to starting a new business. People who become entrepreneurs have a particular set of motivational goals. Entrepreneurs stand out in terms of the issues they consider important and worth pursuing in life. They argue that intentional behavior helps to explain why many entrepreneurs decide to start a business long before they scan for opportunities. Entrepreneurs with high levels of entrepreneurial intention set higher goals for themselves and for the business.

Therefore, Entrepreneurial Intention is the sustained desire to launch a new venture for the purpose of taking identified opportunities profitably. It is a positive behavioural disposition towards venture establishment, the willingness to assume the risk associated with meeting market demand for products and services, which results into an individual exhibiting actual innovative actions of investing time, labour and resources in meeting the identified needs with profit motives.

### **Need for Achievement**

Utari and Sukidjo (2020) defined need for achievement as the probability of performing something in a better way as compared to others or one's own previous performances. Hard working, ambitious and competitive natures are mostly the distinguishing characteristics of people who have need for achievement. Individuals who have a need for high achievement will be more likely to become an entrepreneur. Need for achievement has been identified at the very beginning of entrepreneurship research as a significant predictor of entrepreneurial behavior. People with higher need for achievement are goal-oriented and have strong desire for success.

Eisenberger et al. (2015) defined need for achievement as one's responsibility for involvement in activities to achieve one's desired outcome. Need for achievement is associated with a positive mood, task interest, and organizational spontaneity. An active and significant correlation exists between opportunity perception and the likelihood of starting a new business. Need for self-achievement is the prominent factors as motivation for women to become an entrepreneur. It is believed that individuals with a high need for achievement have a strong desire to be successful and are consequently more likely to behave entrepreneurially.

Need for achievement therefore is the innermost desired to be greater than current status which results into concerted efforts to undertake entrepreneurial activities with the view to achieving set objectives capable of actualizing the conceived achievement.

### **Risk taking**

Rauch et al. (2020) state that risk-taking is the tendency of an organization to take initiatives and perform activities, the results of which are uncertain. He states that entrepreneurs' internal locus of control and desires drives risky ventures. From the perspective of SMEs, entrepreneurs' risk-taking is associated with a greater degree of SMEs performance. asserted that risk-taking propensity and its effects vary at organizational and structural levels due to organizational goals and objectives. Further, they argue that risk-taking is an inherent trait of entrepreneurs because they want higher growth and performance of the business.

Wijetunge (2018) defined risk-taking propensity as the perceived probability of receiving rewards associated with the success of a situation that is required by the individual before he will subject himself to the consequences associated with failure, the alternative situation providing less reward as well as less severe consequences than the proposed situation. Courage of taking a risk reflects a tendency to spend resources for activities or projects with substantial prospect of failures, but they will yield great profit if successful. It is the willingness and readiness to commit resources (own or borrowed) to pursue identified market opportunities that have a reasonable possibility of losses. Risk-taking, as an important feature of entrepreneurship, is not about taking extreme or uncontrollable risks, but it is about taking moderate and calculated risks. Risk-taking and innovativeness are related. This is because innovation involves risk-taking, and the higher an organization innovates, the more risks it takes (Kuratko et al., 2011).

Risk-taking in this study therefore is the willingness to assume risks associated with venture creation.

### **Empirical Review**

#### **Need for Achievement and Entrepreneurial Intention**

Wei et al. (2022) investigated the role of need for achievement in recognition of opportunity, developing entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intention, in the shaping of entrepreneurial actions in the presence of proactive personality. Cross sectional research design was adopted with a sample of 346 university students from Jiangsu province, China. Primary data was used and was analyze using partial least squares structural equation. The study showed that need for achievement positively and significantly influenced entrepreneurial alertness, entrepreneurial self-efficacy to entrepreneurial intention, and entrepreneurial behavior. The recommends that entrepreneurs should be proactive in discovering an opportunity and be able to passionately explore it in other to establish a business venture. The study was carried out in China, the finding may not be applicable in Nigeria due to its economic difference.

Ida (2020) assessed the prediction of need for achievement to generate entrepreneurial intention. Survey research design was used for the study. A sample size of 230 was used from Kenyan university students. Primary data was used and data collected was analyze using SPSS. The study found a positive effect of need for achievement in forming entrepreneurial intentions. The study recommends that policies should be made to support and provide entrepreneurs with certain entrepreneurial resources, that increase entrepreneurs'

self-confidence and other psychological capital, which helps entrepreneurs, achieve success in entrepreneurial activities. The study used SPSS for the analysis, the outcome of the result would be better if SEM PLS was used for the analysis.

### **Risk-taking and Entrepreneurial Intention**

El kabir (2022) studied the influence of risk-taking and entrepreneurial intention in Jigawa state. The study adopted a descriptive research design. A sample size of 300 SMEs was randomly selected from the ministries. Questionnaire was used for data collection and data were analyzed using the descriptive statistics, correlation statistics and inferential statistics. The study found that risk-taking has insignificant effect on entrepreneurial intention. The recommended that organization should allow their employees to take risk in order to enable creativity in the organization. The study used three techniques for data analysis while the current study used one technique which is Smart PLS.

Barton (2022) examined effect of risk-taking and entrepreneurial intention. The study adopted a survey research design. A sample size of 400 employees was selected from the organization. Questionnaire was used for data collection and data were analyzed using the correlation statistics and inferential statistics. The study found a positive and significant effect of risk-taking on entrepreneurial intention. The recommended that organization should embrace risk-taking as it the key to discover creativity and as such, it should be considered accordingly for better performance. The study failed to state the location the study was conduct on like the current study.

### **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)**

Theory of Planned Behavior was propounded by Ajzen (1991). His work was an extension of the Theory of Reason Action (TRA) earlier developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behaviour. Ajzen (1991)'s theory of planned behavior was grounded on the premise that attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control directly affect intention. Personal attitudes entail our personal disposition towards a particular behavior. It is the totality of our knowledge, prejudices, which might be positive or negative that we think of when we consider the behavior. Subjective norms consider how we view the ideas of other people about the specific behavior. This could be the attitude of family and friends and colleagues to smoking. It is not what other people think but our perception of others' attitudes. Perceived behavioral control is the extent to which we believe we can control our behavior. This depends on our perception of internal factors such as our own ability and determination and external factors such as the resources and support available to us.

According to Ajzen's (1991), the following assumptions hold for the theory of planned behaviour: Much human behaviour is planned and therefore preceded by intention towards that behaviour; Human beings are rational and make systematic use of information available to them when making decisions; Intention predicts planned behaviour. The theory was later expanded by Adjzen (2005) to include new variables; namely, demographic, personal, social and environmental factors. These variables can be antecedents of entrepreneurship behaviour. Bird (1989) also affirmed that personal characteristics and contextual factors have the ability to predict entrepreneurial behavior.

### **Strengths of the Theory of Planned Behaviour**

The theory of planned behaviour generally explains the complexity of human behavior and its relevant determinants (Koe *et al.*, 2012). The theory holds that human behavior is caused by intention. Thus, it can be applied in many other areas of interest, specifically to understand health related behavioural intention (Ajzen, 1988) and other certain behaviours such as purchase behavior, and leisure behavior, among others. The theory can cover people's non-volitional behavior which cannot be explained by the theory of reasoned action. Theory of reason action is most successful when applied to behaviors that are under an individual's

voluntary control. If behaviors are not fully under voluntary control, even though individuals may be highly motivated by their own attitudes and subjective norms, they may not actually perform the behavior due to intervening environmental conditions (Keiba, 2016). This means that an individual's behavioral intention cannot be the exclusive determinant of behavior where an individual's control over the behavior is incomplete. The Theory of Planned Behaviour was developed to predict behaviours in which individuals have incomplete voluntary control. Taking self-esteem and self-efficacy into consideration, the Theory of Planned Behaviour expands on the concept of perceived behavioral control, and can explain the relationship between behavioural intention and actual behaviour.

### **Criticism of the Theory of Planned Behaviour**

The theory has been criticised for its exclusive focus on rational reasoning, excluding unconscious influences on behavior and the role of emotions beyond anticipated affective outcomes. Critics posit that the theory is overly cognitive/rational - emotional factors need to be taken into account. They have also questioned whether the hypotheses derived from the model are open to empirical falsification, or whether they are essentially common-sense statements which cannot be falsified.

### **Rationale of Using Theory of Planned Behaviour**

Despite the above criticism, the validity and utility of the Theory of Planned Behaviour cannot be overemphasized. The ambition of this research requires the selection of a rich robust and yet empirically validated theoretical framework to deal with the range of questions arranged. Theory of Planned Behaviour has proven as an effective tool in entrepreneurial intention research with high ability to explain and predict intention. It has increasingly been seen as a useful theoretical framework in new venture creation because it helps to explain the complex and intricate cognitive processes leading to firm creation (Linan, *et al.*, 2012). It also covers broad variables than Social Cognitive Career Theory.

Considering this theory in relation to entrepreneurial intention, it is possible to recognize that entrepreneurial intentions are developed on the basis of three antecedents: beliefs about the outcomes of being an entrepreneur - behavioural beliefs that produce a personal attitude toward the behaviour; beliefs about the normative expectations and perceived pressures of others regarding the choice of being an entrepreneur - normative beliefs that result in a subjective norm; and beliefs about the existence of factors that may enhance or hinder performance of the possible future entrepreneurial role - control beliefs that form perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 2002; Linan & Chen, 2009).

In view of the fact that entrepreneurship is a result of intentional and planned behaviour as Krueger *et al.* (2000) posited, Theory of Planned Behaviour as expanded by Ajzen (2005) and Bird (1989) is a viable tool to investigate entrepreneurial intention of prisoners. In its personal attitude and social norms variables, this theory encompasses the Entrepreneurial Event Model (Shapero & Sokol, 1982)'s propensity to act and perceptions of desirability and feasibility variables. The theory explains that intentions toward becoming an entrepreneur will depend on the perception that becoming an entrepreneur is within a person's competence and control and that becoming an entrepreneur is personally and socially desirable (Mirjana *et al.*, 2018). The researcher therefore believes that Theory of Planned Behaviour is the most appropriate option for this study.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted descriptive research design employing the use of primary data. Data were collected using 5-point likert scale structured questionnaire. The population of the study consists of 176 convicted inmates of Female Custodial Center, Kirikiri, Lagos, and Medium custodial Center, Kuje FCT-Abuja. However, considering the small size of the population, the study adopted a census sampling technique which allows for the entire population to be used as sample size and hence, the sample size is 176. Questionnaire was administered to inmates of Kirikiri and Kuje custodial centers. The copies of the questionnaire were returned analyzed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Model.



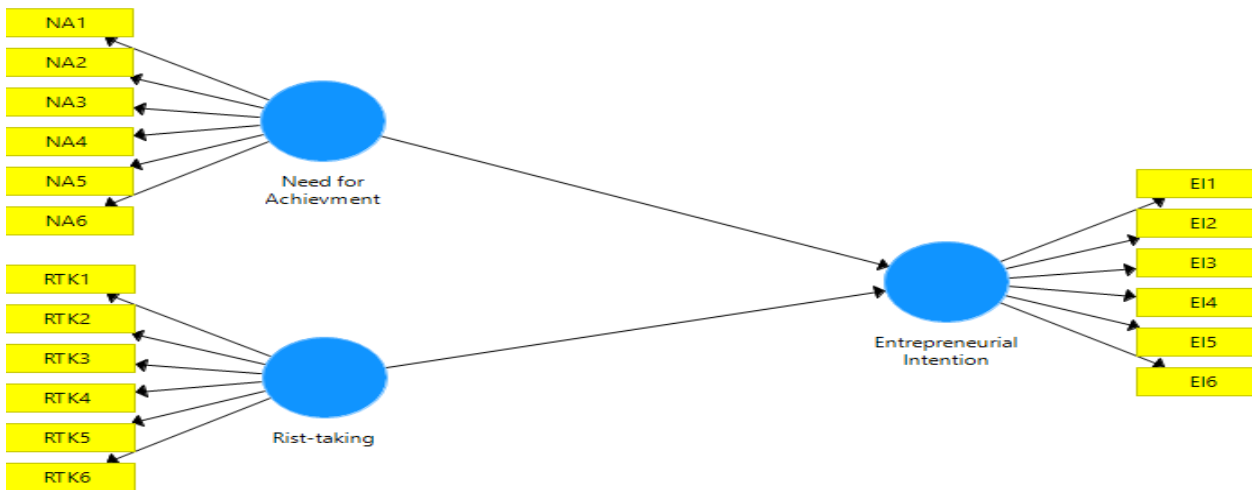


Figure 1: Study Model

Table 1.1: Reliability of study scale

S/N	Variables		Factor Loadings	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	Rho A	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	No of Items
1	Need for Achievement (NA)	NA1 NA2 NA3 NA4 NA5 NA6	0.731 0.819 0.649 0.766 0.647 0.968	0.813	0.896	0.836	0.595	6
2	Risk Taking (RTK)	RTK2 RTK3 RTK4 RTK6	0.734 0.726 0.635 0.946	0.858	0.850	0.886	0.591	4
3	Entrepreneurial Intention (EI)	EI1 EI2 EI3 EI4 EI5 EI6	0.634 0.630 0.829 0.734 0.950	0.761	0.873	0.836	0.586	6

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2024

Composite reliability of Joreskog’s (1971) was applied to test for internal consistency of the items. All the values fall within the Hair, et al., (2019) rating of good consistency. The Cronbach alpha value was above 0.60 which is the minimum threshold as recommended by Sekaran (2010). To test for the convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) was used. All the latent variables showed values greater than 0.50 which indicates that the constructs explain at least 50 percent of the variance of its items. According to Henseler et al., (2015) the Fornell-Larcker criterion does not perform well when explaining discriminant validity, particularly when the indicator loadings on a construct differ only slightly. As a replacement, they proposed the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of the correlations which is the mean value of the item correlations across constructs relative to the (geometric) mean of the average correlations for the items

measuring the same construct (Voorhees et al., 2016). Discriminant validity problems are present when HTMT values are higher than 0.90 for structural models (Henseler, et al., 2015).

**Table 2 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)**

	NA	RTK	E
NA			
RTK	0.578		
EI	0.516	0.509	

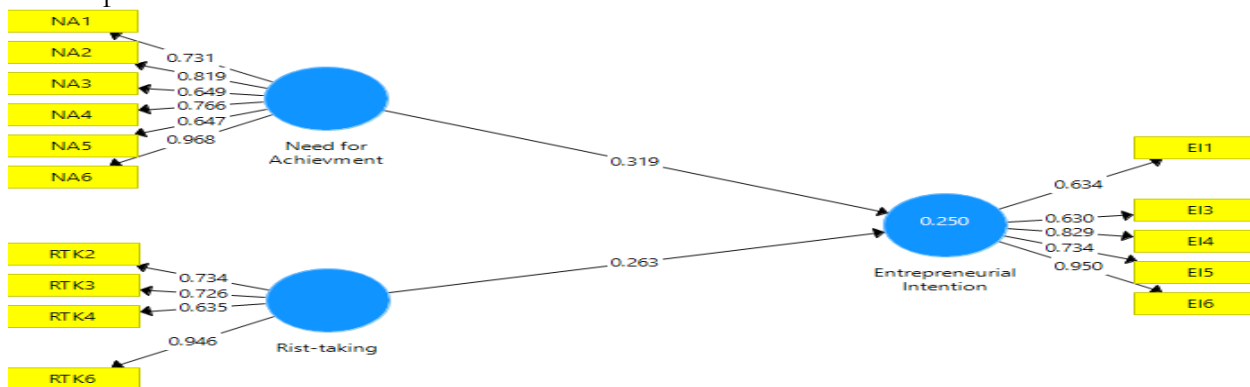
Source: Smart PLS Output, 2024

**Model Goodness of Fit (GoF)**

Sequel to the need to validate the PLS model, there is a need to assess the goodness of fit of the model as Hair, et al. (2017) suggested. This study used the standardised root mean square residual’s (SRMR). The choice of this index was based on the fact that the SRMR provides the absolute fit measure where a value of zero indicates a perfect fit. The study adopted Hu & Bentler (1998) suggestion that a value of less than 0.08 represents a good fit while applying SRMR for model goodness of fit. The study result indicates an SRMR value of 0.01. This indicates the model is fit.

**Assessing the Structural Model**

Having satisfied the measurement model assessment, the next step in evaluating PLS-SEM results is to assess the structural model. Standard assessment criteria, which was considered include the path coefficient, t-values, p-values and coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ). The bootstrapping procedure was conducted using a resample of 5000.



**Fig. 3: Path Coefficients of the Regression Model**

The R-square value stood at 25% indicating that entrepreneurial intention represented by need achievement and risk-taking are responsible for 25% variation in entrepreneurial intention. The remaining 75% variation could be explained by other factors not included in the study. Based on Hair, et al., (2019), the r-square is considered suitable and lends credence to the findings of the study. The result of the path analysis is presented in the table below.

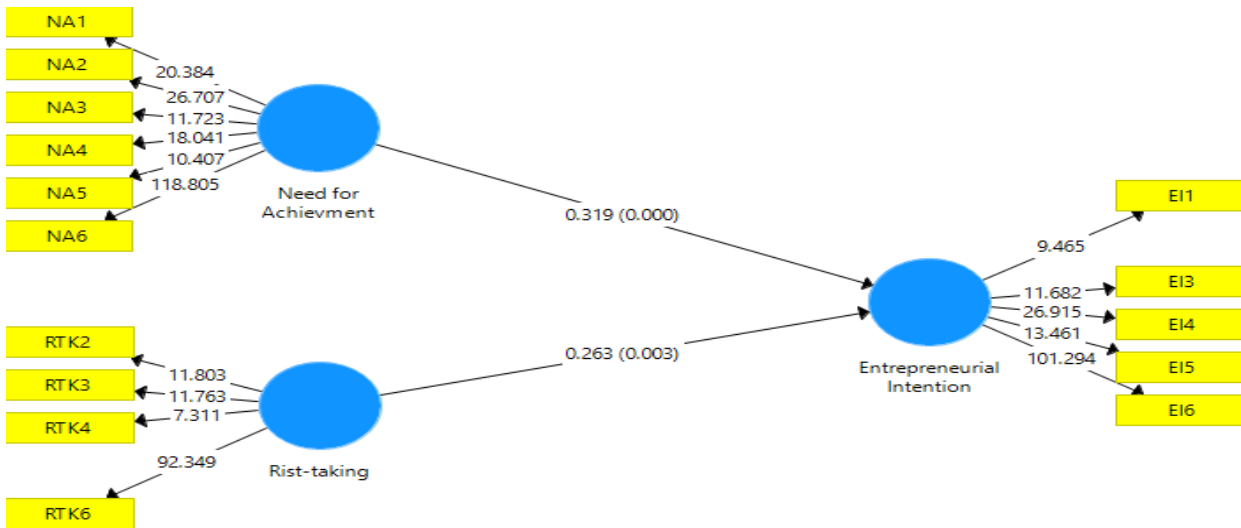


Table 3.1: Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Variable	Path Coefficient ***(Beta)	t-value	p-value	Findings
Ho <sub>1</sub>	Need for Achievement	0.319	4.009	0.000	Rejected
Ho <sub>2</sub>	Risk-taking	0.263	2.999	0.003	Rejected

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2024

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results from table 3.1 above shows that need for achievement has positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. The decision was reached based on the t-value of 4.009, a beta value of 0.319 with a p-value of 0.000. The implication is that the null hypothesis has no sufficient grounds to be accepted and as such the alternate hypothesis which states that need for achievement has significant effect on entrepreneurial intention is accepted.

Finally, result from the analysis equally indicates that risk-taking has positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. The decision was reached based on the t-value of 0.263, a beta value of 2.999 and a p-value of 0.003. This implies that the null hypothesis lacks sufficient grounds to be accepted and as such the alternate hypothesis which states that risk-taking has significant effect on entrepreneurial intention is accepted.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings above, the study concludes that need for achievement and risk-taking are key motivators for entrepreneurial intention among inmates in Nigeria. Therefore, the study recommends that there should be a provision to expose inmates who are aspiring entrepreneurs to interact with successful business mentors and role models. Personal guidance from experienced entrepreneurs can provide valuable insights, inspire, and instill a strong need for achievement. Inmates should be trained to embrace a mindset that views challenges and uncertainties as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles and understand that calculated risks are often necessary for entrepreneurial success.

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**Questionnaire**

**Key:** SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U = Undecided, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree

S/N	Need for Achievement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	I link failure nor success for me rather than other people or circumstances.					
2	Try harder to verify my previous job evaluation.					
3	Will do perfectly in quite tough tasks related studies or job.					
4	I restore unfinished assignments and finish it					
	<b>Risk-Taking</b>					
5	I may not start a business if there is a risk of possible failure					
6	In general, our business has a strong inclination towards high-risk projects.					
7	I see the risk of failure is a major problem					
	<b>Entrepreneurial Intention</b>					
8	My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur.					
9	I will make every effort to start and run my own business.					
10	I am determined to establish business in the future.					