

# The Roles of Entrepreneurial Learning and Cognitiveness on Entrepreneurial Success in The Fashion Industry in Plateau State

Yalwa Irene Buetnaan

*Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences  
University of Jos*

Dr. Nanfa Kusa

*Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences  
University of Jos*

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## ABSTRACT

*The study investigates the roles of entrepreneurial learning and cognitiveness on entrepreneurial success in the fashion industry in Plateau State, Nigeria. Given the challenges facing the Nigerian fashion industry, including high production costs and limited access to entrepreneurial learning, this research aims to elucidate how cognitive processes influence the effectiveness of learning and the subsequent success of entrepreneurs. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 319 registered fashion designers through structured questionnaires. The analysis employed multiple regression techniques to assess the relationships among the variables. The findings reveal that entrepreneurial learning significantly impacts entrepreneurial success ( $\beta = 0.170, p < 0.05$ ) and enhances entrepreneurial cognitivity ( $\beta = -0.222, p < 0.01$ ). Moreover, entrepreneurial cognitivity was found to mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurial success ( $\beta = 0.298, p < 0.001$ ). These results highlight the importance of integrating cognitive skill development into entrepreneurship education programs, emphasizing that cognitive abilities are crucial for navigating the complexities of the fashion industry. The study concludes that fostering both learning and cognitive competencies is essential for enhancing entrepreneurial outcomes in the fashion sector. Recommendations include the implementation of targeted training programs that combine technical skills with cognitive development to better equip fashion entrepreneurs for success. This research contributes to the understanding of entrepreneurial dynamics in developing economies, providing valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and practitioners in the fashion industry.*

**Keyword:** *entrepreneurial cognitivity, entrepreneurial learning, entrepreneurial success*

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## I. Introduction

The fashion designing business stands at the intersection of creativity, commerce, and cultural expression, making it a vital contributor to economic growth and social identity globally. Defined as the art of creating clothing and accessories that reflect contemporary trends and individual styles, the fashion industry is a multi-billion-dollar enterprise that employs millions worldwide.

In 2023, the global fashion market was valued at approximately \$1.5 trillion, with projections indicating a compound annual growth rate of 4.5% through 2025 (Statista, 2023). Countries such as England, Germany, Japan, and Kenya have established robust fashion sectors, leveraging their unique cultural heritages and innovative practices. For instance, England's fashion industry contributed £35 billion to the economy in 2023, while Germany's fashion market was valued at €33 billion (Fashion United, 2023). Japan's fashion sector, renowned for its avant-garde styles, generated \$25 billion in revenue (Japan External Trade Organization, 2023).

In Africa, Kenya's fashion industry is experiencing rapid growth, with an annual increase of 10%, reflecting the continent's rising influence in global fashion (African Development Bank, 2024). However, within Nigeria, particularly in Plateau State, the fashion designing business faces significant challenges that impede its potential for success, necessitating an exploration of the factors influencing entrepreneurial learning and success in this context.

The challenges confronting the fashion designing business are multifaceted, influenced by economic, social, and infrastructural factors. In the United States, the fashion industry has grappled with issues such as supply chain disruptions, leading to a 20% decline in small fashion businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic

(McKinsey & Company, 2023). Similarly, Germany and Japan have reported that approximately 30% of fashion startups fail within their first three years due to inadequate market research and financial mismanagement (Statista, 2023). In Egypt, the fashion sector struggles with regulatory hurdles and limited access to funding, stifling growth potential (World Bank, 2023).

Comparatively, Nigeria's fashion industry faces profound challenges, including high production costs, infrastructural deficits, and a lack of entrepreneurial education, resulting in a significant number of startups failing within their first five years (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Plateau State exemplifies these challenges, where entrepreneurs often lack the necessary resources and support to thrive in a competitive market. This scenario calls for scholarly attention to investigate the role of entrepreneurial cognitivity in mediating the relationship between entrepreneurial learning and success in the fashion designing business, particularly in a region where such relationships remain underexplored.

Entrepreneurial success is a critical determinant of the sustainability and growth of the fashion designing business in Nigeria. It encompasses various dimensions, including financial viability, brand equity, and social impact. Financial viability refers to the profitability and sustainability of fashion enterprises, while brand equity reflects the perceived value of a brand in the eyes of consumers. Social impact emphasizes the role of fashion businesses in promoting cultural heritage and empowering local communities. Research indicates that successful fashion businesses in Nigeria exhibit higher levels of creativity and adaptability, enabling them to thrive in a dynamic market environment (Akinola, 2023).

The relationship between these dimensions and entrepreneurial success is particularly pronounced in the Nigerian fashion industry, where innovation and responsiveness to market demands are essential for survival. By fostering a culture of entrepreneurial success, fashion designers can enhance their competitiveness and contribute to the overall growth of the industry.

Introducing entrepreneurial learning into the discourse surrounding the fashion designing business in Nigeria is essential for fostering sustainable growth and innovation. Entrepreneurial learning refers to the process through which entrepreneurs acquire knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary for navigating the complexities of their industries (Fayolle et al., 2022). In the context of the Nigerian fashion industry, entrepreneurial learning can significantly influence business outcomes along three dimensions: experiential learning, social learning, and cognitive learning. Experiential learning emphasizes the importance of hands-on experience in developing practical skills, which is crucial for fashion designers who must adapt to rapidly changing trends (Akinola, 2023). Social learning highlights the role of collaboration and networking in knowledge sharing, allowing designers to learn from peers and industry leaders (Garcia & Hsu, 2023). Cognitive learning focuses on the mental processes involved in decision-making and problem-solving, which are vital for entrepreneurs as they navigate challenges in a competitive market (Baron, 2022). Together, these dimensions create a comprehensive framework for understanding how entrepreneurial learning enhances entrepreneurial success in the fashion designing business in Nigeria. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation, fashion designers can better respond to market demands and improve their overall performance (Haynie et al., 2023).

Entrepreneurial cognitivity refers to the mental processes that entrepreneurs engage in when making decisions, solving problems, and seizing opportunities. Scholars have emphasized the significance of cognitive factors in shaping entrepreneurial behavior and outcomes. According to Baron (2022), cognitive abilities such as creativity, risk perception, and opportunity recognition are crucial for entrepreneurial success. Furthermore, research by Haynie et al. (2023) highlights how cognitive flexibility allows entrepreneurs to adapt to changing circumstances and innovate effectively. By introducing entrepreneurial cognitivity into the study, this research aims to explore how cognitive processes mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurial success in the fashion designing business in Plateau State, Plateau State.

Conducting research on the role of entrepreneurial cognitivity in the relationship between entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurial success in the fashion designing business is warranted due to the pressing challenges faced by this sector in Nigeria. The fashion industry is a vital contributor to economic development, yet it remains underexplored in academic literature, particularly concerning the unique dynamics within Plateau State. This study aims to fill the existing gaps in understanding how cognitive factors influence the effectiveness of entrepreneurial learning and its subsequent impact on business success. By addressing these issues, the research will provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and practitioners seeking to enhance the entrepreneurial landscape in Nigeria's fashion industry.

The central problem addressed by this study is the significant gap in understanding how entrepreneurial cognitivity influences the relationship between entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurial success within the fashion industry in Plateau State, Nigeria. Despite the increasing recognition of the importance of entrepreneurial learning in fostering business success, there is limited empirical evidence regarding the specific cognitive processes that mediate this relationship in the context of fashion entrepreneurship. This gap is particularly concerning given that approximately 60% of fashion startups in Nigeria fail within their first five years due to inadequate entrepreneurial education and support systems (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). The inability of

fashion entrepreneurs in Plateau State to leverage entrepreneurial learning effectively stifles their growth potential and limits their capacity to adapt to the rapidly changing fashion market.

The first issue is the lack of access to quality entrepreneurial education and training programs that equip fashion designers with the necessary skills and knowledge. Research indicates that fashion entrepreneurs who engage in structured learning experiences are more likely to succeed in their ventures (Akinola, 2023). However, many aspiring designers in Plateau State lack access to such educational opportunities, leading to a skills gap that hampers their ability to innovate and compete effectively.

The second issue pertains to the insufficient integration of cognitive factors in entrepreneurial learning frameworks. Studies have shown that cognitive processes, such as opportunity recognition and risk assessment, play a crucial role in entrepreneurial success (Baron, 2022). Yet, many fashion entrepreneurs in Plateau state do not adequately incorporate these cognitive elements into their learning experiences, resulting in missed opportunities and poor decision-making.

The third issue is the high production costs associated with running a fashion business in Nigeria. Factors such as inflation, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to financing contribute to the rising costs of materials and production (World Bank, 2023). This financial strain makes it challenging for entrepreneurs to invest in their learning and development, further exacerbating the cycle of failure in the fashion industry.

Lastly, the absence of a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem in Plateau state limits networking opportunities and mentorship for emerging fashion designers. Research suggests that strong networks and mentorship relationships significantly enhance entrepreneurial learning and success (Garcia & Hsu, 2023). However, the lack of such support systems in the region leaves many entrepreneurs isolated, struggling to navigate the complexities of the fashion industry without guidance.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In line with the research problem, the following questions are raised:

1. What is the impact of entrepreneurship learning on entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State?
2. To what extent does entrepreneurial cognitiveness affect entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State?
3. To what extent does entrepreneurship learning influence entrepreneurial cognitiveness in fashion industry in Plateau State?
4. What is the role of entrepreneurial cognitiveness in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State?

## **AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship learning, entrepreneurial cognitiveness and entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate the effect of entrepreneurship learning on entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State.
2. To examine the role of entrepreneurial cognitiveness on entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State.
3. To investigate the effect of entrepreneurship learning on entrepreneurial cognitiveness in fashion industry in Plateau State.
4. To examine the role of entrepreneurial cognitiveness in the relationship between Entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State.

## **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

The following hypotheses are provided to direct the investigation in order to fulfill the aforementioned aims. The hypotheses are as follows:

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State.
- H<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial cognitiveness and entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State.
- H<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial cognitiveness in fashion industry in Plateau State.
- H<sub>4</sub>: Entrepreneurial cognitiveness does mediate the relationship between Entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

#### Concept of Entrepreneurial Success

Entrepreneurial success is defined as “the accomplishments (or lack thereof) from exploiting a potential opportunity or multiple potential opportunities” (Shepherd et al., 2019). While early research tended to equate success in entrepreneurship with monetary outcomes, recent research has taken a more refine approach to entrepreneurial success, observing that entrepreneurs also consider non-monetary outcomes to be accomplishments (Wach, Stephan, & Gorgievski, 2016; Wiklund, Nikolaev, Shir, Foo, & Bradley, 2019). Reflecting this success diversity in entrepreneurship, we distinguish between monetary and non-monetary success. In line with recent entrepreneurship research, we view monetary success as income comprising financial returns from entrepreneurship (Kautonen, Kibler, & Minniti, 2017) and non-monetary success as subjective well-being (Shepherd et al., 2019; Wiklund et al., 2019), defined as the general level of life satisfaction (Kibler, Wincent, Kautonen, Cacciotti, & Obschonka, 2019).

Entrepreneurial success (ES) is defined as “a complex phenomenon and it includes multiple criteria of a financial and non-financial character” (Dej, 2018). Initially, ES was equated almost exclusively with economic/financial indicators (Zhou, Zhou, Zhang, Obschonka, & Silbereisen, 2017). Some examples include the following: efficiency, growth, profits, liquidity, market share (Murphy, Trailer, & Hill, 2019), earnings, firm size, probability of survival (Fried & Tauer, 2015), and the growth in the number of employees (Sullivan & Meek, 2012). However, the simplest definition of entrepreneurial success can refer to the mere fact of continuing to run the business and existing in the market (as a registered business) (Fisher, Maritz, & Lobo, 2014). When considering entrepreneurial success, the competitive element allowing the comparison of entrepreneurs cannot be neglected (Fairlie & Robb, 2018). Therefore, an entrepreneur who continually operates in the market may consider themselves to be successful, though the success seems greater when more other businesses (i.e., competitors) fail (Douglas, 2018; Hogarth & Karelaia, 2020). Nevertheless, limiting entrepreneurial success to solely economic indicators does not reflect its full meaning (Wach, Stephan, & Gorgievski, 2016) and thus its definition should not be limited in such a way (Sarasvathy, Menon, & Kuechle, 2013). Wach et al. (2016) stressed the need to assess entrepreneurial success using subjective criteria (that are applied by entrepreneurs). However, this approach focused on the entrepreneurial perspective (Fodor & Pinte, 2017).

Early researches have focused on personality of entrepreneurs as they are elementary to entrepreneurial success. Repetitively most of the previous studies have been conducted on characteristics of entrepreneurs (Herron and Robinson, 2020). This is because psychological characteristics are eccentric to entrepreneurship study. Psychological characteristics school of thought views entrepreneurs as individuals who have unique values, attitudes and needs which drive them. It is based on the assumption that people behave in accordance with their values and behavior resulting from attempts to satisfy needs. (Koh, 2018) highlighted the frequently mentioned psychological characteristics of that predict entrepreneurial success as:

1. Need for achievement: Need for achievement is a unique human motivational attribute which can be explained as a desire for success or achieving something brilliant. In McClelland's, “The Achieving Society”, the need for achievement has been defined as an inclination to undertake and continue any activity that carries a fair chance of success or a satisfaction of personal achievement. An entrepreneur needs to have a strong desire in order to build and expand a business, also known as a “need for achievement” (Carland et al., 2017; Rauch & Frese, 2018). According to McClelland, there would be proportionately greater amount of entrepreneurial activity in a society if there is a moderately higher level of need for achievement in a society. A higher degree of need for achievement motivates an individual to establish goals, use his own skills and abilities essential to achieve the goals and put effort towards its attainment (Alam & Hossan, 2018).

2. Locus of Control: the concept of locus of control speaks about a person's generalized belief over control of his or her own destiny. It is an individual's perception about control over events of life (Findley & Cooper, 2019). Those who accredit control of events and destiny to themselves are likely to have an internal locus of control and are labeled to as ‘internals’. People who accredit control to forces beyond their control are said to have an external locus of control and are labeled to as ‘externals’ (Spector, 2017; Carver, 2018). Many literatures studies have revealed through empirical findings that internal locus of control is an entrepreneurial characteristic that has major drive towards entrepreneurial activity (Ho and Koh, 2018; Cromie, 2019).

3. Self-Efficacy: Self-efficacy alludes to a person's judgments with respect to their ability to execute a given task (Bandura, 2018). Self-efficacy is a strong belief in one's own competency to congregate and accomplish a specific task and achieve the goal by employing necessary resources, skills, and expertise. In entrepreneurship, self-efficacy may be manifested as contemplation of the tasks that needs commencement and development of new ventures, which is representative of the entrepreneurial act (Livesay, 2021).

4. Tolerance of Ambiguity: Budner (2021) has defined tolerance for ambiguity as the “ability to perceive ambiguous or doubtful situations as open and neutral or as desirable”. In an ambiguous situation an individual is

provided with any information that is complicated, insufficient, or outwardly conflicting (Norton, 2022). A person with high tolerance for ambiguity is the one who finds ambiguous situations desirable, challenging, interesting and he toils hard to triumph uncertain and unforeseeable situations in order to perform well (Koh, 2018).

5. Risk Taking propensity: Risk taking propensity has been perceived as an individual's propensity to undertake or avoid risk (Petrakis, 2017). The ability and tendency to take deliberated risks has been perceived as an essential characteristic for entrepreneurial success around the world (Carland et al., 2017; Rauch & Frese, 2019). In entrepreneurship literature risk-taking propensity has been understood as the inclination to take moderate risks (Begley, 2020).

6. Innovativeness: Innovativeness is perceived as an important component of entrepreneurial process. According to Schumpeter (2018) an entrepreneur is simply an innovator. Various literatures on entrepreneurship have commonly mentioned innovativeness as a distinct characteristic of the entrepreneur (Jun & Deschoolmeester, 2017). Peter Drucker (2018) suggested innovation is a tool by which entrepreneurs may exploit ideas in order to generate new service and business opportunities.

### **Entrepreneurship Learning**

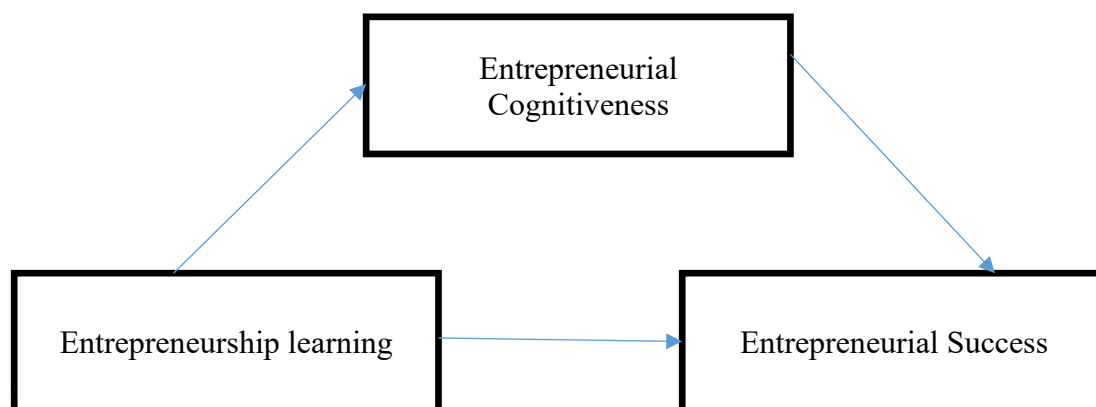
Entrepreneurship learning plays a pivotal role in equipping individuals with the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary for economic advancement (Meyer & Hamilton, 2020; Loi & Fayolle, 2021). This concept has gained global traction due to its multi-dimensional attributes, yet a consensus on its precise definition remains elusive within academic circles (Fayolle, 2018). Defined as a process that imparts knowledge and competence for identifying business opportunities, entrepreneurship learning extends beyond mere information acquisition; it encompasses the attitudes and motivations required to act upon these opportunities (Okeremi et al., 2021; Adamu, 2016). As such, it serves as a crucial predictor of personality traits conducive to business creation, highlighting its significance in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset essential for success (Fayolle, 2018).

### **Entrepreneurial Cognitiveness**

Entrepreneurial cognitivity is a critical area of study within entrepreneurship education, emphasizing the cognitive frameworks that entrepreneurs employ to navigate complex business environments. Defined broadly, entrepreneurial cognitivity encompasses the mental processes and knowledge structures that individuals use to assess opportunities, make decisions, and drive venture creation and growth (Mitchell et al., 2018). This cognitive framework is distinct from that of non-entrepreneurs, as it is shaped by the unique pressures and uncertainties inherent in entrepreneurial tasks. Entrepreneurs often develop specialized thinking patterns and information processing abilities that enable them to make strategic decisions under conditions of ambiguity and resource constraints (Sarasvathy, 2004; Presenza et al., 2020).

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework for this study is represented diagrammatically based on the relationship of the mediating variable on the dependent and independent variables.



Source: Author (2024)

## **2.2 THEORETICAL REVIEW**

The intersection of entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurial success is a complex terrain, particularly within the fashion designing business in Plateau State, Plateau State. This theoretical review explores the role of entrepreneurial cognitivity in this relationship, underpinned by the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, while integrating Human Capital Theory and Social Cognitive Theory as supportive frameworks. By examining these

theories, we can better understand how entrepreneurial cognitiveness influences learning processes and success outcomes in the fashion industry.

### **Resource-Based View Theory**

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, primarily articulated by Wernerfelt (1984) and further developed by Barney (1991), posits that a firm's competitive advantage is derived from its unique resources and capabilities. In the context of entrepreneurship, these resources include not only tangible assets but also intangible assets such as knowledge, skills, and cognitive abilities. The RBV emphasizes that entrepreneurs who can effectively leverage their cognitive resources—such as entrepreneurial cognitiveness—are more likely to identify and exploit opportunities, leading to greater entrepreneurial success (Fang et al., 2020). This theory is particularly relevant for the fashion designing business, where creativity and innovation are paramount. The RBV operates under several key assumptions: first, that resources are heterogeneously distributed among firms; second, that these resources are not easily transferable; and third, that certain resources can lead to sustainable competitive advantages if they are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). In the context of entrepreneurial cognitiveness, these assumptions suggest that the unique cognitive frameworks and decision-making processes of entrepreneurs can significantly impact their ability to harness resources effectively. This aligns with the notion that cognitive diversity can enhance resource utilization in dynamic environments, such as the fashion industry (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2022).

### **Human Capital Theory**

Human Capital Theory, introduced by Becker (1964), posits that individuals' skills, knowledge, and experiences constitute a form of capital that can enhance their productivity and economic outcomes. In entrepreneurship, human capital is critical as it encompasses the education, training, and cognitive abilities that entrepreneurs bring to their ventures. Recent studies have shown that higher levels of human capital correlate positively with entrepreneurial success, particularly in creative industries like fashion (Zhang et al., 2021). This theory supports the idea that entrepreneurial learning enhances human capital, which in turn fosters entrepreneurial cognitiveness and success.

The primary assumptions of Human Capital Theory include the belief that investments in education and training lead to increased productivity and that individuals with higher levels of education and skills will achieve better economic outcomes (Becker, 1993). In the context of the fashion designing business, these assumptions suggest that entrepreneurs who actively engage in learning and skill development are more likely to succeed. This aligns with the notion that entrepreneurial cognitiveness, as a facet of human capital, can significantly influence decision-making and opportunity recognition in dynamic markets (Treffers et al., 2022).

### **Social Cognitive Theory**

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Bandura (1986), emphasizes the role of observational learning, imitation, and modeling in the development of behavior and cognition. This theory posits that individuals learn from their environment and the behaviors of others, which is particularly relevant in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs often observe and learn from peers, mentors, and industry leaders, which can shape their cognitive frameworks and decision-making processes (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2020). In the fashion designing sector, where trends and consumer preferences rapidly evolve, the ability to adapt and learn from others is crucial.

SCT is based on several key assumptions: first, that behavior is influenced by personal factors, environmental factors, and the interplay between them; second, that individuals have the agency to influence their own behavior through self-efficacy; and third, that learning occurs within a social context (Bandura, 1997). These assumptions highlight the importance of social interactions and cognitive processes in shaping entrepreneurial cognitiveness. In the context of Plateau State, the social dynamics of the fashion industry can significantly impact how entrepreneurs learn and succeed.

### **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Sarman et al. (2025) examined the influence of entrepreneurial motivation and self-efficacy on the success of leather shoe craftsmen in Indonesia. Employing a quantitative methodology, the researchers distributed questionnaires to 95 small and medium-sized business operators registered with the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia. The analysis, conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), revealed that entrepreneurial motivation positively impacts entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which in turn significantly affects business success. Furthermore, the findings indicated that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between motivation and success, suggesting that motivated entrepreneurs are more likely to succeed when they possess confidence in their capabilities. This study underscores the critical importance of fostering both motivation and self-efficacy among entrepreneurs, particularly in emerging markets, while also identifying external factors that may influence these relationships as a potential area for future research.

The exploration of resourcefulness and its impact on entrepreneurial growth was conducted by Echu and Okpara (2020). This study focused on the Plateau State of Plateau State, Nigeria, investigating factors such as fund availability, innovative ideas, and customer patronage that contribute to entrepreneurial success. Utilizing a quantitative approach, the researchers sampled 342 registered entrepreneurs, including fashion designers and metal fabricators, and employed structured questionnaires for data collection. The analysis, conducted using SPSS multiple linear regression, revealed a significant positive relationship between all three independent variables—innovative ideas, availability of funds, and customer patronage—and the growth of entrepreneurs. The findings underscored the importance of fostering a culture of resourcefulness to enable entrepreneurs to capitalize on existing opportunities and drive business growth. However, the study identified a gap in understanding the specific challenges faced by these entrepreneurs, highlighting the need for further research into the contextual factors influencing their resourcefulness. In 2022, Nzei examined entrepreneurship within fashion design business ventures for retirees, emphasizing the necessity for entrepreneurial skills training to facilitate successful transitions into self-employment. The study highlighted the importance of equipping prospective retirees with both technical skills, such as pattern making and clothing construction, and essential business management skills to navigate the challenges of the fashion industry. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the research discussed various opportunities within the fashion sector, the obstacles faced by aspiring fashion entrepreneurs, and strategies to overcome these challenges. Key findings indicated that while many retirees express a desire to start their own businesses, a lack of preparation and training often hinders their success. The author advocated for comprehensive training programs focusing on both technical and soft skills, enabling retirees to create sustainable fashion ventures. This research contributed valuable insights into the intersection of entrepreneurship and retirement, while also identifying a gap in the literature regarding the specific training needs of retirees in the fashion industry. Ahmad et al. (2025) investigated the interplay between entrepreneurial learning intensity, psychological capital, and work engagement in driving entrepreneurial success, specifically through the lenses of market and service orientation, while considering the moderating role of digitalization. This quantitative study collected survey data from CEOs of entrepreneurial ventures in China and Pakistan, analyzing the results using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed that both entrepreneurial learning intensity and psychological capital significantly enhance entrepreneurial success, with market and service orientation acting as vital mediators in these relationships. Additionally, digitalization was found to strengthen these connections, underscoring its role as a strategic enabler in dynamic market environments. This research contributes to the literature by integrating psychological and strategic perspectives on entrepreneurship, offering practical insights for fostering resilient and customer-centric businesses in an evolving digital landscape. However, the study noted limitations regarding its focus on specific regions and sectors, suggesting a need for further exploration of these dynamics across diverse contexts. Hermawan et al. (2025), investigated the mediating and moderating roles of entrepreneurial cognition and skills in the relationship between digital entrepreneurship, government support, and the development of entrepreneurial competencies among university students in Indonesia. Employing a quantitative research design, the study analyzed data from 474 second-year students across fifteen universities using AMOS and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings indicated that well-structured entrepreneurship education significantly enhances students' competencies, with entrepreneurial cognition and skills acting as critical mediators in this process. The research also highlighted the positive influence of digital literacy and government-led digitalization efforts on entrepreneurial competencies. However, challenges related to traditional teaching methods and inconsistencies in government policy effectiveness were identified, suggesting that a balanced approach is necessary for optimizing entrepreneurship education.

## **RESEARCH GAP**

The empirical review of literature surrounding entrepreneurship learning, entrepreneurial cognition, and entrepreneurial success reveals several notable gaps that warrant further investigation. First, while studies such as those by Dickson et al. (2020) and Kerr et al. (2017) have established links between general learning and entrepreneurial success, there remains a lack of clarity regarding the specific mechanisms through which various forms of entrepreneurial learning influence success across different contexts. The findings indicate a positive correlation between learning and outcomes, yet they also highlight inconsistencies and ambiguities, particularly regarding the effectiveness of specific entrepreneurial learning programs. This gap suggests a need for more nuanced research that explores how contextual factors, such as industry type and cultural differences, influence the relationship between entrepreneurial learning and success. Another significant gap is the limited exploration of the role of emotional and psychological competencies in the entrepreneurial process. Although studies like those by Fernández-Pérez et al. (2021) and Jiatong et al. (2021) touch on the importance of emotional competencies and self-efficacy, there is still insufficient understanding of how these factors interact with cognitive attributes to influence entrepreneurial intentions and success. The existing research often treats cognitive and emotional dimensions separately, neglecting the potential synergies between them. Addressing this gap could lead

to more holistic entrepreneurship education programs that foster both cognitive and emotional skills, thereby enhancing overall entrepreneurial success.

Furthermore, the empirical review highlights a lack of research focused on the specific challenges faced by entrepreneurs in niche markets, such as the fashion industry in Jos LGA, Plateau State. Studies like those by Echu and Okpara (2020) and Nzei (2022) provide insights into entrepreneurship in various contexts, yet they do not adequately address the unique challenges and opportunities present in the fashion sector. This oversight suggests a need for targeted research that examines the intersection of entrepreneurial learning, cognition, and success specifically within the fashion design business. Such studies could illuminate the distinctive factors that influence entrepreneurial outcomes in this industry, providing valuable guidance for aspiring fashion entrepreneurs.

The review indicates that while there is a growing body of literature on digital entrepreneurship and its impact on entrepreneurial success, as seen in the work of Hermawan et al. (2025), there is still limited understanding of how digital tools and platforms specifically enhance entrepreneurial learning and cognition in various sectors. The rapid evolution of digital technologies necessitates research that investigates how these tools can be effectively integrated into entrepreneurship education to cultivate the cognitive skills required for success in a digital economy.

This research topic on the role of entrepreneurial cognition in the relationship between entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurial success in the fashion designing business in Jos LGA, Plateau State, aims to address these identified gaps. By focusing on the unique context of fashion entrepreneurship, this study will explore how specific learning experiences and cognitive styles contribute to entrepreneurial success, while also considering the emotional and psychological dimensions that influence entrepreneurial behavior. This research will not only fill critical gaps in the literature but also provide practical insights for educators, policymakers, and aspiring entrepreneurs seeking to navigate the complexities of the fashion industry.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically utilizing a cross-sectional field survey. The justification for using a quantitative design lies in its ability to provide statistical insights and generalizable results, particularly when the research aims to quantify relationships or differences among variables. Quantitative methods are suitable for this study as they allow for the objective measurement of variables, enabling the researcher to analyze data statistically and draw conclusions that can inform policy and practice (Creswell & Creswell, 2021; Johnson & Christensen, 2023). The target population for this study consists of the registered fashion designing businesses within the Plateau State chapter of the Fashion Designers Association of Nigeria (PSFADAN, 2024). The total population is 1,706 registered businesses operating in the fashion design industry in Plateau State. To determine the appropriate sample size for this study, Krejcie and Morgan's formula will be utilized. According to the Krejcie and Morgan table, for a population of 1,706, the sample size is calculated as follows:

$$S = \frac{X^2 \cdot N}{X^2 + N - 1}$$

Where:

$S$  = Required sample size

$X^2$  = The table value for the desired confidence level and degree of freedom (from the chi-square distribution)

$N$  = Total population size

$$S = \frac{X^2 \cdot N}{X^2 + N - 1}$$

$$S = \frac{3.841 \times 1706}{3.841 + 1706 - 1}$$

$$S = \frac{6550.526}{1708.841} = 3.84$$

$$S = \frac{6550.526}{1708.841} = 319$$

In research, determining an appropriate sample size is crucial for ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings. For a population of 1706 individual fashion designing business owners, Krejcie and Morgan's formula suggests a recommended sample size of approximately 319 at a 95% confidence level. This sample size is calculated to provide a representative subset of the population, allowing researchers to make generalizations about the entire group while minimizing sampling error.

To distribute a sample size of 319 among the 17 LGAs in Plateau State, using a population of 1706, we will apply proportional allocation based on the number of registered Fashion designing Businesses in each ward.

**Table 1: Distribution of Registered Fashion Designing Businesses**

| LGAS          | Number of Registered Business |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Jos North     | 300                           |
| Jos South     | 250                           |
| Bassa         | 150                           |
| Barkin Ladi   | 120                           |
| Pankshin      | 100                           |
| Mangu         | 90                            |
| Riyom         | 80                            |
| Shendam       | 70                            |
| Langtan North | 60                            |
| Langtan South | 60                            |
| Jos East      | 40                            |
| Kanke         | 30                            |
| Bokkos        | 30                            |
| Quam'pam      | 40                            |
| Kanaam        | 20                            |
| Mikang        | 13                            |
| Wase          | 13                            |
| Total         | 1706                          |

Source: PSFADAN, 2024

## METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Multiple regression is a statistical technique used to examine the relationship between two or more independent variables (predictors) and a dependent variable (outcome). It extends the simple linear regression model, which deals with the relationship between two variables, to a scenario where there are multiple predictors influencing the outcome.

The multiple regression model can be expressed mathematically as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_p X_p + \epsilon$$

where:

$Y$  is the dependent variable (the variable you are trying to predict).

$\beta_0$  is the intercept term, representing the value of  $Y$  when all predictor variables are zero.

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_p$  are the coefficients of the independent variables  $X_1, X_2, \dots, X_p$ , respectively. These coefficients represent the change in  $Y$  associated with a one-unit change in the corresponding predictor variable, holding all other variables constant.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 DATA ANALYSIS

#### Reliability of Constructs

The reliability of the instrument was tested using the Cronbach's alpha test. The Cronbach's alpha is based on the average inter-item correlation. According to Pallant (2005), a scale with a Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.7 is required in order to create a reliable construct of multiple variables. Table 7 shows the result of the Cronbach's Alpha for each of the constructs was greater than 0.70 and the overall Cronbach's Alpha for all the variables is 0.951. This implies that all the variables were reliable and can be used in this study.

**Table 2: Reliability Test.**

| S/N | Questionnaire Construct | Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Result | Number of Items | Remark   |
|-----|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| 1   | Entrepreneurial Success | 0.923                               | 6               | Reliable |

|   |                               |              |           |                 |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 2 | Entrepreneurial learning      | 0.968        | 8         | Reliable        |
| 3 | Entrepreneurial Cognitiveness | 0.963        | 7         | Reliable        |
|   | <b>Overall</b>                | <b>0.951</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>Reliable</b> |

Source: SPSS 26.0

### Regression

Regression analysis describes and evaluates the relationships between a specified dependent variable and one or more independent variables. One can therefore assume that regression is an appropriate statistical method in order to confirm or disconfirm the chosen hypotheses. In regression analysis, important assumptions for a valid regression is elaborated and tested in order to ensure that the final regression model is not flawed. In this research the most important tests were assessing the appropriate number predictors compared to the sample size, testing the normality of the dependent variable, testing the included variables for multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity, and inspect if there are very influential cases and/or outliers. This part of the analysis will look at the predicting powers of the established constructs on the dependent variable using linear regression, and inspect if the established hypotheses can be confirmed or disconfirmed.

**Table 3: Model Summary**  
**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1     | .240 <sup>a</sup> | .713     | .510              | .638                       | 1.891         |

a. Predictors: (Constant), EC, EE

b. dependent variable: ES

Table 3 above shows the model summary for the multiple regression analysis. From the table, it can be seen that the R square is .713, meaning that the independent variable used explains about 71.3% of the variations in the explanatory variables. Taking into consideration the number of predictors entered into the model, table 9 also reveals an adjusted R square of .510, meaning that the explanatory variables (EC, EE) explain about 51.0% of the variations in the respondent variable (ES). There none is explained by factors outside the model.

**Durbin-Watson Test:** The Durbin-Watson (DW) test for serial correlation (auto-correlation) stands at 1.891. This falls within the range of 1.50 and 2.50, implying no presence of serial correlation among the residuals within the study period.

**Table 4: ANOVA**  
**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

| Model        | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig.              |
|--------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 31.458         | 2   | 15.729      | 10.167 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
| Residual     | 177.907        | 115 | 1.547       |        |                   |
| Total        | 209.364        | 117 |             |        |                   |

A. Dependent Variable: E

b. Predictors: (Constant), EC, EE

Findings in Table 10 showed the F statistic of the result. The F value indicates whether the set of dependent variables as a whole contribute to the variation in the independent variable. An F-value of 10.167 was found. Findings in Table 10 further revealed that the F value was significant ( $p = 0.000$ ) at 95% confidence level. This means that the independent variables are highly significant impacting entrepreneurial success.

### Normality of Dependent Variable

One important assumption of the regression analysis is that the dependent variable be normally distributed. Normality is used to describe a symmetrical, bell-shaped curve, which has the greatest frequency of scores around in the middle combined with smaller frequencies towards the extremes (Pallant, 2005). The regressions in this study has entrepreneurial success as the dependent variable.

## Correlations

**Table 5: Correlation Matrix**  
**Correlations**

|    |                     | ES     | EE      | EC      |
|----|---------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| ES | Pearson Correlation | 1      | .051    | .361**  |
|    | Sig. (2-tailed)     |        | .584    | .000    |
|    | N                   | 319    | 319     | 319     |
| EE | Pearson Correlation | .051   | 1       | -.239** |
|    | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .584   |         | .009    |
|    | N                   | 319    | 319     | 319     |
| EC | Pearson Correlation | .361** | -.239** | 1       |
|    | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000   | .009    |         |
|    | N                   | 319    | 319     | 319     |

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Version 22

Table 5 shows the correlation among the variables. It revealed that the correlation between entrepreneurial learning skills and entrepreneurial success is positive with coefficient value of .584. The correlation between entrepreneurial cognitiveness and entrepreneurial success is positive with coefficient value of .361. The correlation between entrepreneurial cognitiveness and entrepreneurial learning is negative with coefficient value of -.239. All the correlation value indicated a mixed correction.

## TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Here, the hypothesis formulated in chapter one of this research will be tested. The three (3) raised hypothesis will be tested one after the other.

### Decision Rule:

The general rule is that if the p-value is less than the level of significance of 0.05, the null hypothesis will be rejected while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. But if the p-value is greater than the level of 0.05, accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate.

Reject  $H_{01}$ - $H_{03}$  if p value < 0.05, otherwise Accept  $H_{01}$ - $H_{03}$

**Table 6: Coefficients**  
**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model        | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t     | Sig. |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |
| 1 (Constant) | 1.347                       | .352       |                           | 3.827 | .000 |
| Ee           | .170                        | .104       | .145                      | 1.642 | .013 |
| Ec           | .497                        | .111       | .396                      | 4.470 | .000 |

Dependent variable: ES

### Hypothesis I

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success in fashion designing in Plateau State, Plateau State. From table 11, the regression p-value of Entrepreneurial learning (EE) is 0.013 which is less than the significance level of 0.05. We reject the null hypothesis which states that entrepreneurial learning has no significant effect on entrepreneurial success, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Meaning, entrepreneurial learning has significant effect on the entrepreneurial success.

### Hypothesis II

H<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial cognitiveness and entrepreneurial success in fashion designing in Plateau State, Plateau State. From table 11, the regression p-value is 0.000 which is less than the significance level of 0.05. We reject the null hypothesis which states that entrepreneurial cognitiveness does not have a significant relationship on entrepreneurial success, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Meaning, entrepreneurial cognitiveness has significant relationship on entrepreneurial success.

### Hypothesis III

H<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial cognitiveness in fashion designing in Plateau State, Plateau State.

**Table 7: Coefficients.**  
**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model        | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| 1 (Constant) | 2.107                       | .219       |                           | 9.612  | .000 |
| EE           | -.222                       | .084       | -.239                     | -2.647 | .009 |

a. Dependent Variable: EC

From table 7, the regression p-value is 0.00 which is less than the significance level of 0.05. We reject the null hypothesis which states that entrepreneurial learning does not have a significant relationship on entrepreneurial cognitiveness, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Meaning, entrepreneurial learning has significant relationship on entrepreneurial success.

#### **Hypothesis IV**

H<sub>4</sub>: Entrepreneurial cognitiveness does mediate the relationship between Entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success in fashion designing in Plateau State, Plateau State.

**Table 8: Coefficients.**  
**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model        | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| 1 (Constant) | 1.394                       | .258       |                           | 5.397  | .000 |
| ES           | .298                        | .067       | .374                      | 4.470  | .000 |
| EE           | -.240                       | .078       | -.258                     | -3.079 | .003 |

a. Dependent Variable: EC

From table 8, the regression p-value on both entrepreneurial success and entrepreneurial learning are 0.000 and 0.003 respectively, which are both lesser than the significance level of 0.05. We reject the null hypothesis which states that entrepreneurial cognitiveness does mediate the relationship between Entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success in fashion designing in Plateau State, Plateau State, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Meaning entrepreneurial cognitiveness mediates the relationship between Entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success in fashion designing in Plateau State, Plateau State.

## **V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The study revealed a significant relationship between entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success in fashion industry in Plateau State, with a regression p-value of 0.013, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative, indicating that entrepreneurship learning plays a crucial role in the success of entrepreneurs in this field. This finding is consistent with prior studies that highlight the transformative impact of entrepreneurial learning in equipping individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively launch and manage enterprises (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). Formal learning fosters key competencies such as opportunity identification, strategic planning, financial literacy, and business ethics, which collectively enhance entrepreneurial performance and sustainability (Kuratko, 2019). In the context of fashion designing, the relevance of entrepreneurship learning is particularly significant, given the dynamic nature of the industry that requires a blend of creativity, innovation, and business acumen. Entrepreneurs with formal learning are more likely to adapt to market trends, manage competition effectively, and leverage opportunities for growth, thereby achieving greater success. The analysis of the second hypothesis showed a regression p-value of 0.000, signifying a highly significant relationship between entrepreneurial cognitiveness and entrepreneurial success. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected, supporting the assertion that cognitive skills are integral to entrepreneurial performance. Entrepreneurial cognitiveness encompasses critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, and the ability to adapt to changing business environments. Entrepreneurs with high cognitive capabilities are better positioned to make informed decisions, anticipate market changes, and innovate in response to customer needs. This finding aligns with the cognitive theory of entrepreneurship, which posits that cognitive processes significantly influence entrepreneurial behavior and success (Baron, 2004).

In fashion designing, entrepreneurial cognitiveness manifests in the ability to conceptualize unique designs, solve customer complaints creatively, and identify emerging fashion trends. Entrepreneurs with such

mental agility are more likely to develop competitive products, enhance customer satisfaction, and achieve long-term success in the industry. The regression result for the third hypothesis indicated a p-value of 0.00, confirming a significant relationship between entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial cognitiveness. This supports the idea that learning enhances not only technical skills but also cognitive competencies necessary for business success. This finding supports previous research suggesting that learning significantly influences an entrepreneur's mindset and approach to business challenges (Sarasvathy, 2001). Through structured learning, entrepreneurs gain access to tools, frameworks, and experiences that enhance their critical thinking, opportunity recognition, and decision-making abilities. In the realm of fashion designing, cognitive skills are essential for innovation, brand differentiation, and problem-solving. As such, entrepreneurship learning serves as a foundation for developing these skills, enabling entrepreneurs to navigate complexities in the industry and to remain competitive. The final hypothesis tested whether entrepreneurial cognitiveness mediates the relationship between entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial success. The regression p-values of 0.000 and 0.003 for entrepreneurial success and entrepreneurial learning, respectively, confirmed the significance of this mediating relationship. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, affirming that cognitiveness acts as a pathway through which learning influences success. This outcome reinforces the theoretical framework that learning indirectly contributes to entrepreneurial outcomes through cognitive development. It supports Baron and Markman's (2003) assertion that cognitive and social competencies are crucial mediators in the entrepreneurial process. Entrepreneurs with learning backgrounds develop cognitive skills that, in turn, enable them to apply their knowledge effectively in real-world business situations. In the context of fashion designing, this means that learning programs should not only impart technical knowledge but also focus on enhancing cognitive abilities such as creativity, strategic thinking, and decision-making. By doing so, entrepreneurs can better utilize their learning experiences to drive business success, especially in industries requiring high levels of adaptability and innovation.

## **VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 CONCLUSION**

The research concludes that entrepreneurial learning is a vital contributor to the success of fashion designers in Jos North. It equips entrepreneurs with essential skills and knowledge, fostering their ability to innovate and adapt to market demands. Entrepreneurial cognitiveness, characterized by mental agility and effective problem-solving, is crucial for achieving success in the dynamic and competitive fashion landscape.

Moreover, the mediating role of entrepreneurial cognitiveness indicates that cognitive development is a key outcome of learning experiences, which subsequently enhances business performance. Thus, entrepreneurship education programs should be designed to strengthen cognitive competencies alongside technical skills to better prepare entrepreneurs for the complexities of the industry.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Integrate Cognitive Development in Learning Programs:** Educational institutions and training organizations should design entrepreneurship programs that combine technical skills with cognitive skills development. Modules focusing on creativity, decision-making, and strategic thinking should be included to enhance cognitive competencies.
  2. **Promote Practical Learning Experiences:** Stakeholders should invest in workshops and mentoring programs that emphasize real-world problem-solving and critical thinking. Practical sessions, such as business simulations and case studies, can provide valuable hands-on experience for aspiring fashion entrepreneurs.
  3. **Enhance Collaboration with Industry Experts:** Curriculum developers should collaborate with industry practitioners to incorporate current market trends and challenges into entrepreneurship education. This will ensure that learning materials are relevant and applicable to the realities of the fashion industry.
  4. **Encourage Peer Learning and Networking:** Initiatives that foster networking among fashion entrepreneurs can enhance knowledge sharing and support systems. Creating platforms for collaboration and mentorship can help entrepreneurs learn from one another and build valuable industry connections.
  5. **Conduct Continuous Evaluations of Learning Programs:** Regular assessments of entrepreneurship education programs should be implemented to evaluate their effectiveness in developing both cognitive and technical skills. Feedback from participants can inform improvements and adaptations to the curriculum.
- Future research can explore various dimensions to further understand the dynamics of entrepreneurial learning and cognitiveness: Investigate Other Cognitive Factors: Studies could examine additional cognitive elements, such as emotional intelligence and resilience, and their impact on entrepreneurial success, particularly in creative industries.

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