

## DO ENTREPRENEUR NETWORKS AND PASSION INFLUENCE ENTREPRENEUR RESILIENCE? A SURVEY AMONG FIRM OWNERS IN BURUNDI

**Muhimpundu Filliolet**  
Shanghai University  
China  
mpundufil2005@yahoo.fr

**Gideon Asare**  
Zhejiang Gongshang University  
China  
asaregideon015@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of entrepreneur networks and passion on entrepreneur resilience. Also, the research used entrepreneurs' education and internal locus of control to moderate the relationship. The study employed a cross-sectional survey and designed questionnaires to collect data from all the accessible entrepreneurs at a time in five cities in Burundi. A convenient sampling approach was used to select the participants due to the busy operational activities of the targeted group. Both physical (drop and pick later approach) and online questionnaires were used to gather the data. In three weeks, 215 responses were retrieved. The study found a significant relationship between entrepreneur passion, network, and entrepreneur resilience. Moreover, the moderation output supported the assumption that when entrepreneurial education and locus of control are high, entrepreneurs' network increasingly influences their resilience in the hierarchical regression. This study suggests that scholars, universities, business agencies, and leading entrepreneurs should organize webinars, workshops, or entrepreneur programs to motivate young entrepreneurs. Moreover, the researcher recommends mentorship, coaching, or entrepreneur development agencies in the local districts to help entrepreneurs succeed.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneur network, passion, resilience.

### INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial businesses contribute significantly to livelihood empowerment and a country's economic growth. For instance, the U.K. had 5.7 million small and medium enterprises in 2017, which accounted for 99.9% of all businesses, 60% of the U.K. (Ekinci et al., 2020). In Burundi, the entrepreneurs' activity in the small and medium enterprises formed 37%, whereas the Global entrepreneurship index was 21.8% in 2019 according to the Integrated Business Survey (IBES). Entrepreneurship creates employment and wealth for both individuals and society. In all sectors of the economy, entrepreneurs have contributed to the improvement of lives, infrastructure, technological innovations, services, processes and industrialization (Costa et al., 2023). There is no single sector in that entrepreneurs have not engaged in creative and passionate work activity. This makes the study of entrepreneurship vital for all groups and organizations (Oberoi et al., 2021).

Empirical studies have given evidence that most successful entrepreneurs are popularly characterized as being resilient, having strong networks, and having a great passion for their business (Newman et al., 2021; Costa et al., 2023). Recently, young boys and girls are expanding their network, and passion to alleviate poverty, improve self-dependency, and attain financial freedom through entrepreneurship (McIntyre et al., 2023). Today's entrepreneurs have learned to

be more resilient due to the competitive environment and glocalization or globalization. Resilience is a construct with manifold descriptions, and Fisher, Merlot, and Johnson (2017) documented it as a critical phenomenon in entrepreneurship. Kaplan (2019) postulated that resilience emerges when the interaction of risk and protective factors contribute to good outcomes (entrepreneurial success). Entrepreneurial resilience is entrepreneurs' ability to adapt to changes in their business environment and rebound after experiencing adverse situations (Bullough, Renko & Myatt, 2020).

Passion has been identified as a critical cognitive attribute of entrepreneurs that is linked to entrepreneurial survival, growth, and success (Santos et al., 2020; Block et al., 2020). Meanwhile, the informative and competitive nature of today's business has required the need for strong network connections to stay resilient in the world of doing business. Zhang et al. (2021) maintained that a crucial venturing strategy for entrepreneurs is to build business networks that help alleviate their liability in terms of newness and provide access to resources and opportunities worldwide. Although entrepreneur networks and passion for entrepreneur resilience have been documented in advanced countries (China, USA), more empirical research is needed among entrepreneurs in African countries (e.g. Burundi) for a comparative analysis of strong entrepreneurial features. This research, therefore, provides a timely and empirical contribution to entrepreneur literature by investigating and widening the understanding of how entrepreneurs' attributes such as passion, network and resilience contribute to entrepreneurial success in the country.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Entrepreneur, Network, Passion and Resilience**

The question of who or what is an "entrepreneur" generate a broad array of responses. Originally from the French word to mean contractor, the online dictionary explains an entrepreneur as a person who sets up a business, taking a financial risk in the hope of profit (Oxford Dictionary, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition). Santos et al. (2020) opined that entrepreneurs are people intrinsically motivated to utilize the benefits of technological, demographic, and social changes to create upheavals in the current state of equilibrium and, in so doing, bring in new products and services or new ways of working. In our modern societies, the entrepreneur is a hero-like character and it is the entrepreneurs' personal attributes that play a critical role in his/her ability to recognize entrepreneurial opportunities. Costa et al. (2023) see an entrepreneur as an exploiter of profit opportunities that exist due to disequilibrium in the market, and who through his knowledge, recognizes those opportunities when others cannot.

Generally, a network is about developing and using contacts, influence, roles, and positions to achieve desired goals. In 1998, Wit and Meyer described networks as the patterned relationships between individuals, groups, and organizations. These connections are formed on the voluntary arrangement between individuals who work together and share a common goal. According to Emrizal et al. (2020), networking can be regarded as a form of collaboration in which various actors (either individuals or organizations) informally or formally collaborate with several other actors in the network. In terms of the individual entrepreneur, the level is more about one's ability to cooperate, team, build relationships, connect and maintain social and personal linkage ideas in entrepreneurship. Remarkably, studies focusing on informal networking often included

also other actors like friends, family members, religious affiliations, social groups, backgrounds, etc. in entrepreneurs' networks (Emrizal et al., 2020).

A passion is a strong inclination that people to enjoy and consider important activities, and in which they invest their time and energy (Nowinski et al, 2020). Everyone puts his or her passion first and therefore prefers to engage in activities that bring inner satisfaction. Mostly, people internalize their passions in identities and activities that they enjoy doing. The concept is not far from a career and entrepreneurial passion. For example, Cardon & Kirk (2013) argue that entrepreneurial passion is the love of the business itself. According to Vallerand et al. (2015), entrepreneurial passion implies a strong inclination towards activities that one enjoys and considers important. Likewise, entrepreneurial enthusiasm will lead entrepreneurs to devote a higher level of energy and effort to their business success (Balgiasvhili, 2017).

Entrepreneurial resilience constitutes a dynamic and developing process from which an entrepreneur acquires knowledge, ability, and skills to assist them in facing an uncertain future with positivity, creativity, and optimism by relying on their resources (Ayala & Manzano, 2014). According to Lee and Wang (2017), entrepreneur resilience is the ability to overcome traumatic events and bounce back from despair or success in overcoming challenges and regaining positive results despite adverse circumstances in doing business. Bonanno (2020) defined resilience as the ability to maintain psychological and physical stabilities from anything that may disturb activities. A resilient enterprise and individual is always ready in handling disturbances, which is likely to translate into entrepreneurship. Mostly, it is a test of time that measures one's resilience and ability to resolve conflicts and impediments to work progress.

### Research Model and Hypotheses Development

The research conceptualizes the relationship between entrepreneur passion, network, and resilience in one model and proposes underlying assumptions in Figure 1. The study moderated the relationships between entrepreneurship education and locus of control. Based on this, the study adopts the previously validated measuring items and modifies them to suit the current data collection environment.

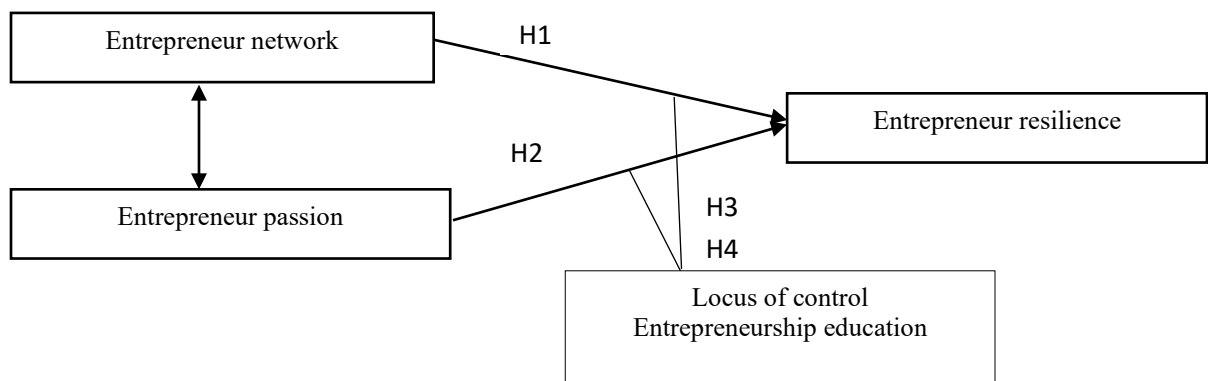


Figure 1: A research framework

### **Entrepreneur Network and Entrepreneur Resilience**

An entrepreneur network is the existence or building of cooperation, partnership, and collaboration among the various stakeholders both at the individual or organizational level. Emrizal (2020) asserted that at the individual entrepreneur level, a network is more about one's ability to cooperate, team, build relationships, connect and maintain social and personal linkage ideas in entrepreneurship. Existing literature used functional and structural approaches such as roles, positions, communication partners, and connections to describe the entrepreneur network (Kaplan, 2019). According to Costa (2023), informal networking often included also other actors (friends, family members, religious affiliations, social groups, background, etc.) in entrepreneurs' networks and has a positive relationship with entrepreneur resilience. Block et al. (2020) argued that the roles and positions of local firms and entrepreneurs' connections have an impact on the entrepreneur's success. Based on these previous findings, this study proposes that;

*H1: The entrepreneur network has a positive relationship with entrepreneur resilience.*

### **Entrepreneur Passion and Entrepreneur Resilience**

Passionate entrepreneurs promote entrepreneurship and advocate for entrepreneurial values and mindsets. While Vallerand et al. (2018) found that passion is a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy. Chen et al. (2015) concluded that passion inspires people to work harder and with greater effect, while effort comes more easily and enjoyably. It is driven by intense positive feelings, occurs over time (is not episodic), regulates behavioral tendencies, and is target-specific (Cardon, Glauser, & Murnieks, 2017). In an entrepreneurial context, passion has been associated with positive affect, subjective well-being, mental health, creative problem-solving, decreased burnout, reduced role conflict goals, commitment and not giving up spirit. Prior literature has documented that there has been significant emphasis on how the entrepreneur's passion affects their business life and continuity (Newman et al, 2021; Vallerand et al, 2018; Thorgren & Wincent, 2013). This study, therefore, postulates that;

*H2: Entrepreneur passion will positively relate to entrepreneur resilience.*

### **Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneur Resilience**

Entrepreneurship education can stimulate consciousness toward self-employment as a career option. There are implications that the consciousness towards self-employment inspires young people to equip themselves with the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to acquire a successful business (Abdelwahed et al., 2022). It is referred to as a legitimate program that is done to prepare startup owners, or entrepreneurs with the required skills and knowledge to be able to identify opportunities, understand a customer's perception, generate new ideas and develop business plans, as well as understand and evaluating environmental, institutional and political issues (Cheng, 2019). As a form of education, a social practice of transforming people, entrepreneurship education will inevitably affect the participants. This study, therefore, assumed that;

*H3: Entrepreneur education will moderate the relationship between entrepreneur network, passion and resilience.*

### **Internal Locus of Control**

The concept of locus of control describes the degree to which a person perceives an outcome as being contingent on their actions or those of external forces, existing along a continuum from a more internalized orientation to a more externalized orientation (Yuksel et al., 2020). According to Mazzei et al. (2016), individuals who hold the belief that outcomes are dependent on their behavior or personal characteristics are said to have an internal locus of control. Entrepreneurs with an internal locus of control are associated with self-determination theory, which Ryan and Deci, (2000) argued that the self-determination pathway based on the changing sense of control driven by rewards may affect intrinsic motivation, which more directly affects creativity and resilience. Yuksel et al. (2020) and Amabile (1983) related internal locus of control in the entrepreneur context as the belief that all entrepreneurial activities and success depends on the owner but not external factors. Gagné & Deci (2021) asserted that the internal locus of control also relates to self-control or regulation, self-belief, self-determination and self-motivation which are likely to affect entrepreneur resilience. This study, therefore, assumed that;

*H4: Internal locus of control will moderate the relationship between entrepreneur network, passion and resilience.*

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study employed a cross-sectional survey research design to collect data from many different entrepreneurs at a moment in Burundi. A cross-sectional survey, thus taking information from many people at a time was appropriate for this study since the researcher focused on numerous entrepreneurs in different industries and cities of Burundi. Some of the entrepreneurial activities in the country include grocery stores, plumbers, hairdressers, fashion designers, electricians, creative arts, consultants, and many others. The cross-sectional survey is relatively cheaper and faster to gather data in different locations and it is less time-consuming.

### **Population and Sample Size**

#### **Research Instrument (Questionnaire)**

The study used questionnaires to collect information from entrepreneurs. The questions were grouped into three sections. First, Section A' describes the entrepreneurs' background information such as age, gender, years in the entrepreneurial business, educational level, and the number of workers employed. In Section B, the questionnaire inquired about the participants' opinions on entrepreneurs' business activities. There were a total of seven (7) questions in this section and some of the questions included "I have difficulties controlling my urge to do my business activities", "the new things that I discover with this business allow me to appreciate it even more", etc. The study measured the questions by using the Five-Likert scale response, where; strongly agree (SA) = 5, agree (A) =4, neutral (N) = 3, disagree (D) = 2 and strongly disagree (SD)=1. Section C contains questions on entrepreneur network (N1-N5), passion (P1-P7), locus of control (LC1-LC5), entrepreneurship education (EE1- EE4), and resilience (R1-R7). The study measured the questions by using the Five-Likert scale response. For instance, strongly agree (SA) = 5, agree (A) =4, neutral (N) = 3, disagree (D) = 2 strongly disagree (SD)=1.

### Data Collection Procedure

Before the full-scale administration of the questionnaires, the researcher contacted the entrepreneur association leaders at Bujumbura, Gitega, Muyinga, Ngozi, and Bururi. The study explained the notion behind the research, the purpose of the data, how the data will be managed after the study, and the ethical considerations to be observed. Before then, the study adopted a two-way approach in the data collection process. These were online and drop-and-pick-later methods.

With the drop-and-pick-later approach, the researcher sought the help of five (5) field enumerators to administer the questionnaires. The field enumerators were first trained on how to carry out the data collection with due diligence. The field enumerators visited the business premises of the entrepreneurs, interact and give them the questionnaires. Within two to three days' intervals, the field enumerators would then pay a second visit to pick the questionnaires. The field enumerators recorded the responses in an already coded SPSS and sent the data to the researcher. In addition to hiring field enumerators to administer physical questionnaires, the study employed an online survey to gather information from entrepreneurs who had formed groups in the cities. Since the researcher found it difficult to locate all the entrepreneurs, the online administration provided the easiest and cheapest way to reach all the entrepreneurs at once. The questions were designed online using the Google Survey Form. The questionnaire administration occurred from 25<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023. A total of two hundred and fifteen (215) complete responses were received, and this was used for the data analysis.

## RESULTS

### Respondents' Biodata

The study enquired about the respondents' background information such as age, gender, educational level and years in the entrepreneurship business as well as the number of workers they have employed. It was found that more males (54.9%) responded to the questionnaires, whereas females accounted for 45.1%. The gender bias had no statistical impact on the study results since the researcher employed a simple random approach to select the entrepreneurs from five business cities in Burundi. In terms of the respondents' age, respondents from 31-40 years formed the highest age group of 101 (47%), followed by respondents with ages 21-30 years. Besides, the study found that 51.6% of the entrepreneurs who responded to the survey had bachelor's degrees, 8.8% had a postgraduate degree and 34% had secondary-level certificates. Interestingly 5.6% of the respondents had no formal qualification. The study found that 50.7% of respondents have been in the entrepreneurship business for 6 to 10 years. The experience in business operations would contribute to entrepreneurial education and network.

### Model Fitness Test

The researcher applied for major indices to evaluate the model fit. From the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) test the study discovered the following properties. Chi-square properties ( $X^2$ ) = 140.030,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ . The indices output for the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) is .921, the incremental fit index (IFI) is .908, and the comparative fit index (CFI) is .903. All the values were greater than .90 and meet the condition of a good model fit (Bentler, 1990). Additionally, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is .051, the (Adjusted) Goodness of Fit (AGFI) is .899, and GFI is .839. The CFA results indicated that the variables were acceptable and appropriate for further analysis in Figure 2.



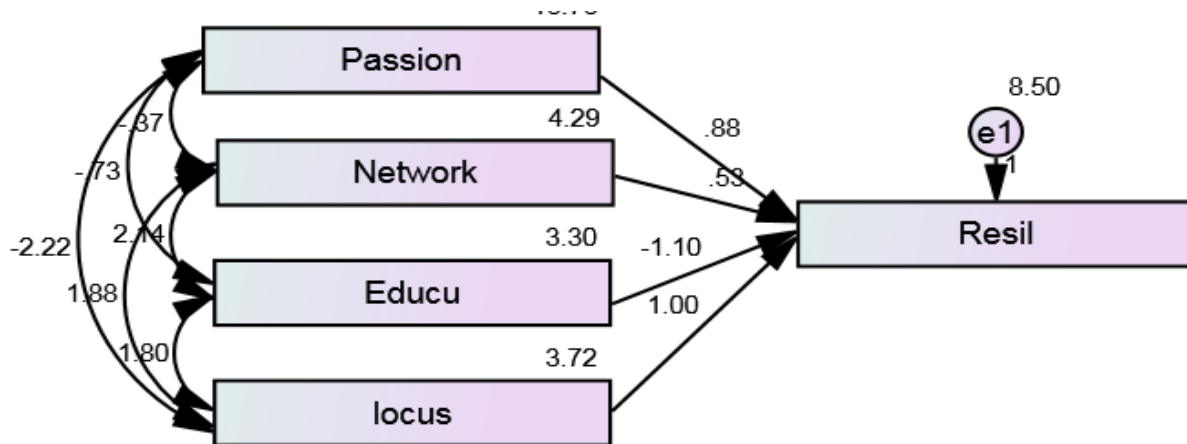


Figure 2 Statistical model

**Correlation Results**

First, the reliability statistics of the individual variables met Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient threshold of more than 0.5 as “acceptable” and 0.7 as “good”. The results are shown in parentheses in the correlation output in Table 1. The Pearson Moment Correlation Matrix output showed that entrepreneur passion positively and strongly correlated with entrepreneur resilience ( $r = 0.782^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Moreover, the study found that the entrepreneur network had a positive but weak correlation with entrepreneur resilience ( $r = 0.175^*$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Contrary to the assumptions, entrepreneurship education and locus of control had negative but significant associations with entrepreneur resilience as illustrated in Table 5.10. Both moderating variables had an association with the entrepreneurs’ resilience.

Table 1 Correlation matrix among study variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	
Passion	26.31	4.10	(0.843)				
Network	19.07	2.08	-.044	(0.625)			
Education	14.83	1.82	-.099	.568**	(0.713)		
Internal locus of control	19.56	1.93	-.281**	.472**	.515**	(0.754)	
Resilience	27.35	4.13	.782**	.175*	.177**	-.292**	(0.889)

Note; total responses = 215, \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), \*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed) Reliability values are in parentheses.

**Entrepreneur Passion and Resilience Relationship**

In Step 1 of Table 2, the study controlled for gender, age and years in entrepreneurship, although gender was found to be significant in each step of the model. This means entrepreneurial gender (male or female) has an impact and some control effects on entrepreneur passion and resilience relationship. Age and years in business operation were not statistically significant. In Step 2, the passion variable (independent factor) was added to the model. The results showed a positive and significant relationship with entrepreneur resilience (Step 2:  $\beta$  0.687,  $p < 0.05$ ). The r-square increased by 0.376 (from 0.293 to 0.669). This means passion alone contributed 37.6% to the reason entrepreneurs are resilient. The researcher included the moderators in Step 3 and observed the statistical changes and contributions of entrepreneurial education and locus of control.

Entrepreneurial education was significant (0.182,  $p < 0.05$ ), however, the internal locus of control was insignificant. The introduction of these two variables contributed only 1.2% to the overall model.

Table 2 Moderators vs Passion and resilience relationship

Variables	<i>Education and internal locus of control</i>		
	Step 1	Step2	Step 3
<i>Control variables</i>			
Gender	4.23**	1.91**	1.89**
Age	-.014	-.242	-.208
Years in entrepreneurship	.450	.221	.279
<i>Main variables</i>			
Entrepreneur passion		.687**	.663**
<i>Interaction term</i>			
Education			.182*
Internal locus of control			-.100
R	.542	.818	.825
R <sup>2</sup>	.293	.669	.681
F	29.207	238.613	3.806
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	.293	.376	.012

NB: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; N = 215; Dependent Variable: resilience; interaction term (entrepreneur education and locus of control); independent factor (entrepreneur passion)

### Entrepreneur Network and Resilience Relationship

Following the previous procedures, the study controlled for gender, age and years in entrepreneurship in Step 1. Similarly, gender and years in entrepreneurship were statistically significant in each step. In Table 3, the result revealed that entrepreneurs' sex (male or female) and years in entrepreneurship have an impact on the network and resilience relationship. However, age values were insignificant in the model. In Step 2, the entrepreneur network variable (independent factor) was added to the model. The results showed a positive but weak significant relationship with entrepreneur resilience (Step 2:  $\beta$  0.150,  $p < 0.05$ ). The r-square increased by 0.005 (from 0.293 to 0.299). This means the network alone contributed 0.5% to the reason entrepreneurs are resilient. The researcher included the moderators in Step 3 and observed the statistical changes and contributions of entrepreneurial education and locus of control. Entrepreneurial education was significant (0.509,  $p < 0.05$ ), as well as the locus of control (0.683,  $p < 0.05$ ). The introduction of these two variables contributed 13.6% to the overall model and also increased the relationship between network and resilience (Step 3:  $\beta = 0.738$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). For this reason, the H4 was supported and the study reaffirmed that when entrepreneurial education and locus of control are high, entrepreneurs' network increasingly influences their resilience.



Table 3 Moderators vs entrepreneur network and resilience relationship

Variables	<i>Education and locus of control</i>		
	Step 1	Step2	Step 3
<i>Control variables</i>			
<b>Gender</b>	4.23**	4.13**	3.29**
<b>Age</b>	-.014	.011	.188
<b>Years in entrepreneurship</b>	.450*	.418*	.531*
<i>Main variables</i>			
<b>Network</b>		.150	.738**
<i>Interaction term</i>			
<b>Education</b>			.509*
<b>Locus of control</b>			.683**
<b>R</b>	.542	.547	.659
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.293	.299	.434
<b>F</b>	29.207	1.607	24.954
<b><math>\Delta R^2</math></b>	.293	.005	.136

NB: \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01; N = 215; Dependent Variable: resilience; interaction term (entrepreneur education and locus of control); independent factor (entrepreneur network)

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The researcher used both correlation and regression models to investigate the direct relationship between entrepreneur passion, network and resilience relationship. First, the correlation output indicated that entrepreneur passion positively and strongly correlated with entrepreneur resilience. Also, it was established that the entrepreneur network had a positive but weak correlation with entrepreneur resilience. The study further used a hierarchical regression model to buttress the correlation results, and evidently, similar results were obtained. The results indicated that entrepreneur passion was statistically significant and positively related to entrepreneur resilience. In the same way, there was a positive relationship between the entrepreneur network and entrepreneur resilience.

First, this research upholds the assumption that entrepreneurs' passion and network influence entrepreneur resilience in Burundi which is similar to the results of Cardon et al 2009, Fatoki, 2018; Huyghe et al., 2016). Past researchers found that entrepreneurs may disengage from certain activities, or prefer to focus on other activities, depending on the particular passion(s) they hold, and the effectiveness of their network or association in the industry (Santos et al., 2020; Ferreira, et al. 2016). Thus entrepreneurs' passion (feeling of commitment without external inducement) and association, a network such as family, religion, community support, position or role largely contribute significantly to the success and growth of entrepreneurs in East African countries, especially Burundi.

Entrepreneurial education and internal locus of control had a positive relationship with the entrepreneur network. This suggested that passion is intrinsic and it's difficult to regulate but building an entrepreneur network had significant relation with the individual self-belief and the nature of the startup or innovative education received. Moreover, the moderation output supported the assumption that when entrepreneurial education and locus of control are high, entrepreneurs' network increasingly influences their resilience in the hierarchical regression. This research upholds the assertion that passion interacts with education to influence intentions, behaviors, and venture outcomes (Cardon et al., 2009; Huyghe et al., 2016).

The hierarchical results revealed that entrepreneurial education was significant. This finding conforms to Bakar et al. (2015). They asserted that entrepreneurship education, at its core, is to educate people about building skills in fields like negotiation, leadership, new product development, creative thinking, and innovation, as well as awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option. Entrepreneurship plays the critical and essential role of combining business activities to create better and more innovative ones. Similarly, Fatoki (2018) argued that education provides individuals with a sense of autonomy independence, and self-confidence in their operational activities. Moreover, Yuksel et al. (2020) concluded that education broadens the horizons of individuals, thereby making people better equipped to perceive opportunities as well as education provides knowledge that can be used by individuals to develop new entrepreneurial opportunities.

Although this study showed no association in internal locus of control with resilience in the correlational output, which could be attributed to the heterogeneous characteristics of the sample as well as the sampling technique. However, Tyler et al. (2020) provided evidence that individuals with the relevant internal and external locus of control have strength-based interventions to promote development.

## CONCLUSION

Entrepreneur passion, network, and resilience relationships have several theoretical and conceptual implications. First, this study established that there is a bond between entrepreneurial passion and resilience. This link conforms to the dualistic model of passion, which describes the entrepreneur as having a strong leaning or desire for a self-defining activity one likes (McIntyre et al., 2023). The entrepreneur out of passion invests a huge amount of time and energy into the activities he or she values. The passion attribute of entrepreneurs supports the self-determination theory which supports the intrinsic commitment and sense of feeling to succeed in the field of business (Block et al., 2020).

In some entrepreneurs, the passionate activities become so self-defining that it represents a key feature of the individual's identity. The duality model provides two distinct features; harmonious and obsessive (Nowinski et al., 2020). According to Vallerand *et al.* (2008), harmonious passion is expected to lead to adaptive outcomes, whilst obsessive passion is expected to predominantly lead to less adaptive and at times maladaptive outcomes. Again, the theories of the millennial generation of entrepreneurs have associated entrepreneur passion and resilience with the adaptation of technologies, innovation, and love of scientific discovery (Liu et al., 2019). The world has witnessed millennial entrepreneurs, such as Mark Zuckerberg, founder, and CEO of Facebook.

Moreover, an entrepreneur network has a key impact on resilience. From the theoretical perspective, Costa et al. (2023) related networks to resource dependence, transaction cost economics, social network, innovation diffusion, and business diversity. Most successful entrepreneurs have utilized their organizational and personal network connections (positions, associations, religion, families, culture, places, etc.) to withstand political trauma, financial losses, acquire resources, mergers and acquisitions, strategic alliances, and other partnership deals. In some market structures, the concept of an entrepreneur network is used to overcome hoarding activities and transaction costs by networking. In the areas of supply chain management, an entrepreneur network is used to perform economic activities, firms have to enter into relationships with these external or outside actors (Ekinici et al., 2020). The stakeholders' theory and social exchange theory have been widely established through community and institutional networks. Some entrepreneurs have connected their business activities to societal leaders, models, agencies, and influential entities or persons to enjoy a competitive advantage from the network. Besides, Yu et al. (2021) argued that an entrepreneur network is about channels, information, knowledge, and resource exchange. The network is important for business diversity, uncertainty, and other opportunities. For instance, this report found that network entrepreneurs broadening search scope to form new ties, adopt a market-based approach when interacting with international partners, and reach out to unfamiliar individuals and organizations to form new bonds making such entrepreneurs more resilient.

First, this study recognized that entrepreneurs share some key similarities across different countries. Entrepreneurs' passion spirits should be revived through conducive political, social, and macroeconomic policies that facilitate start-up businesses, strategic alliances, easy business registration, partnerships, and joint ventures. To ensure this, innovative and educational entrepreneur programs or webinars should be integrated to graduate students in the various universities, apprentices, startup entrepreneurs, entrepreneur annual workshops and other events that could rekindle the entrepreneur's attention in Burundi.

Furthermore, this study suggests that scholars, universities, business agencies, and leading entrepreneurs should organize webinars, workshops, or entrepreneur programs to motivate young entrepreneurs. They should argue for the benefits of entrepreneur network, passion, and resilience or perseverance.

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