



GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND GREEN SELF-EFFICACY AS PREDICTORS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN EDO STATE

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ABSTRACT

In a society characterized with increasing level of ecological and environmental problems such as arising from abuse by industrialists and entrepreneurs, promoting green entrepreneurial practices becomes a necessity. The present study aimed to examine the extent to which green entrepreneurship and green entrepreneurial self-efficacy predicts business education students' green entrepreneurial intention in public universities in Edo State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a Correlational survey research design. The population of the study comprised all business education students in University of Benin (N =172) and Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma (N = 210). The instruments used for data collection were adapted from existing scales. The instruments were validated by two experts in Business Education. Cronbach's alpha was used in calculating the reliability of the instruments and it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78, 0.81, 0.80 for Green Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire, Self-Efficacy Questionnaire and Green Education Questionnaire respectively. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using correlation and regression analyses. The findings revealed that green entrepreneurship is a significant predictor of business education students' green entrepreneurial intention in universities in Edo State ($R^2 = .270$, $F(1, 283) = 104.559$, $P < .05$). The findings also revealed that green entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a significant predictor of business education students' green entrepreneurial intention in universities in Edo State ($R^2 = .171$, $F(1, 283) = 58.342$, $P < .05$). Based on these findings, it was recommended, among others, that the teaching and learning of green entrepreneurship should be emphasized and not just the conventional entrepreneurship education alone.

Keywords: Business education, Green entrepreneurship, Green entrepreneurial intention, Green entrepreneurial self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

Early and contemporary researchers have documented how important entrepreneurship is to the development and advancement of societies (Schumpeter, 1934; Ediagbonya, 2013; Ediagbonya, 2022b; Ediagbonya, 2022c; Ediagbonya, 2023). Ironically, entrepreneurship has received a lot of criticism for the detrimental effects of its commercial operations on society. Researchers have referred to these unsustainable business practices as the "business as usual model" (Mrkajic, Murtinu & Scalera, 2019; Demirel, *et al.*, 2019; Muo, & Azeez, 2019). In order to raise public awareness of ecological sustainability issues in relation to business management, various international donor agencies and organizations including the United Nations (UN), launched a



number of educational and enlightenment programmes at various levels (Pachecho, Dean & Payne, 2010; Muo & Azeez, 2019). The Stockholm Conference in 1972, the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992, the Montreal Convention, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Framework Convention on Climate Change are just a few of the interventions that tried to broaden understanding on green commercial endeavors. For instance, Farinelli, Bottini, Akkoynlu and Aerni (2013) highlight entrepreneurs' capacity to depart from the unsustainable traditional business model, which places an overemphasis on financial gain at the expense of sustainable development, which was the main focus of Green Entrepreneurship (GE).

Researchers from all over the world are paying growing attention to the innovative topic of green entrepreneurship (GE) (Gevrenova, 2015; Yin, Paz Salmador, Li & Lloria, 2022). Eco-entrepreneurship, ecological entrepreneurship, sustainopreneurship, sustainable entrepreneurship, and environmental entrepreneurship have been used interchangeably with GE. The notion of GE was created by combining the key elements of entrepreneurship: Innovation, risk, a fresh company model and the social and ecological responsibility of businesspeople (Gevrenova, 2015). According to Isaak (2002), GE is a system that uses substantial advances to change socially and environmentally conscious businesses. GE was defined by Yin, Paz Salmador, Li and Lloria (2022) as entrepreneurial conduct in an enterprise's development of green products, services, and markets to produce profit while taking environmental protection into consideration. Similar to this, GE refers to a distinct subgroup of entrepreneurship that aims to develop and execute solutions to environmental issues while also advocating for societal transformations to ensure that the environment is not harmed (Skordoulis, *et al.*, 2022). GE promote the green economy in at least four ways, including by offering eco-friendly goods and services, creating eco-friendly production methods, increasing demand for eco-friendly goods and services and generating eco-friendly employment. GE helps to create green companies that work with entrepreneurs and companies dedicated to fostering social change; and these companies are more likely to be successful and have higher sales (Mia *et al.*, 2022). GE and business education students' levels of green self-efficacy are closely related.

The terms "green self-efficacy" and "green entrepreneurial self-efficacy" are used interchangeably in the extant literature, and as such researchers are focusing more and more on them. The term "self-efficacy" refers to a person's confidence in his or her ability to carry out the behaviours required to achieve a certain performance goal (Bandura, 1977; Edokpolor, Imeokparia & Asemota, 2023). Self-efficacy is the belief that one can exert control over their motivation, behaviour, and environment in social situations (Ediagbonya, 2022a; Nguyen, Pham, Nguyen, Nguyen, Ngo & Pham, 2022). According to Guo (2022), green entrepreneurial self-efficacy (GESE) is a person's confidence that they can help solve environmental problems and demonstrates assurance in their efforts to safeguard the environment. The confidence a person has in his or her ability to take a risk and succeed in green entrepreneurial activities can be referred to as GESE in this present study. GESE further suggests that people possess the tenacity, conviction, and capacity to address environmental problems and challenges (Alshebami, 2023). This there implied that business education students with higher GESE have a higher chance of succeeding in green entrepreneurial endeavours. Furthermore, the extent to which business education students exert GESE is a function of their exposure to green entrepreneurship education (GEE), and in turn influences their green entrepreneurial intention or intention to start a new business upon graduation.

As the first critical step in starting a business, having entrepreneurial intentions is crucial in the entrepreneurship process. In the past two decades of the 21st Century, a number of models and theories have been developed and postulated to explain entrepreneurial intentions, including Shapero's Entrepreneurial Event (Shapero & Sokol, 1982), the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) "implementing entrepreneurial ideas" and the most recent Luthje and Franke's model



(Luthje & Franke, 2003) (Prabowo, Ikhsan, & Yuniarty, 2022). People with Green Entrepreneurial Intention (GEI) tend to adopt more behaviours that contribute to sustainable development of the economy. However, it is essential to cultivate green intents that would make one to become a green entrepreneur. People with green aspirations often not only create cutting-edge green goods and services but also help raise awareness of green consumerism and green ideals (Kirkwood, & Walton, 2010; Alshebami, *et al.*, 2023).

An individual's position or state that prompts curiosity, attention, and a decision to carry out a certain action can be interpreted as having a green entrepreneurial intention (Cai, Hussain, & Zhang, 2022). Little empirical research has examined the development of GEI in the samples of students and SME managers and owners (Sudyasjayanti, 2017; Koe, Omar, & Majid, 2013). In addition to the perceived constraints related to selling green products and obtaining financial help, a study conducted in India on GEI of Engineering and MBA graduates indicated positive perception towards green entrepreneurship and green business opportunities (Paramusshivaiah, *et al.*, 2013). The little empirical research done thus far therefore suggests the need for further research in the field of entrepreneurship and business education.

Statement of the Problem

Green entrepreneurship (GE) is a form of entrepreneurship which primarily have emphasis on the creation of businesses that will not only make profit but also promote environmental sustainability via 'green products and services'. It is hoped that GE will help promote the establishment of businesses that will help in reducing social vices (For example, unemployment, food insecurity and poverty) and environmental problems. From observations, most businesses are being established with emphasis on reducing social vices (or problems); with less emphasis on addressing the environmental problems which negatively impact on the ecosystem. The emphasis now is on achieving the goals of sustainable development which aims at tackling the social and environmental problems in the society. The importance of 'green entrepreneurship' has been emphasized by institutions and scholars in several fora. Such include: UN, the Stockholm Conference in 1972, Rio De Janeiro Earth Summit 1992, Montreal Convention, Kyoto Protocol and Framework Convention on climate change. GE has been embraced by so many because of its potential of solving societal problems. If GE is not seriously embraced, individuals or investors may continue to venture into entrepreneurial activities whose activities may negatively impact on the environment or ecosystem. Scholars such as Sher *et al.* (2020), Alvarez-Risco *et al.*, (2021), Hussain *et al.*, (2021), Qazi *et al.*, (2021), Maryani and Yuniarsih (2022), and Ali *et al.*, (2023) have established a significant relationship between self-efficacy and GEI. Wang *et al.*, (2021) and Yunikawati *et al.*, (2022) in their studies found that Green entrepreneurial self-efficacy is not a significant predictor of GEI. From the review so far, there is dearth of empirical studies especially as it relates to developing nations like Nigeria. This to a large extent has created a gap which this study has filled by investigating the extent to which GE and GESE predict business education students' green entrepreneurial intention in universities in Edo State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the extent to which GE and GESE predict business education students' GEI in public universities in Edo State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. If GE is a predictor of business education students' GEI in public universities in Edo State.
2. If GESE is a significant predictor of business education students' GEI in public universities in Edo State.



Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does GE predict business education students' GEI in public universities in Edo State?
2. Is GESE a significant predictor of business education students' GEI in public universities in Edo State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

1. GEIs not a significant predictor of business education students' GEI in public universities in Edo State.
2. GESE is not a significant predictor of business education students' GEI in public universities in Edo State.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Since the primary goal of this study was to determine how well green entrepreneurial self-efficacy and green entrepreneurship in Edo State business education students predict each other, a Correlational survey design was used.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

All students studying business at the University of Benin and Ambrose Alli University in Ekpoma, Edo State make up the study's population. There were 382 people living there. The study included the entire population. There was no sampling method because the full population was employed.

Data Collection Instruments

A standardized questionnaire served as the study's main tool. The questionnaires were used in eliciting information from the respondents and they were titled: *Green Entrepreneurship Questionnaire*, *Green Self-Efficacy Questionnaire* and *Green Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire*. It was divided into two parts – A and B. Part A was made up of the demographic variables of the respondents such as sex and institution; while Part B was made up of opinion statements designed in a Likert Scale showing: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively. The three components that made up the Green Entrepreneurship (GE) component were taken from Lotfi, Yousefi, and Jafari (2018). A sample of the item reads: 'Green entrepreneurship eliminates environmental degradation'. Three questions from Wang *et al.*, (2021) were adapted for the Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (GESE). A sample of the item reads: 'I can find a way to solve environmental problems'. Five items from Wang *et al.* (2021) were adapted for the Green Entrepreneurial Intention (GEI). A sample of the item reads: 'I am very interested in Green entrepreneurship'.

Validity and Reliability of Data Collection Instruments

The face and content validity of the instruments were examined. It was delivered to business education specialists, and the final questionnaire incorporated their feedback on the draft instrument. The Cronbach alpha was used in ascertaining the reliability of the instruments and it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78, 0.81 and 0.80 for Green Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire, Self-Efficacy Questionnaire and Green Education Questionnaire respectively after administering the instrument to 30 business education students in Delta State University, Abraka. The researcher used



Google Forms as an online tool for data collecting. 285 questionnaires, or 74.6% of the population, were collected by the researcher from the respondents.

Data Analysis

The SPSS version 23.0 was used for data analyses. The correlation and regression statistical tools were used in analyzing the data collected from the respondents.

RESULTS

The results of the data analyses are presented in this section with respect to answering of the research questions with correlation matrix and testing of the research hypotheses with linear regression.

Table 1
Correlation Matrix showing the relationship among Green Entrepreneurship, Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Green Entrepreneurial Intention

Variables		M	SD	1	2	3
GE	Pearson Correlation			1	.438**	.519**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	4.079	.553		.000	.000
	N			285	285	285
GESE	Pearson Correlation			.438**	1	.414**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	3.988	.572	.000		.000
	N			285	285	285
GEI	Pearson Correlation			.519**	.414**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	4.005	.556	.000	.000	
	N			285	285	285

Note.**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), GE – Green Entrepreneurship; GESE – Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy; GEI- Green Entrepreneurial Intention

The information in Table 1 shows the correlations between green entrepreneurial intention, green entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and green entrepreneurship. The variables have correlation coefficients between .414 and .519. Business education students’ intentions to start a green business had a moderately favorable connection with green entrepreneurship (r=.519, n=285). The self-efficacy of green entrepreneurs and their intention to become green entrepreneurs were somewhat positively correlated (r=.414, n=285). Green entrepreneurship and green entrepreneurial self-efficacy had a moderately good association (r=.438, n=285).

Hypotheses Testing

The results of the data analyses of the hypotheses were presented as follows.

Table 2: Linear regression estimates of the direct relationship between the study variables

Variables	GEI						
	SE(β)	F	t	Bias	R ²	Adj.R ²	p
GE	.147 (1.219)	104.559	10.225	-.001	.270	.267	.000
GESE	.126(.939)	58.342	7.638	.002	.171	.168	.000

Note: GE – Green Entrepreneurship; GESE – Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy; GEI – Green Entrepreneurial Intention; Adj.R² – Adjusted R-squared, R² – R-squared.

Table 2 reveals that GE ($F(1, 283) = 104.559$, $SE = .147$, $\beta = 1.219$, $t = 10.225$, 95% LLCI = .928 – ULCI = 1.506) had a significant positive influence on GEI. The adjusted R-square (.267) reveals that 26.7% of the variance in GEI is influenced by GE. The results of the 5000-resample bootstrap coefficients for GE influencing GEI (bias = -.001, $p = .000$) were statistically significant. All in all, the results confirmed the expectations of the author. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is rejected in the study. That is, Green Entrepreneurship is a significant predictor of Business Education students' green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Table 2 reveals that GESE ($F(1, 283) = 58,342$, $SE = .126$, $\beta = .939$, $t = 7.638$, 95% LLCI = .705 – ULCI = 1.201) had a significant positive influence on GEI. The adjusted R-square (.168) reveals that 16.8% of the variance in GEI is influenced by GESE. The results of the 5000-resample bootstrap coefficients for GESE influencing GEI (bias = .002, $p = .000$) were statistically significant. All in all, the results confirmed the expectations of the author. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is rejected in the study. That is, Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy is a significant predictor of Business Education students' green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis of hypothesis one showed that the intention of business education students in Edo State to engage in green entrepreneurship is significantly predicted by their knowledge of green entrepreneurship. To put it another way, having a working knowledge of GE tends to pique the enthusiasm of business education students in starting their own green businesses. The results of Nuringsih and Nuryasman (2022) and Abdelwaheed *et al.*, (2023), who discovered that GE has a substantial positive connection with GEI, are corroborated by this finding.

According to the study of hypothesis two, business education students' intention to start a green firm is significantly predicted by their level of green entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Because of their high levels of green entrepreneurial self-efficacy, business education students are more equipped and more confident in their ability to start a green firm. The results of Sher *et al.* (2020), Alvarez-Risco *et al.*, (2021), Hussain *et al.*, (2021), Qazi *et al.*, (2021), Maryani and Yuniarsih (2022), and Ali *et al.*, (2023) who discovered a substantial association between self-efficacy and GEI are corroborated by these results. The results, however, go against those of Wang *et al.*, (2021) and Yunikawati *et al.*, (2022), who found no evidence of a connection between GSE and GEI.



Conclusion

A conclusion that can be drawn from the results is that green entrepreneurship and green entrepreneurial self-efficacy are important predictors of business education students' intention to engage in green entrepreneurship in Edo State. Therefore, it indicates that stakeholders must take on the challenges of encouraging green entrepreneurial activity in order to address the nation's environmental and societal problems.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are therefore advanced:

- i. the teaching and learning of green entrepreneurship should be emphasized and not just the conventional entrepreneurship education alone.
- ii. the students should be encouraged to continuously improve on their abilities and build confidence that will propel them to launching green entrepreneurial ventures in the absence of paid-employment; and
- iii. Researchers are encouraged to begin to focus on this aspect of entrepreneurship with a view to solving the ecological and social issues.

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