

GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP ORIENTATION AS A PREDICTOR OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATES IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated green entrepreneurship orientation as a predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study. The study adopted the correlational survey research design. The population of the study comprised 87 (400 level) business education students in the 2023/2024 academic session from two public universities offering business education programmes in Anambra State. Two structured validated questionnaires were used to collect data for the study. The instrument was subjected to a pilot test. A reliability co-efficient value of 0.86 was obtained for the questionnaire on green entrepreneurship orientation and 0.87 for the questionnaire on business education students' entrepreneurial intentions. Simple regression analysis was used to analyse data for the study. The finding of the study revealed that that green entrepreneurship innovation is a positive predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. Furthermore, findings showed that green entrepreneurship innovation is a positive predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended among others that administrators of business education programmes in universities should include green entrepreneurial innovation into the business education curriculum.

Keywords: Green Entrepreneurship, Green Orientation, Green Initiatives, Entrepreneurship Intentions, Business Education

Introduction

Green entrepreneurship has garnered significant attention from governments, academics, and policymakers as a means to address social and environmental issues. However, it has not received full support globally, particularly in developing countries (Tien et al., 2020). Although governments and policymakers are increasingly embracing green economies as a new developmental paradigm, there is limited empirical evidence from entrepreneurs running green businesses. Research on green entrepreneurship remains scarce, especially in developing countries. The study of green entrepreneurship is urgent due to the pressing need to meet community needs through entrepreneurship while also ensuring environmental sustainability. Green entrepreneurship is rapidly gaining traction owing to the timely implementation of government policies, growing consumer demand for eco-friendly products and services, and the rise of a new generation of entrepreneurs who are highly conscious of environmental sustainability (La Tercera, 2021). Green entrepreneurship focuses on utilizing green market opportunities, which are increasingly popular and expanded by green values, to open new markets and create new profit growth points. Green entrepreneurs primarily open markets and enhance

their enterprises' competitiveness by having a forward-looking understanding of the future market and developing green products and services that will meet future demand (Santika et al., 2022). Thus, green entrepreneurship is seen as an entrepreneurial behaviour that involves the dual roles of ecological environment orientation and market orientation.

Green Entrepreneurship Orientation (GEO) implies that venture enterprises not only use market opportunities as the source of entrepreneurship but also aim for "ecological" entrepreneurship. GEO emphasizes both market competition and an ecological environmental focus. Researchers highlight that GEO involves environmental orientation, social orientation, and innovation (Guo et al., 2020). As a strategic initiative, GEO can facilitate the production of innovative, environmentally friendly products to bolster corporate sustainability (Guo et al.). Consequently, the primary goal of GEO is to promote sustainable production processes and introduce environmentally friendly products and services. As a manifestation of environmental entrepreneurship, GEO is a vital skill for small businesses, encompassing a broader range of responsibilities (Makhloufi et al., 2021). Xia (2019) highlighted the potential of green entrepreneurship to

address social and environmental issues. GEO is defined by sociality, ecology, innovation, and initiative (Xia, 2019). Green innovation, green initiative, and risk-taking are the three primary categories into which Zhang and Li (2021) suggested splitting the measuring parameters of GEO. This study operationalized green orientation based on green innovation and green initiative.

Green Innovation (GI) has emerged as a vital strategic tool for achieving sustainable development effectively. GI can be defined as "eco-design + eco-production", involving the development of ecological products or processes and the application of innovative technologies for energy saving, pollution prevention, and ecological product design (Borsatto et al., 2022). Similarly, Wang et al. (2022) defined GI as innovations focused on achieving sustainable development and conserving natural resources through the development of greener products and services. Some authors defined green innovation as the development of sustainable products and processes using environmentally friendly materials during manufacturing or design, incorporating eco-design or eco-production principles (Guinot et al., 2022). This approach ensures environmental considerations from product or process conception, not just at the end of their useful life (Idris et al., 2022). Therefore, GI encompasses the entire business cycle, including design, production, supply, and end-use of commercial products, significantly contributing to environmental sustainability. The primary objective of GI is to reduce human-induced material flows and promote sustainability goals (Guinot et al., 2022). It involves adopting "eco-innovation" in corporate practices, which entails implementing and developing innovations that minimise environmental and social damage while enhancing economic outcomes. Laguía et al. (2019) stated that postgraduate students with a strong intent to establish a new business and pursue entrepreneurship are those who have received extensive education in innovation. When education and training in innovation are viewed as key methods to enhance students' entrepreneurial intentions, starting a new business ceases to be problematic (Idris et al., 2022). Students who have the opportunity to study and receive training in innovation education are more likely to successfully launch a new venture (Laguía et al., 2019).

Green initiatives encompass a variety of measures and programmes aimed at promoting environmental sustainability across different sectors and industries. These initiatives are designed to reduce the ecological footprint of businesses, organisations, and communities, while also addressing pressing environmental challenges. Green initiatives can take

various forms, including policy changes, technological innovations, behavioural shifts, and operational improvements. Oksana (2016) categorised green initiatives into transport-related measures (such as fuels, vehicle technology, mode choice, behavioural aspects, and transport management) and beyond-transport initiatives (including logistics system design, partner selection, environmental management systems, and emissions and energy data). In universities, Green University Initiatives (GUIs) are comprehensive concepts that encompass environmental awareness and practices in universities (Menon & Suresh, 2022). Over the past two decades, scholars have used various terms such as "green campus," "green university," and "sustainable university" to assess the efforts of higher institutions in promoting sustainable activities (Ribeiro et al., 2021). Researchers have developed an inclusive strategic plan to establish and monitor the impact of educational initiatives on campus users to foster sustainable development (Zhu et al., 2020). Additionally, universities play a role in curriculum development, research and development initiatives, and promoting environmentally friendly behaviours (de Andrade et al., 2018). Initiatives for green programmes are introduced to promote environmentally friendly behaviours (Fissi et al., 2021). According to existing research, universities have implemented environmental policies and regular activities on their campuses (Yañez et al., 2019). Universities have undertaken various efforts, including reducing their carbon footprint, implementing energy and water conservation measures, lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and adopting green procurement practices (Marinho et al., 2014). GUIs raise awareness by promoting resource-efficient activities, such as energy conservation (Plummer et al., 2022). Researchers have observed that GUIs and Environmental Values (EVs) are significant determinants of environmental attitudes (Amaral et al., 2020). By encouraging actions such as waste segregation, promoting sustainable transportation, conserving energy and water, and fostering social development, researchers advocate for the adoption of green initiatives on campuses (Ribeiro et al., 2021). Shi et al. (2019) opined that having a green entrepreneurship orientation is a significant factor in fostering entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. Zhou et al. (2021) further supported this notion by highlighting the crucial role of green entrepreneurship orientation in stimulating students' entrepreneurial intentions. The desire to pursue green entrepreneurship is a deliberate behaviour that can be cultivated among undergraduate business education students in universities in Anambra State.

Business education is an aspect of the vocational education programmes offered at the university which prepares students for careers in business. Business education is the education that prepares individuals for business competencies necessary for teaching business attitudes, concepts, skills and knowledge. Umezulike (2021) defined a business education programmes as a broad and comprehensive discipline whose instructional programmes encompasses knowledge, skills, vocation and aptitude needed by all citizens to effectively manage their businesses and also function in the economic system. Business education students are expected to possess relevant skills, competencies and knowledge in major aspects of business. Otamiri and Otomiewo (2022) defined business education as a type of occupational training that aims to make students productive in the classroom, in paid jobs, and in their businesses. Beneficiaries of education are better prepared for lucrative jobs and enduring subsistence. It is typically viewed as business education. Edokpolor and Egbri (2017) saw the business education programme as a unique academic programme that equips its recipients with skills to function independently as self-employed and employers of labour. Olatoye et al. (2020) noted that the objectives of business education include among others, providing opportunities for practice job preparation or vocation studies for students in to make them render effective and efficient services in office, distributive and service occupations and preparing students based on interests and aptitudes with the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to enter into a business occupation, advance and profit in it. However, the seeming rising rate of unemployment among business education graduates brings to question their entrepreneurship intention.

Entrepreneurial intention is the entrepreneur's intrinsic cognition, preference and behavioural tendency to create a new business. Santika et al. (2022) defined entrepreneurial intention as a subjective attitude and expectation of potential entrepreneurs about whether they engage in entrepreneurship activities or not. Rai et al. (2017) defined entrepreneurial intention as the belief that entrepreneurs intend to start a business. Chhabra et al. (2019) defined entrepreneurial intention as the mindset that ultimately drives an individual to generate a new business idea and pursue a career in entrepreneurship. It involves a willingness to acquire knowledge, participate in entrepreneurial activities, and establish a new company to become self-employed (Shi et al., 2019). The level of commitment a person demonstrates towards engaging in entrepreneurial activities is reflected in their entrepreneurial ambition.

Entrepreneurial intention can be defined as an individual's perception of a problem and their conceptualization of a plan to address it by launching a business in the future (Mwange, 2018). Thus, entrepreneurial intention is a psychological state that guides our attention toward specific business goals to achieve entrepreneurial results. It is also recognized that individuals take actions to develop new businesses or create new values in existing enterprises. Liguori et al. (2020) opined that individuals harbouring entrepreneurial intentions may encounter obstacles preventing them from actually initiating new businesses, owing to personal traits and environmental factors. In other words, while entrepreneurial intention is a prerequisite for embarking on entrepreneurship, not all aspiring entrepreneurs can translate their intentions into action, even if they aspire to establish a business. Furthermore, the researcher wonders if green entrepreneurship orientation could predict the entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. Literature search reveals that no studies have been conducted in Anambra State to determine the link between green entrepreneurship orientation and the entrepreneurship intention of undergraduate students. It is this gap that the researcher empirically filled by investigating green entrepreneurship orientation as a predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a crucial driver of societal progress in the United Kingdom, fostering innovation, economic growth, and job creation. However, the activities of entrepreneurs have also been linked to exacerbating global warming and environmental pollution, particularly in States like Anambra State in Nigeria. This has prompted universities in developed countries to recognise the importance of promoting green entrepreneurship orientation among undergraduates, aiming to mitigate environmental impact while encouraging business innovation. Nonetheless, it appears that similar initiatives have not been effectively implemented among undergraduates pursuing business education programmes in public universities in Anambra State. Examples of such failures include a lack of dedicated courses or modules on green entrepreneurship, insufficient integration of sustainability principles into entrepreneurship curricula, and limited emphasis on environmental responsibility in entrepreneurship education.

Furthermore, the rising rate of unemployment underscores the failure of business education undergraduates in Anambra State to capitalise on the opportunities provided by green entrepreneurship orientation to venture into entrepreneurship. Despite this pressing need, there has been a notable absence of empirical investigations to establish the link between green entrepreneurship orientation and the entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. Thus, there is a critical gap in research regarding the predictive value of green entrepreneurship orientation on the entrepreneurial intentions of students in this area. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no study has been conducted to investigate the predictive value of green entrepreneurship orientation on the entrepreneurship intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. This study filled this research gap by investigating green entrepreneurship orientation as a predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of green entrepreneurship innovation on the entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State?
2. What is the predictive value of green entrepreneurship initiatives on the entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State?

Research Method

A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised 87 (400 level) business education students in the 2023/2024 academic session from two public universities offering business education programmes in Anambra State. The universities are; Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus and Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Two questionnaires were used to collect data for the study. The first questionnaire is titled: "Questionnaire on Green Entrepreneurship Orientation

(QGEO)." The instrument contains a total of 17 items in two clusters; A and B. Cluster A contains 9 items on green innovations while Cluster B contains 8 items on green initiatives. The second questionnaire is titled: "Questionnaire on Business Education Students Entrepreneurship Intentions (QBESEI)." It contains 10 items measuring business education students' entrepreneurship intentions. Both instruments were structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly and Disagree (SD).

The instrument was validated by three experts in the Department of Technology and Vocational Education. To further determine the internal consistency of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted on 20 business education students at Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The application of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 using Cronbach Alpha reliability method on the data obtained yielded a reliability co-efficient value of 0.84 for cluster A and 0.88 for cluster B with an overall coefficient value of 0.86 for QGEO and 0.87 for QBESEI. Data for the study was administered by the researchers. The instrument was administered to the respondents in their lecture halls and department. The instrument was administered and retrieved on the spot. Out of 87 copies of the questionnaire administered, 79 copies were returned in good condition. The 79 copies of the returned questionnaire amounted to a 91% questionnaire return rate and the 8 copies of the questionnaire not returned amounted to a 9% loss rate. Simple regression analysis was used to analyse data for the study. In answering the research questions, the regression coefficient rule suggested by Stephen (2017) was used for judgment as thus: Negligible (0.00- 0.20), Low (0.20 - 0.40), Moderate (0.40- 0.60), Substantial (0.60 - 0.80), and Very High (0.80-1.00). For regression coefficient (r); + Sign = Positive Predictor and - Sign = Negative Predictor.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the predictive value of green entrepreneurship innovation on the entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 1: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis with Green Entrepreneurship Innovation as a Predictor of Entrepreneurial Intentions of Business Education Undergraduates in Public Universities in Anambra State

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β
Constant	35.231	10.445	
Entrepreneurship Incubation Centres	.717	.312	.703
R	.703		
R ²	.660		
Adj. R ²	.610		

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 1 indicated that green entrepreneurship innovation highly predicts entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State as shown by the regression coefficient ($R = .703$). The coefficient of determination (R^2), .660, showed that the explanatory power of the variable was highly strong. This implies that 66% of the variations in entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State were accounted for by the variations in green entrepreneurship innovation. The adjusted R^2 supported the claim of the R^2 with a value of .610 indicating that 61% of the total variation in the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates) was explained by

the independent variable (green entrepreneurship innovation). Thus, adjusted R^2 supports the statement that the explanatory power of green entrepreneurship innovation is highly strong in determining the entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. Nevertheless, the standardized beta weight ($\beta = .703$) showed that green entrepreneurship innovation is a positive predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the predictive value of green entrepreneurship initiatives on the entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 1: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis with Green Entrepreneurship Initiative as a Predictor of Entrepreneurial Intentions of Business Education Undergraduates in Public Universities in Anambra State

	Unstandardized β	Std. Dev. β	Standardized β
Constant	39.220	13.001	
Entrepreneurship Incubation Centres	.723	.420	.770
R	.770		
R ²	.672		
Adj. R ²	.623		

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in Table 1 indicated that green entrepreneurship initiatives highly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State as shown by the regression coefficient ($R = .770$). The coefficient of determination (R^2), .672, showed that the explanatory power of the variable was highly strong. This implies that 67% of the variations in entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State were accounted for

by the variations in green entrepreneurship initiative. The adjusted R^2 supported the claim of the R^2 with a value of .623 indicating that 62% of the total variation in the dependent variable (entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates) was explained by the independent variable (green entrepreneurship initiative). Thus, adjusted R^2 supports the statement that the explanatory power of green entrepreneurship initiative is highly strong in determining the entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. Nevertheless, the standardized beta weight ($\beta = .770$)

showed that green entrepreneurship initiative is a positive predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that green entrepreneurship innovation is a positive predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. This finding is in agreement with Idris et al. (2022) who reported that innovation promotes entrepreneurial intentions of students in universities. In the same vein, Laguía et al. (2019) revealed that postgraduate students with a strong intent to establish a new business and pursue entrepreneurship are those who have received extensive education in innovation. Idris et al. (2022) opined that when innovation enhances students' entrepreneurial intentions. This is because through entrepreneurship orientation students would see starting a new business as being less problematic. Laguía et al. (2019) stated that students who have the opportunity to study and receive training in innovation education are more likely to successfully launch a new venture. This is in line with the finding of the study which revealed that green entrepreneurship innovation is a positive predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Furthermore, the finding of the study revealed that green entrepreneurship initiative is a positive predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. This is in agreement with Amaral et al. (2020) who revealed that green university initiatives could promote the adoption of green and environmental initiatives among university undergraduates. In the same vein, Shi et al. (2019) stated that having a green entrepreneurship orientation is a significant factor in fostering entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. Similarly, Zhou et al. (2021) further supported this notion by highlighting the crucial role of green entrepreneurship orientation in stimulating students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Conclusion

5. ideas that are consistent with green principles.

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers conclude that green entrepreneurship orientation is a predictor of entrepreneurship intentions of business education undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. It is therefore imperative that stakeholders in universities adopt measures for promoting green entrepreneurship orientation among university undergraduates in Anambra State in particular and Nigeria in general.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Administrators of business education programmes in universities should include green entrepreneurial innovation in the business education curriculum. This integration will most likely increase students' entrepreneurial intents by providing them with information and skills related to sustainable business practices.
2. Administrators of universities should encourage green entrepreneurial initiatives by inculcating a culture that prioritizes sustainability and creativity, students will be more likely to pursue successful and ecologically responsible entrepreneurial endeavours.
3. Administrators of business education programmes in universities should encourage collaborations between academics and industry professionals on green entrepreneurship. These partnerships may avail business education students with real-world experiences and networking possibilities which would boost their entrepreneurship intentions.
4. Administrators of universities should support university-based green entrepreneurship research and development. This will encourage business education undergraduates to participate in creative initiatives which could help them develop business

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