



ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ALERTNESS AS PREDICTORS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION IN EDO STATE

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Abstract

It becomes essential to look for alternative employment opportunities by starting new businesses that may address society's concerns in an environment marked by rising levels of social problems and unemployment. The current study focused on entrepreneurial education and alertness as predictors of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. To direct the investigation, four research questions were posed. Three hypotheses were developed and evaluated at the significance level of 0.05. A Correlational survey research design was used for the investigation. All 382 business education students from the University of Benin and Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, made up the study's population. Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Alertness and Social Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EASEIQ) was the tool that was employed. Two people validated the tool. After giving the test to 20 business education students at Delta State University, Abraka, the cronbach alpha was employed to determine the instrument's reliability, and it produced a reliability coefficient of .81. Using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, simple linear regression, and multiple regression analysis, the data gathered from the respondents was examined. The findings revealed that that entrepreneurship education is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State ($R^2 = .171$, $F(2, 242) = 50.035$, $P < .05$). The finding further revealed that entrepreneurial alertness is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State ($R^2 = .267$, $F(2, 242) = 87.975$, $P < .05$). It was suggested that social entrepreneurship should be promoted in light of the findings.

Keywords: *Business education, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial alertness, and social entrepreneurial intention*

INTRODUCTION

In the absence of white collar jobs or paid employment, entrepreneurship education (EE) continues to be a crucial component of education that can equip students with the desirable competencies needed to create their own jobs. In order to better equip graduates from postsecondary institutions in Nigeria to create jobs when there is a lack of paid work, entrepreneurship education was incorporated into the curricula of programs. According to Hagg, Politis, and Alsos (2022), entrepreneurship education is a crucial tool for helping students acquire entrepreneurial knowledge



and skills, promote an entrepreneurial identity, and consequently grow the number of entrepreneurs. According to Ediagbonya (2013), EE is interdisciplinary and aims to provide participants the skills to either build something new or incorporate something new into an existing product in order to address problems and find economic opportunities. According to Sulaiman and Wan-Fauziah (2013), EE is a type of education that aims to alter students' perspectives by giving them skills necessary to start their own business. In order to give students the necessary skills to function in the present knowledge and socioeconomic environment, EE is intended to be offered by all students in higher institutions (Ediagbonya, 2022a; Ediagbonya, 2022b). This program is meant to familiarize the students with the minutiae and complexities of business venture creation. The development of entrepreneurial ventures tends to increase productivity, encourage economic growth, reduce poverty, and address socio-economic problems in the society. The need to address the socio-economic problems of the society has informed the concept of Social Entrepreneurship in recent times.

Social entrepreneurship (SE) has remained popular worldwide. The development of the private sector is where social entrepreneurship got its start (Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017; Sousa-Fillio, & Almeida, 2023). In underdeveloped nations where there are still inequalities in social development and economic discrimination, social entrepreneurship is particularly crucial (Chell, 2007; Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017). According to Tiwari, Bhat, and Tikoria (2017) and Hattab (2023), social entrepreneurship is a process that starts with a perceived social opportunity, converts it into a business model, determines and acquires the wealth required to execute the venture, and launches and expands the venture toward the venture's objective. The actors or participants in social entrepreneurship are known as social entrepreneurs. By (i) adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value); (ii) recognizing and assiduously pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission; (iii) engaging in the process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning; (iv) acting boldly without being constrained by the resources currently in hand; and (v) displaying a heightened sense of accountability to the constituency, the social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector.

Social Entrepreneurial Intention (SEI) can be defined as the decision made by an entrepreneur to create a new business that brings social changes. In addition, it expresses a state of mind such as a desire, a wish and a hope that steers the endeavor of entrepreneur towards a new business concept (Rozar, Razik, Sidik, & Bahrein, 2020; Ruiz-Rosa, Gutierrez-Tano, & Garcia-Rodriguez, 2020; Aloulou, Algarni, Ramadani, & Hughes, 2023). This is in agreement with Tran and Korflesch (2016) that summarized SEI as a rooted belief, catalyst, desire, determination and engagement for an entrepreneur or a person to assemble a social enterprise. The SEI of people is often influenced by several variables among which are Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness.

According to Kirzner (1979), alertness is the capacity of a person to recognize chances that others may pass over. The author contends that in further defining the parameters of alertness, the feature of judgment—which is concerned with assessing fresh developments, shifts, and information and determining if they would represent a business opportunity with potential for profit—is a crucial element. Three unique components make up alertness: scanning and looking for information, connecting previously unrelated information, and determining whether there are any lucrative



business chances. According to the entrepreneurial cognitive school of thinking, one's cognitive framework is impacted by entrepreneurial alertness (Lanivich, Smith, Levasseur, Pidduck, Busenitz, & Tang, 2022; Li, Jiang, Bi, Feng, & Cui, 2022). A particular mental model called entrepreneurial alertness motivates entrepreneurial teams to go through and analyze both internal and external data in order to spot business possibilities (Li, Jiang, Bi, Feng, & Cui, 2022). Entrepreneurial alertness is a crucial determining factor in the entrepreneurial process because it influences how the entrepreneur processes information and views the market, which in turn influences how they recognize outside opportunities (Eteh, 2020). Entrepreneurial alertness is defined by Tang, Kacmar, and Busenitz (2012) as a mental activity that entails searching for new information, connecting disparate pieces of information from various sources, and assessing potential business opportunities. This mental activity also includes scanning and searching, association and connection, and evaluation and judgment.

In order to produce value, an entrepreneur must be alert to new business opportunities and exploit the resources at their disposal (Puapradit & Supan, 2021). Based on the information available for such entrepreneurial intention, it is an attitude that is significant in the tendency to act on prospective opportunities in an entrepreneurial event (Izlem, & Nurdan, 2016; Ugwueze, Ike, & Ugwu, 2022). Studies such as Alvi and Sharma (2017), Biswas and Verma (2021), Gill, Bencheva, N., Karayel, and Usman (2021), Jiatong, Murad, Li, Gll, and Ashraf (2021), Odebunmi, Kee, and Jimoh (2020) and Urban (2020), offers a useful mechanism for the propensity to act on potential opportunities based on the perception of available knowledge as a result of the perception of desirability and feasibility on the entrepreneurial event. Similar to this, Saadat, Aliakbari, Alizadeh Majd, and Bell (2022) found a strong link between entrepreneurial alertness and education.

In order to establish a relationship between entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial alertness, and social entrepreneurial intention, there has been an increase in study interest in the field of social entrepreneurship. According to Hockerts' (2018) empirical research, taking social entrepreneurship courses boosts one's sense of self-efficacy, perception of social support, and ambition to pursue social entrepreneurship. Additionally, research by Hassan (2020), Ndou (2021), Naweed, Zia, Younis, and Shah (2021), as well as Chang, Wannamakok, and Kao (2021), found a strong correlation between entrepreneurial education and the intention to engage in social entrepreneurship. Studies have also shown a link between entrepreneurial alertness and social entrepreneurial intention, in a similar line. The authors of the studies by Urban (2020) and Nsereko, Balunywa, Kyazze, Nsereko, and Nakoto (2022) found that entrepreneurial alertness substantially predicted the participants' propensity to engage in social entrepreneurship. According to the review, the majority of previous research was conducted on unrelated subjects, and while a few studies have linked entrepreneurial alertness and entrepreneurship education, none of them have done so with business education students' intentions for social entrepreneurship in Edo State. This study has considerably filled a gap in the literature by investigating entrepreneurial education and alertness as predictors of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to ascertain the extent to which Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness predict Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. The relationship among Entrepreneurship Education, entrepreneurial alertness and Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention.
2. If Entrepreneurship Education is a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.
3. If entrepreneurial alertness is a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.
4. If Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness are significant predictors of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered.

1. What is the relationship among Entrepreneurship Education, entrepreneurial alertness and Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention?
2. Is Entrepreneurship Education a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State?
3. Is entrepreneurial alertness a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State?
4. Are Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness significant predictors of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State?

Hypotheses

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

1. Entrepreneurship Education is not a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.
2. Entrepreneurial alertness is not a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.
3. Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness are not significant predictors of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

METHOD

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: What is the relationship among Entrepreneurship Education, entrepreneurial alertness and Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention?

Table 1

Correlation Matrix showing the relationship among Entrepreneurial Education, Entrepreneurial alertness and Social Entrepreneurial Intention (N=244)

		Entrepreneurship Education	Entrepreneurial Alertness	Social Entrepreneurial Intention
Entrepreneurship Education	Pearson	1	.436**	.414**
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	244	244	244
Entrepreneurial Alertness	Pearson	.436**	1	.516**
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	244	244	244
Social Entrepreneurial Intention	Pearson	.414**	.516**	1
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	244	244	244

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

Source: Researcher's Field work (2023)

The data presented in Table 1 shows the correlation coefficients among entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial alertness and social entrepreneurial intention. The correlation coefficients range from .414 to .516 among the variables. There was a moderate positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and business education students' social entrepreneurial intention ($r=.414$, $n=244$). There was a moderate positive relationship between entrepreneurial alertness and business education students' social entrepreneurial intention ($r=.516$, $n=244$). There was a moderate positive relationship between entrepreneurial alertness and entrepreneurship education ($r=.436$, $n=244$).

Hypothesis One: Entrepreneurship Education is not a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

The result of this hypothesis analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 2: Entrepreneurship Education Predicting Business Education Students' Social Entrepreneurial Intention in Edo State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	7.283	.667		10.919	.000
Entrepreneurship Education	.282	.040	.414	7.074	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Entrepreneurial Intention

Note: $R^2 = .171$, $F = 50.035$, $P < .05$, $Df = 1, 242$

Source: Researcher's Field work (2023)

The results of the regression on Table 2 indicated that entrepreneurship education explained 17.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .171$, $F(2, 242) = 50.035$, $P < .05$). The result from hypothesis one revealed that there entrepreneurship education is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Hypothesis Two: Entrepreneurial alertness is not a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Table 3: Entrepreneurial Alertness Predicting Business Education Students' Social Entrepreneurial Intention in Edo State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.349	.604		10.516	.000
Entrepreneurial Alertness	.454	.048	.516	9.379	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Entrepreneurial Intention

Note: $R^2 = .267$, $F = 87.975$, $P < .05$, $Df = 1, 242$

Source: Researcher's Field work (2023)

The results of the regression on Table 3 indicated that entrepreneurial alertness explained 26.7% of the variance ($R^2 = .267$, $F(2, 242) = 87.975$, $P < .05$). The result from hypothesis one

revealed that entrepreneurial alertness is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Hypothesis Three: Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness are not significant predictors of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Table 4: Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial alertness predicting Business Education Students' Social Entrepreneurial Intention in Edo State

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.820	.704		6.842	.000
	Entrepreneurship Education	.159	.041	.233	3.919	.000
	Entrepreneurial Alertness	.365	.052	.415	6.976	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Entrepreneurial Intention

Note: $R^2 = .311$, $F = 54.279$, $P < .05$, $Df = 2, 241$

Source: Researcher's Field work (2023)

The results of the regression on Table 4 indicated that entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial alertness collectively explained 31.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .311$, $F(2, 241) = 50.279$, $P < .05$). The result from hypothesis three revealed that entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial alertness are significant predictors of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis of hypothesis one revealed that entrepreneurship education is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurship intention in Edo State. It implies that students in business education who are appropriately exposed to the EE curriculum content will be more inclined to start a business that will aid in resolving societal issues. The results support those of Hockerts (2018), who discovered that taking social entrepreneurship courses boosts social entrepreneurship intention, self-efficacy, and perceived social support. The results support those of Hassan (2020), Ndou (2021), Naweel, Zia, Younis, and Shah (2021), as well as Chang, Wannamakok, and Kao (2021), who discovered that the intention to engage in social entrepreneurship was significantly predicted by one's experience with entrepreneurship education.

The analysis of hypothesis two revealed that entrepreneurial alertness is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. It follows that entrepreneurially astute students of business education will be more likely to take the risk of starting a business that will aid in solving societal challenges. This finding supports that of Urban (2020), who discovered that entrepreneurial alertness is strongly and favorably related to social



entrepreneurial initiative. The findings were also validated by Nserekko, Balunywa, Kyazze, Nsereko, and Nakato (2023), who found a positive and substantial association between entrepreneurial alertness and social entrepreneurial intention.

The analysis of hypothesis three revealed that entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial alertness are significant predictors of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. This finding supports those revealed by Hassan (2020), Ndou (2021), Naweed, Zia, Younis, and Shah (2021), Chang, Wannamakok, and Kao (2021), Nserekko, Balunywa, Kyazze, Nsereko, and Nakato (2023), who all found a strong correlation between entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial alertness, and social entrepreneurial intention in their respective studies.

Conclusion

Based on the results, it can be said that entrepreneurship education and alertness are both predictive of business education students' intention to engage in social entrepreneurship in Edo State. Additionally, it was found that EE and EA both independently predict business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. The results suggest that deliberate efforts must be made to improve the EE program in higher institutions in order to promote SE that is able to address the socioeconomic issues the country is currently facing. By bridging the empirical and scholarly gaps in this sector, this study has significantly advanced understanding.

Recommendations

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

- i. Entrepreneurship education programme should be strengthened in tertiary institutions;
- ii. Social entrepreneurship should be emphasized in the curriculum of entrepreneurship education;
- iii. Practical ways to promoting entrepreneurial alertness among students should be encouraged; and
- iv. Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); should encourage and sponsor research work in the field of SE with a view to creating more awareness.

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