

Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Business Education Students' Green Entrepreneurial Intention: Does Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy Matters?

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Abstract

Encouraging sustainable entrepreneurial practices becomes essential in a society where environmental degradation and ecosystem depletion due to entrepreneurial exploitation are on the rise. The current study looked into how, in Edo State, green entrepreneurial self-efficacy (GESE) mediated the relationship between green entrepreneurial intention (GEI) and sustainable entrepreneurship (SE). Four hypotheses were formulated and tested at the significance level of 0.05. A correlational survey research design was used in the study. The study's population consisted of all 382 business education students from Ambrose Alli University in Ekpoma and the University of Benin. The convenience sampling technique was used in selecting a sample of 285 students. The Sustainable Entrepreneurship, Self-Efficacy and Green Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (SESEGEIQ) was the tool utilized. Two professionals validated the instrument. After the instrument was given to thirty business education students at Delta State University, Abraka, who were not parts of the sample, the reliability coefficient of the instrument, as determined by Cronbach's alpha, was found to be .85. A straightforward linear regression analysis was used to examine the responder data. The findings revealed that sustainable entrepreneurship and green entrepreneurial self-efficacy were significant predictor of business education students' green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. The finding also revealed that green entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a significant predictor of business education students' green entrepreneurial intention. The finding further revealed that green entrepreneurial self-efficacy mediates the relationship between sustainable entrepreneurship and green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. This study has made significant contribution to knowledge as it was able to establish the mediating role of GESE in the relationship between SE and GEI among business education students in Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the teaching and learning of sustainable entrepreneurship should be emphasized across the nation's tertiary education level.

Keywords:

Sustainable Entrepreneurship, Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Green Entrepreneurial Intention, Business Education

INTRODUCTION

Another name for sustainable entrepreneurship (SE) is eco-entrepreneurship, also known as ecological entrepreneurship, sustainopreneurship, and environmental entrepreneurship. SE is gaining traction as an alternative to conventional profit-based entrepreneurship (Kummitha & Kummitha, 2021; Ediagbonya, 2023b). This is because it creates a company that aligns the economic, social, and environmental facets of the triple bottom line (Belz & Binder, 2017). Developing and implementing solutions to environmental problems while simultaneously promoting social changes to guarantee that the environment is not damaged is known as sustainable entrepreneurship, or SE (Skordoulis et al, 2022). The main goal of SE is to create or initiate economic initiatives that are centered on safeguarding the environment from potential harm caused by commercial operations. Combining innovation, risk, a novel business strategy, and the social and environmental responsibilities of entrepreneurs led to the development of the concept of SE (Gevrenova, 2015). The need for entrepreneurs to focus inward and promote environmentally friendly firms has been made clear by the depletion of the ecosystem and other significant environmental concerns. The personal ability or capacity of the individual has a major role to play in advancing SE, and this makes the self-efficacy of the individual important.

It is increasingly common for academics to refer to "green self-efficacy" and "green entrepreneurial self-efficacy" interchangeably. As stated by Guo (2022), "green entrepreneurial self-efficacy" (GESE) refers to an individual's assurance in their efforts to protect the environment and their belief that they can contribute to fixing environmental problems. In this study, "GESE" refers to an individual's self-efficacy—or lack thereof—in taking risks and succeeding in green entrepreneurship. People may confront environmental issues and obstacles with persistence, conviction, and ability, according to GESE (Alshebami, 2023). That is, individuals who score better on the GESE are more likely to succeed in the green entrepreneurial process. Individuals' intentions are influenced by their GESE, which is largely a result of the sustainable entrepreneurship education they have received.

Having entrepreneurial intents is an essential part of the entrepreneurship process, as it is the first key step in launching a business. Many theories and models have been developed over the past 20 years to explain entrepreneurial intentions. These include the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), "implementing entrepreneurial ideas," Shapero's Entrepreneurial Event, and the most recent model developed by Luthje and Franke (Prabowo et al, 2022). Individuals with GEI frequently take on more actions that improve the economy and society. But if you want to become a green (sustainable) entrepreneur, you have to cultivate green intents. Recent critical research has been informed by this.

This study is important because it will clarify how GESE mediates the relationship between SE and GEI, which is important given the significant degree of ecological degradation and other detrimental effects of enterprises on the ecosystem that were previously highlighted. To better understand the GESE's mediating role in the relationship between SE and GEI, the current study looks into it. These are the ways that the current study has substantially advanced the literature as a result. Investigating GESE's possible role as a mediator in the relationship between SE and GEI is the aim of this study; prior research on this topic has not been particularly focused on. To try to reduce this gap, the new study is a significant step forward. It has been established for a long time that SE plays a crucial role in fostering GESE and GEI. The study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the domain since GESE mediates the link between SE and GEI.

Even though GESE has contributed to the relationship between SE and GEI, nothing is known about how this interaction can work in poor countries such as Nigeria. The body of research on a conceptual model explaining how GESE mediates the interaction between SE and GEI is still lacking. This is why the current work attempts to add to the body of knowledge regarding GESE's function in the interaction between SE and GEI. Additionally, fresh information from the study's findings may guarantee that SE may better prepare undergraduates studying business education with GESE potentials to start green businesses.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Social Cognitive Theory

The literature is currently lacking in certain areas describing how GESE may influence the relationship between SE and GEI in developing countries such as Nigeria, even if it has a significant contribution to this. Regarding GESE's role as a mediator in the interaction between SE and GEI, there is still a lack of clarity in the research. Because of this, the current work seeks to add to the body of knowledge on the function of GESE in the interaction between SE and GEI. In addition, fresh information from the study's findings may guarantee that SE offers undergraduates studying business education with GESE potentials the best start-up opportunities for environmentally conscious businesses.

We believe that SCT is the best theory for this study because it offers a thorough framework for examining one's behaviors and outcomes in connection to behavioral, cognitive, personal, and environmental factors. It is possible to use SCT to ascertain students' intent to launch sustainable businesses, which may be impacted by a confluence of behavioral outcomes, individual traits, and environmental inputs (Biraglia & Kadile, 2016). SCT holds that people behave in ways that advance their objectives (Bandura, 1986). Many personal and environmental factors are studied about GESE and SE, respectively (Biraglia & Kadile, 2016). Regarding behavioral consequences, we investigate the students' intentions to start their green enterprises (GEI) following graduation. According to SCT, behavior results from a three-way reciprocal interaction between an individual's inputs, their environment, and their prior experiences (Bandura, 1986).

Within the framework of the present investigation, prior encounters may be interpreted as prior educational opportunities that pupils obtained from mandatory instruction on sustainable entrepreneurship. By raising their GESE, these learning experiences may impact students' future GEI. This would imply that for graduates to start their green businesses, they must understand the procedures and how to carry them out. Therefore, students are more likely to have the ability and capacity to start and maintain an entrepreneurial enterprise if they engage in or carry out specific sustainable entrepreneurial development activities or actions regularly. The results of this study suggest that students' experiences participating in sustainable entrepreneurial activities may have an impact on their decision to pursue a career in green business or entrepreneurship after graduating from college. Drawing from the previously provided information, this theoretical framework highlights the crucial individual inputs (contextual aspects) that drive GEI, specifically GESE, and the environmental inputs of SE.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Green Entrepreneurial Intention

Within the realm of entrepreneurship, Sustainable Entrepreneurship (SE) is a new frontier. Green entrepreneurship, eco-entrepreneurship, ecological entrepreneurship, sustainopreneurship, and environmental enterprise are other names for the concept of sustainable entrepreneurship. According to Gevrenova (2015), the notion of sustainable entrepreneurship is a result of the convergence of several key elements of entrepreneurship, including creativity, risk-taking, a novel company concept, and the social and ecological responsibility of business owners. SE is defined as an "enterprise's green innovation of products, services, and market development to generate profit while considering environmental protection," according to Yin et al (2022). The main goal of SE is to create or initiate economic initiatives that are centered on safeguarding the environment from potential harm caused by commercial operations. All parties involved have continued to be interested in protecting the ecology. To prevent environmental harm, SE works to create and implement solutions to environmental problems as well as to promote societal change (Kirkwood & Walton, 2010). According to Lotfi et al (2018), SE develops novel goods and technology to address environmental issues. People with this kind of mindset are more likely to start "eco-friendly" businesses (Ediagbonya, 2022c; Ediagbonya, 2023a). Due to its important functions, people's intentions to start green businesses are expanding. A scenario or state of an individual that sparks curiosity, attention, and a decision to carry out a particular action could be interpreted as a green entrepreneurial intention (GEI) (Cai et al, 2022). People with GEI typically exhibit more behaviors that advance society and the economy. However, developing green intents is a must for being a sustainable entrepreneur. People with strong intentions for the environment frequently create cutting-edge environmentally friendly goods and services as well as help raise public knowledge of environmentally friendly consumption and values (Alshebami et al., 2023). Academics are becoming more and more interested in this area of study. Green entrepreneurial intention and sustainable entrepreneurship were found to be significantly correlated in studies by Nuringshi and Nuryasman (2022) and Abdelwaheed et al. (2023). There were few or no studies conducted in Nigeria; most of these studies were conducted in the Western World. We therefore hypothesize as follow:

H1: Sustainable entrepreneurship is a significant positive predictor of business education students' green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

Globally, academics have continued to focus their study efforts on self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the conviction that one can carry out the actions required to achieve a particular performance goal. According to Nguyen et al. (2022), self-efficacy is the belief in one's capacity to influence motivation, behavior, and social surroundings. The notion of "green entrepreneurial self-efficacy (GESE)" has been introduced into entrepreneurship literature by the contemporary "green" trend. GESE is a term used to describe a person's confidence in their ability to help resolve environmental problems and their commitment to protecting the environment (Guo, 2022). The confidence a person has in their ability to take risks and achieve in green entrepreneurial endeavors is known as green entrepreneurial self-efficacy. According to GESE, people are strong, self-assured, and capable of resolving environmental problems and obstacles (Alshebami, 2023). In other words, those with higher GESEs typically have greater success as

green entrepreneurs. The education about sustainable entrepreneurship that a person has received has a significant impact on their GESE. Researchers have been concentrating on the connection between green entrepreneurial self-efficacy and sustainable entrepreneurship. Studies such as Ediagbonya (2023b) and Abdelwahed, et al (2023) have found a significant positive relationship between SE and GESE. We therefore hypothesize as follows:

H2: Sustainable entrepreneurship is a significant positive predictor of business education students' green entrepreneurial self-efficacy in Edo State.

Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Green Entrepreneurial Intention

As the first crucial stage in starting a business, entrepreneurial intentions are crucial to the entrepreneurial process. The "Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)," "Implementing Entrepreneurial Idea," "Shapero's Entrepreneurial Event," "Social Learning Theory," and the most recent model by Luthje and Franke (Prabowo et al, 2022) are just a few of the models and theories that have been developed in the last 20 years to explain entrepreneurial intentions. These theories or models were proposed in an attempt to understand the factors and pressures that encourage people to start their businesses. Previous studies focused on entrepreneurial intentions (Jena, 2020; Ediagbonya, 2022a; Ediagbonya, 2022b), and only a few investigated the intentions of becoming a sustainable green entrepreneur (Middermann et al, 2020; Prabowo et al, 2020) and become a sustainable entrepreneur (Wang & Peng, 2020). Green entrepreneurial intention (GEI), according to Cai et al. (2023), is linked to a person's readiness to adopt green entrepreneurial conduct and pledge to launch a new company. A condition or state of the individual that sparks interest, attention, and a determination to carry out a particular activity could be interpreted as GEI (Bird, 1988; Cai et al, 2022). People with GEI typically exhibit more behaviors that advance society and the economy. However, developing green intents is a must for being a green entrepreneur. People with strong intentions for the environment often create cutting-edge environmentally friendly goods and services as well as help raise public awareness of environmentally friendly consumption and ideals (Kirkwood & Walton, 2010; Alshebami et al, 2023). Scholars over time have investigated the relationship between GESE and GEI across the globe. The study conducted by Wisanggeni et al (2023) found that entrepreneurial self-efficacy did not affect GEI. Similarly, the studies by Wang, et al (2021) and Yunikawati, et al (2022) found that GESE was not a significant predictor of GEI. We therefore hypothesize as follows:

H3: Green entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a significant positive predictor of business education students' green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy as Mediator Between Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Green Entrepreneurial Intention

People's self-perception of their ability to complete a task is known as self-efficacy. A person's confidence in their capacity to meet work requirements serves as a proxy for their level of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993). Many characteristics of behavior, such as levels of task perseverance, aspiration, positive thinking and mood, and task performance, are significantly influenced by self-efficacy (Yu-Shan et al, 2014). As to the social cognitive theory, those who possess a high degree of self-efficacy are inclined to exhibit superior performance and a greater dedication to maintaining task concentration and accepting failure. High self-efficacy people are also more

likely to stick with and maintain high aspirations for their goals. High self-efficacy individuals are more inclined to believe in their skills to finish ideas and activities, which may lead to improved performance (Yu-Shan et al, 2014). Comparably, GESE is a word used to characterize an individual's dedication to environmental protection and their confidence in their abilities to assist in resolving environmental problems (Guo, 2022). Green entrepreneurial self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to take calculated risks and succeed in green entrepreneurship. People are resilient, confident, and able to overcome environmental challenges, according to GESE (Alshebami, 2023). As mentioned in the introduction, it's critical to look into unethical corporate activities that harm the environment. This has turned SE into a magic bullet for encouraging an environmentally responsible world. Understanding SE will put entrepreneurs in a better position to look for business ideas that won't harm the environment. Studies (Nuringshi & Nuryasman, 2022; Abdelwaheed et al., 2023; Ediagbonya, 2023b) have demonstrated the impact of SE on GEI. In other words, those who aspire to be entrepreneurs and are aware of SE are likely to start green businesses. Someone may feel more confident starting a green business if they are knowledgeable about SE. That suggests that knowing SE strengthens an individual's GESE while starting a green entrepreneurial venture. Thus, the proposition in this research is that students of business education are more likely to initiate green entrepreneurial initiatives if their GESE is greater. Additionally, research using empirical data has validated that GESE plays a mediating function in determining how independent and dependent variables are related (Yu-Shan et al, 2014; Hussain et al, 2021; Akhtar et al, 2021; Abdelwahed et al, 2023). Overall, GESE is presumed to be capable of transferring the influence of SE to green entrepreneurial venture creation. We therefore hypothesize as follows:

H4: Green entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a significant mediator of sustainable entrepreneurship and green entrepreneurial intention.

Conceptual Framework

The authors of this study developed a research model, which serves as the foundation for all of the postulated propositions regarding the study variables and the mediation effect (Figure 1). The role that GESE had in the link between SE and GEI was explained by the model. The mediating role of GESE in the interaction between SE and GEI is described by the research model, which is a single mediation model. Alshebami (2023) asserts that SE develops people's potential and has the power to transform people's viewpoints from those of job searchers to those of job producers. In other words, by encouraging GESE among business education undergraduates, SE fosters the development of green entrepreneurial ventures.

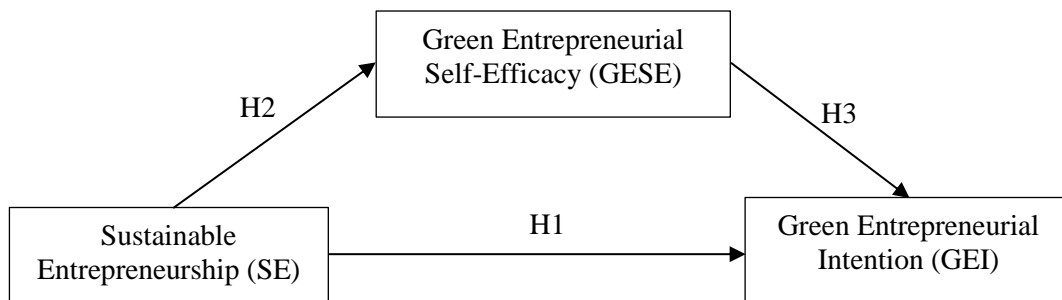


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

METHODOLOGY

A correlational survey design was employed in this study because the main objective was to ascertain the degree to which green entrepreneurial self-efficacy and sustainable entrepreneurship in Edo State business education students predict each other. The population of the study consists of all business students at the University of Benin and Ambrose Alli University in Ekpoma, Edo State. There were a total of 382 students in the study. The convenience sampling method was used in selecting a total of 285 students who participated in the study. A standardized questionnaire served as the study's main tool. The questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents and it was titled: *Sustainable Entrepreneurship, Self-Efficacy and Green Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (SESEGEIQ)*. 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 thirteen (13) 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 Sustainable Entrepreneurship (SE) component were taken from Lotfi et al (2018). A sample of the item reads: 'Sustainable 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'.

We looked at the face and content validity of the test. It was given to experts in business education, and their comments on the draft instrument were included in the final version of the questionnaire which was administered. The Cronbach alpha was used to assess the instrument's reliability after it was administered to 30 business education students who were not part of the study sample at Delta State University in Abraka, Delta State. The results showed a coefficient of .85. Google Form was the internet application that the researchers utilized to collect data. The Google Form was designed by the researcher and it contained the following sections: Introduction of the researcher and research study, seeking consent of the participants and the final section contained all the items in the instrument based on the adapted scales. A total of 11 items from the scales were included in the Google Form. The Google Form was sent to the Heads of Departments in the various institutions and they thereafter forwarded it to the concerned class group WhatsApp where the students responded to the Google Forms. The researcher obtained 285 questionnaires from the respondents, representing 74.61 percent of the population. The analysis made use of SPSS version 23.0, the PROCESS macro, and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The descriptive statistic was used in analyzing the demographic variables of respondents. The Pearson Product Moment Correlations were used in testing the relationship among all the variables. Hypotheses 1 – 3 were analyzed using regression analysis while hypothesis 4 was analyzed using the PROCESS macro.

RESULTS

The results of the data analysis are presented in this section with respect to the demographic variables, correlation matrix and hypotheses testing of the study variables. The distribution of the respondents under investigation is shown in Table 1. It was discovered that 284 business education students from Edo State, Nigeria's two universities that provide business education answered the questionnaire. There were 182 (64.09%) female business education students who

answered the instrument, compared to 102 (35.91%) male business education students. Age-based responses to the instrument were received from the following total of students: 19–23 years (202) (71.13%), 24-28 years (51) (17.96%), 29–33 years (29) (10.21%), and 34–50 years (02) (0.7%). There were 83 (29.23%) business education students from the University of Benin who answered the questionnaire overall and there were 201 (70.77%) business education students from Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Table 1: Displays the demographic variables of the respondents

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Sex		
Male	102	35.91
Female	182	64.09
	100	100
Age		
19-23 years	202	71.13
24-28 years	51	17.96
29-33 years	29	10.21
34-50 years	02	0.7
	100	100
University		
University of Benin, Benin City	83	29.23
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	201	70.77
	100	100

Source: Researcher’s Field work (2023)

Table 2: Displays the correlations between sustainable entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and green entrepreneurial intention (N=285)

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	1	2	3
SE 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

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

Note. SE – Sustainable Entrepreneurship; GESE – Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy; GEI- Green Entrepreneurial Intention

The information in Table 2 displays the correlations between green entrepreneurial intention, green entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and sustainable 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 sustainable entrepreneurship ($r=.519, n=285$). The green entrepreneurial self-

efficacy of business education students had a moderately good association with green entrepreneurial intention ($r=.414$, $n=285$). Sustainable 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 3: Linear regression estimates of the direct relationship between the study variables

Pathways	Bootstrap with BCa 95% CI								
	SE (β)	F	T	Bias	R ²	AdjR ²	P	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
SE → GEI	.147 (1.219)	104.560	10.225	-.001	.270	.267	.000	.928	1.506
SE → GESE	.055 (.438)	67.352	7.638	.001	.192	.168	.000	.705	1.201
GESE → GEI	.126 (.939)	58.342	7.638	.002	.171	.168	.000	.705	1.201

Note: SE – Sustainable Entrepreneurship; GESE – Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy; GEI – Green Entrepreneurial Intention; AdjR²– Adjusted R-squared

Table 3 reveals that SE ($F(1, 283) = 104.559$, $SE = .147$, $\beta = 1.219$, $t = 10.225$, 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 SE. The results of the 5000-resample bootstrap coefficients for SE influencing GEI (bias = -.001, $p = .000$) were statistically significant. All in all, the results confirmed the expectations of the author. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is accepted in the study. That is, Sustainable Entrepreneurship is a significant predictor of Business Education students’ green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Table 3 reveals that SE ($F(1, 283) = 67,352$, $SE = .055$, $\beta = .438$, $t = 7.638$, 95% LLCI = .705 – ULCI = 1.201) had a significant positive influence on GESE. The adjusted R-square (.168) reveals that 16.8% of the variance in GESE is influenced by SE. The results of the 5000-resample bootstrap coefficients for SE influencing GESE (bias = .001, $p = .000$) were statistically significant. All in all, the results confirmed the expectations of the author. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted in the study. That is, Sustainable Entrepreneurship is a significant predictor of Business Education students’ green entrepreneurial self-efficacy in Edo State.

Table 3 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 3 is accepted in the study. That is, Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy is a significant predictor of Business Education students’ green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Table 4: The mediating effect of GESE in the relationship between SE and GEI

Pathways/Effects	Estimates (β)	SE	P	Bootstrap with BCa 95% CI	
				Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Total effect					
SE → GEI	.5224	.0511	.0000	.4218	.6229
Direct effect					
SE → GESE	.2237	.0534	.0000	.1185	.3289
SE → GEI	.4209	.0552	.0000	.3122	.5297
GESE → GEI	.2237	.0534	.0000	.1185	.3289
Indirect effect					
SE → GESE → GEI	.1014	.0260	Sig	.0519	.1558

Note: SE – Sustainable Entrepreneurship; GESE – Green Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy; GEI – Green Entrepreneurial Intention

The data in Table 4 reveals that the total effect of SE on GEI ($\beta = 0.5224$, SE = 0.0511; $p = 0.000$, CI_{.95} = [0.4218-0.6229]). Also, Table 4 reveals that the direct effect of SE on GESE ($\beta = 0.2237$, SE = 0.0534; $p = 0.000$, CI_{.95} = [0.1185-0.3289]) were statistically significant. Table 4 also reveals that the indirect effect of SE on GEI via GESE ($\beta = 0.1014$, SE = 0.0260; $p < 0.05$, CI_{.95} = [0.0519-0.1558]) were statistically significant. However, since the direct effect of SE on GEI ($\beta = 0.4209$, SE = 0.0552; $p = 0.000$, CI_{.95} = [0.3122-0.5297]) is statistically significant; the direct effect of SE on GESE ($\beta = 0.2237$, SE = 0.0534; $p = 0.000$, CI_{.95} = [0.1185-0.3289]) is statistically significant; and the direct effect of GESE on GEI ($\beta = 0.2237$, SE = 0.0534; $p = 0.000$, CI_{.95} = [0.1185-0.3289]) is statistically significant, GESE is regarded as a partial mediator in the relationship. Therefore, hypothesis 4 is accepted in the study.

DISCUSSION

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 sustainable entrepreneurship. To put it another way, having a working knowledge of SE tends to pique the enthusiasm of business education students to start their green businesses. The results of Nuringsih and Nuryasman (2022), Abdelwaheed et al. (2023), and Ediagbonya (2023b) who discovered that SE has a substantial positive connection with GEI, are corroborated by this finding. The analysis of hypothesis two revealed that SE is a significant positive predictor of business education students’ green entrepreneurial self-efficacy in Edo State. It implies that the knowledge of SE possessed by business education students is capable of boosting their confidence and capacity to venture into green entrepreneurial enterprise. This finding corroborates the findings by Ediagbonya (2023) and Abdelwahed et al (2023) who found that SE significantly predicted GESE. According to the study of hypothesis three, 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 GESE and GEI. The results of hypothesis four have once more demonstrated that GESE does considerably mediate

the relationship between sustainable entrepreneurship and Business education students' green entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. This finding corroborates the findings by Hussain et al (2021) who found that ESE is a mediator between the relationship between sustainable entrepreneurship and sustainable entrepreneurial intention.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how GESE mediated the relationship between GEI and SE in Edo State. The results revealed that SE and GESE are important predictors of business education students' intention to engage in green entrepreneurship in Edo State. It can also be concluded that a significant relationship exists between SE and GESE, and that GESE is a partial mediator in the SE and GEI relationship. This study has been able to bridge the gap in theory and practice as it was able to establish the mediating role of GESE in the relationship between SE and GEI among business education students. It is a novel study in this part of the world and it has contributed significantly to the literature on sustainable entrepreneurship and green entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, it indicates that stakeholders must be conscious of putting the necessary machinery in place to ensure that the GESE of individuals is strengthened towards promoting 'green' entrepreneurial activities in society.

How much GESE mediates the relationship between SE and GEI was the main focus of this investigation. Especially when considering poor countries such as Nigeria, this particular field of scientific inquiry is devoid of significant empirical support. A model that examined the connections between SE, GESE, and GEI was produced by the current study's findings, and it verified the SCT's presumptions. One fundamental principle of the SCT, for example, is that an individual's input, like a GESE, may motivate them to launch a green business. This implies that GESE is a major driving force for launching a particular green entrepreneurial venture. This idea emphasized once more how contextual circumstances (such as sustainable entrepreneurship) may influence a person's choice to follow a specific path. This shows that students are motivated to pursue self-employment through green entrepreneurship as a result of being exposed to a realistic, sustainable entrepreneurship education program. Thus, future empirical research focusing on this link should evaluate the extent to which different personal inputs moderate the relationship between GEI and SE.

The study's conclusions included some helpful advice for faculty members and students at universities. University administrators could raise the standard of graduates they are producing by strengthening and restructuring their entrepreneurial centers, making them more operational, and guaranteeing that students fully acquire the entrepreneurial skills required to launch their venture in the future. This is achievable when management consciously works to provide relevant resources, both human and material, and to encourage excellent research in the field. Furthermore, it benefits students because the SE program's content exposes them to the development of green entrepreneurial self-efficacy. To effectively stimulate and propel them toward starting their own green business, students need to be proactive and constant in their engagement with the lectures and practical included in the curriculum. The study's conclusions provide specific empirical proof of the country's sustainable entrepreneurial activity. This discovery will refine policy recommendations for the establishment of entrepreneurial ventures. This will make it possible for interested parties to support and stimulate company endeavors that shield the environment from damaging commercial activities. This will have the dual benefits of lowering unemployment and social vices in the

community as well as greatly fostering and supporting environmentally friendly entrepreneurship.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are therefore advanced. Firstly, the teaching and learning of sustainable entrepreneurship should be emphasized across the nation's tertiary education level. Secondly, the students should be encouraged to pursue things that are capable of stimulating their self-efficacy. Future researchers are encouraged to begin to focus on this aspect of entrepreneurship with a view to solving the environmental and social challenges confronting the nation.

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