

Article

Can University Students' Psychological Resources Stimulate the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Optimism and Green Entrepreneurial Intentions? Moderating Role of Sustainability Orientation

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Abstract: Given the crucial role of entrepreneurial optimism (EO) in prompting university students' green entrepreneurial intentions (GEI), scholars are still striving to explore the causal mechanism that can facilitate the underlying relationship. Based on the social cognitive theory, we hypothesize that individual's psychological resources, entrepreneurial resilience (ER) and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE), mediate the association between EO and GEI. In addition, this study seeks to investigate the impact of sustainability orientation (SO) in the relationship between EO and GEI. Data for this study have been collected from Chinese university students in their final years. The authors used variance-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses. The findings indicate that EO significantly influences GEI. Further, ER and ESE significantly mediate the link between EO and GEI. Moreover, this study finds that SO significantly moderates the relationship between EO and GEI such that the association is stronger at high levels of SO and vice versa. To the best of the authors' knowledge, no prior studies have tested these relationships. The findings suggest that the proposed model can be utilized by practitioners and policy makers to facilitate the execution of green entrepreneurship among university students.

Keywords: entrepreneurial optimism; entrepreneurial resilience; entrepreneurial self-efficacy; green entrepreneurial intentions; sustainability orientation



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1. Introduction

While the prevalence of green entrepreneurship is well-recognized, understanding the phenomenon of university students' green entrepreneurial intentions (GEI) is still a subject of ongoing debate [1,2]. This debate to a certain extent reflects the two distinct streams of views about the antecedents of GEI. On the one hand, a massive stream of research has identified contextual factors as the key stimulators of GEI, including university-based and external institutional entrepreneurial support [2]; conceptual, educational, and national support [3]; and entrepreneurial education [4,5]. On the other hand, there is a narrow strand of psychology and entrepreneurship domains that strive to explore the individual-level antecedents of GEI such as personality traits [6], entrepreneurial passion, and alertness [7]. Surprisingly, there is a dearth of empirical evidence that investigates the individual-level precursors of GEI [8]. Although it has been theorized that entrepreneurial optimism (EO) can be linked with GEI, only a limited sample of studies have investigated entrepreneurial