Promoting ecopreneurship behaviors in sustainable resources exploitation: greening youths for small scale green business in Cameroon

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The Cameroon environment

- West/Central Africa
- Green country
- Immense resources: biodiversity wealth
- Agricultural resources
- Riches BUT
- Many unemployed youths; poverty, environmental/resources challenges
Introduction: Africa's tragedy

- Africa's tragedy; the resource curse
- Exploitation by "outsiders"
- "Tragedy of the commons"; Critical
- Dormant entrepreneurial behaviors
- Consumerist culture; endemic psychological dependence
- Green economy as optimistic measure of sustainability
- Capacity building absolute
Resources management = man-environment interface

Ecosystem (Resources)

Man as object, Property,

Man as human being: motives, attitudes, values, action
Survival motives and resources

- Drive
- Needs
- Goal (resources)
- Reward
  - Satisfaction or dissatisfaction
Processes in resources exploitation

- Thinking, knowledge, beliefs
- Emotion: likes and dislikes
- Action: Conformity, compliance, deviance
The task of the day: sustainable resources management

Sustainability

Sustainable thinking

Sustainable behaviour
Green economy paradigm: a psychological paradigm?
The green economy paradigm

- New growth paradigm; diversity paradigm; need sustainable behaviors
- Emerging response to unfriendly economic paradigms and behaviors
- Pro-poor, pro-environment
- Enhances the earth’s natural capital base and ecosystem
- Depends on attitudes/behaviors towards resources exploitation
Green economy cont.

- Entrepreneurial focus: employability, economic and social inclusion
- Ecological/green entrepreneurship
- Correlation, green economy and agricultural entrepreneurship
- Green farming enhances biodiversity and maintain higher levels of productivity (African Union)
Human dimension: green business, a psychological challenge

- Human behavior determines biodiversity loss and restoration; thus capacity building
- Limitation of technical knowledge in natural resources development
- Green economy requires a radical change in behavior and a shift in public opinion (African Union, 2011)
Emergence of ecopreneurship

- The “driver” of green economy is ecopreneurship
- “Entrepreneurship through an environmental lens” (Schaltegger, 2002) i.e. wealth creation & environmentalism
- Present context: from corporate capitalist ventures to survival strategies of local people.
- Requires a training culture
Developing responsible behaviors

- Unfavorable attitudes towards green business and skill deficits require systematic training in ecopreneurship i.e. responsible behaviors/social intelligence
- Skills to realize market success with environmental innovations (Schaltegger, 2002)
The Green Project

- Cameroon; North West Region
- Agriculture economic/cultural activity
- Orthodox practices, low green business drive by young people
- Eco-enterprise initiative of Youth Outreach Programme-Cameroon
- Building on endogenous activities: training on market gardening and poultry farming- attitudes, motivation, self-concept and technical competence
Key question: can capacity building influence behavioural disposition towards green enterprises?
Methodology

- 44 young people (n= 25 females and 19 males); 43.2%, 26-30 years; 75.0% single; 45.5%, Higher School
- Entrepreneurship Intention Questionnaire [EIQ.V3.1] ; SPSS used
- Cronbach’s alphas: Attitude, \( \alpha = .72 \); Social norms, \( \alpha = .60 \); perceived behavior control, \( \alpha = .74 \); intention \( \alpha = .86 \). Descriptive/inferential statistics
Results

- **Past/present activities**: Teaching (2.4); petty business (36.6%); crop farming (31.7%); poultry farming (9.8%); gardening (9.8%); poultry farming (9.8%); design (9.8%).

- **Prospective careers/occupations**: Green entrepreneurs (69.4%); civil servants (14.3%); employees (12.2%).
Results cont.

- **Start-up difficulties.** Lack of capital (67.3%); lack of management skills (12.2%); poor management practices (16.3%); lack of cooperation (4.9%).

- **Youth perspectives.**
  Education/training (55.1%); financial support (18.4%); Mentoring (8.2%) and saving (8.2%).
Training appears to be a core factor in reinforcing significant relationships among attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioral control and green business start-up intention.

Table 1: Bivariate correlation analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green attitude (1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29.68</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social norms (2)</td>
<td>.302*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.86</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived behavior control (3)</td>
<td>.579**</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.62</td>
<td>5.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green intention (4)</td>
<td>.790**</td>
<td>.362**</td>
<td>.776**</td>
<td>35.61</td>
<td>6.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).
Predictors of green business deposition

- **Step 1:** Attitude significantly predicted green business intention at $R = .75$; $R^2 = .63$; $\Delta R^2 = .62$, $p < 0.001$ and **63.2%** variation in intention level.

- **Step 2:** Attitude and perceived behavior control significantly predicted green business intention at $R = .88$; $R^2 = .78$; $\Delta R^2 = .77$, $p < 0.001$. $\Delta R^2$ increased from .62 to .77 and **77.1%** variations in intention level.
Gender dispositional analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intention</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35.31579</td>
<td>6.412251</td>
<td>1.471071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35.84000</td>
<td>7.191894</td>
<td>1.438379</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test statistics showed no significant difference; $t(42) = -.251$, $p > .05$; the same level of green business intention was observed for male and female participants.
Lessons from the study

- Green enterprise education affects cognitive & behavioral dispositions towards green business.
- Attitude and perceived behavior control are core predictors of green business start-up intention.
- Training capable of eradicating male-female psycho-cultural barriers.
- Criticality of human dimension in natural resources exploitation.
- Youth inclusion & sustainable future.
Concluding Remarks

- Building ecopreneurship on local survival strategies/cultural realities
- Up-scaling green business practices
- More studies on the behavioral dimensions of resources management
- More gender sensitive eco-initiatives
- Validating outcome-field activities
- Green paradigm; a psychological paradigm: cognitions and behaviors as “drivers” of green economy
Our resources: green minds, green action.

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Thank You

Merci