

Green Entrepreneurial Intention: Impact of Environmental Awareness, Innovativeness, and Social Support

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ABSTRACT

Environmental damage impacts individuals starting to become aware of how to care. Individual awareness is reflected in how individuals switch to an environmentally friendly lifestyle. Apart from changing lifestyles for themselves, people are starting to spread it to society through environmental awareness campaigns. Environment awareness also has an impact on the emergence of green products. The emergence of green products is based on people who intend to set up a green business. For this reason, this research aims to determine the influence of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intentions. This research also tested the impact of innovativeness and social support. Innovativeness starts from a person's creativity and how he/she finds an opportunity. Besides, social support can come from family, relatives, friends, and environmental groups. This research was conducted on undergraduate students in Indonesia with a sample of 171 respondents. The results of this study indicate that environmental awareness is a driver of green entrepreneurial intentions. This is also supported by innovativeness and social support. Someone who has high environmental awareness tends to intend to set up a green business. Moreover, someone who has environmental awareness and innovativeness can encourage highly green entrepreneurial intention. Furthermore, social support also mediates environmental awareness of green entrepreneurial intention.

Keywords: Green Entrepreneurial Intention, Environmental Awareness, Innovativeness, Social Support

Citation:

Utami, T. L. W. (2024). Conference Proceedings Paper: Green Entrepreneurial Intention: Impact of Environmental Awareness, Innovativeness, and Social Support. *Proceedings of ASBN International Conference 2024* (pp. 616-628), Yogyakarta, Indonesia. ASEAN School of Business Network.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64458/asbnc.v1.46>

INTRODUCTION

Environmental awareness plays a crucial role in fostering green entrepreneurship. Individuals who care about environmental issues can be motivated to engage in environmentally sustainable practices and businesses. The increasing environmental awareness issues have led to a rise in green entrepreneurship intentions, where individuals aim to establish businesses focusing on green products (Bian, 2024; Prananta et al., 2024). This shift towards green entrepreneurship is crucial in addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable practices in the business sector (Magdincheva-Shopova & Stojanovska-Stefanova, 2024). Despite concerns about the market response, the enthusiasm for environmentally friendly concepts and the desire to contribute to environmental preservation are driving forces behind the emergence of green ventures, showcasing a growing trend towards environmentally conscious business initiatives (Prananta et al., 2024; Ramayah & Lo, 2007).

The increasing environmental awareness emerges environmentally conscious entrepreneurs that contribute to the growth of green and energy firms (Arin et al., 2023). The implementation of green entrepreneurship reflects a broader trend towards environmentally sustainable development and green marketing strategies in the current business landscape (Prananta et al., 2024). Green entrepreneurship emphasizes how a company is able to create green products or green innovation (Afum et al., 2021), green production and green supply chain management (Antwi et al., 2022), and environmental sustainability. It is required an understanding of this matter which is driven by sensitivity to the environment. In response, orientation towards environmental sustainability can be used as reinforcement when someone has the desire to become a green entrepreneur (Zhang et al., 2023).

In general, entrepreneurial intention can be influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors that affect entrepreneurial intention can be from personality traits such as the need for achievement, risk tolerance, risk tolerance, ambiguity tolerance, internal control, and self-efficacy (Altinay et al., 2012; Ashraf et al., 2021; Hussain, Nazir, Hashmi, Di Vaio, et al., 2021; Hussain, Nazir, Hashmi, Shaheen, et al., 2021), innovativeness (Bhatti et al., 2021), gender differences (Fragoso et al., 2020; Jena, 2020), family background (entrepreneur or non-entrepreneur), and education (Indarti et al., 2013). Various internal drives lead more to economic motives.

Meanwhile, a person's desire to become an environmentally friendly entrepreneur is certainly different from that of a more general person. A person's desire to establish a green business can start from their awareness of the environment. A person's awareness of the importance of protecting the environment brings about a desire to behave in an environmentally friendly manner. This starts with purchasing decisions towards green products (Sharma et al., 2024), how to sort waste, reduce consumption of goods, and environmentally friendly campaigns. Behaviors that reflect environmental awareness encourage people to think innovatively and creatively to build businesses that not only focus on economic growth but also their positive impact on the environment (Genoveva & Tanardi, 2022).

A green entrepreneur does not only rely on their internal motivation but must get positive support from external. Some previous studies found that external factors such as cultural characteristics, social relations, and economic and political conditions (Anwar, Jamal, & Saleem, 2021; Indarti et al., 2013; Jena, 2020) influence the desire to set up a business. Support from external or that can be called social support is from family, friends, colleagues (Pascucci et al., 2022), institutions, universities, and the government (Alvarez-Risco, Mlodzianowska, Zamora-Ramos, et al., 2021). Social support can strengthen green entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors (Li et al., 2023). The role of external factors is to promote environmental awareness practices (Alshebami et al., 2023). Sharing knowledge about green lifestyles and entrepreneurship facilitates the development and implementation of green innovations among small businesses. Chee & Nordin (2020) found that green entrepreneurship is not driven by individual green behavior but rather by more commercial motives. So, a study related to factors affecting green entrepreneurial intention is needed.

In Indonesia, the existence of environmentally friendly people is usually pioneered by young people. Several environmental awareness communities have emerged, such as Greenpeace Indonesia, Zero Waste Indonesia, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Indonesia, and Youth for Climate Change (YFCC) Indonesia. These communities were founded by the young generation who have environmental awareness. The existence of the young generation starting to care about the environment certainly gives rise to their desire to establish environmentally friendly businesses. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the influence of environmental awareness, innovativeness, and social support on green entrepreneurial intention. This study is limited to the young generation, especially undergraduate students in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The individual's desire to start a business is called entrepreneurial intention (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993). Entrepreneurial intention has been studied starting from the desire to become an entrepreneur with social value or called social entrepreneurial intention (Paramita et al., 2022), entrepreneurship in digital companies or called digital entrepreneurial intention (Mohammed et al., 2023), and the desire to become an environmentally friendly entrepreneur or called green entrepreneurial intention. Green entrepreneurial intention starts from individuals who are indeed sensitive to the environment (Zhang et al., 2023). In addition, social factors such as communities that focus on the environment can also be a factor in the emergence of environmentally friendly businesses.

Entrepreneurial intention can be influenced by internal factors (including demographics) and external factors. For demographic factors, research on entrepreneurial intention is more directed at the influence of gender differences (Fragoso et al., 2020; Jena, 2020), family background (entrepreneur or non-entrepreneur), and education (whether they have received entrepreneurship education) (Indarti et al., 2013). Internal factors that influence entrepreneurial intention can be seen from personality traits that are distinguished into creativity, need for achievement, risk tolerance, tolerance for risk, tolerance for ambiguity, internal control and self-efficacy (Altinay et al., 2012; Bhatti et al., 2021; Hussain, Nazir, Hashmi, Di Vaio, et al., 2021). Furthermore, from external factors, entrepreneurial intention is influenced by cultural characteristics, social relations, and economic and political conditions (Anwar, Jamal, & Saleem, 2021). Green entrepreneurial intention is usually driven externally by social support from family, universities, institutions, and government (Alvarez-Risco, Mlodzianowska, Zamora-Ramos, et al., 2021).

Environmental Awareness and Green Entrepreneurial Intention

The concern for the environment plays a crucial role in inspiring individuals to establish eco-friendly ventures, driven by their awareness and sensitivity to environmental issues (Kour, 2024). This concern leads to a proactive approach in providing solutions to mitigate negative impacts on the environment (Wiradimadja et al., 2024). Individuals with a strong environmental concern are motivated to recognize the potential of businesses as a means to address environmental challenges, viewing them not only as sources of financial gain but also as vehicles for environmental preservation (Megawati et al., 2024). Individuals with a strong concern for the environment often exhibit a deep-rooted intrinsic motivation to address environmental issues through eco-friendly ventures, as reflected in their heightened environmental awareness and sensitivity (Kotyza et al., 2024). Such individuals are motivated by a genuine care for the environment, leading them to establish businesses that not only generate economically benefits but also contribute significantly to environmental preservation (Genoveva & Tanardi, 2022). This intrinsic motivation stemming from environmental concern serves as a powerful driver for initiating and sustaining eco-friendly ventures that prioritize environmental value alongside financial gains.

Green entrepreneurial intention starts from individuals who are indeed sensitive to the environment (Zhang et al., 2023). Internal motivation for environmental awareness encourages someone to start a business. This is explained in the theory of planned behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1985) that individual behavior is determined by the desires or intentions of individuals which are formed from attitudes and based on their beliefs. Individuals who have beliefs and orientations towards green products will be encouraged to create green businesses. Environmental awareness can increase an individual's desire to become a green entrepreneur, which can be driven by an individual's knowledge of the negative impacts on environmental conditions caused by human activities. For this reason, they start by investing in environmentally friendly assets and then have an initiation into green entrepreneurship. A person who has high environmental awareness can be reflected in their participation in social and charity activities related to ecology such as planting trees, manifesting

environmentally friendly consumption behavior, and promoting sustainable development goals (Zhang et al., 2023). An individual's understanding of green entrepreneurship, which includes understanding the concept of being environmentally friendly, environmental problems, and the ability to identify green entrepreneurial opportunities, can influence their desire to establish a green business (Cai et al., 2022). Based on the argument, this research formulates the following hypothesis:

Hipotesis 1: Environmental awareness has a positive effect on green entrepreneurial intention

Innovativeness and Green Entrepreneurial Intention

Innovativeness is closely related to how to start a business. Innovative thinking drives a person to create something new and unique. Creative and innovative people tend to have high entrepreneurial intentions (Altinay et al., 2012; Bhatti et al., 2021; Shi et al., 2020; Zampetakis et al., 2011). A new business forces people to face uncertainty that requires innovativeness to gain a competitive advantage (Altinay et al., 2012). In the context of green entrepreneurship, innovativeness is a driving factor for individuals to be able to think innovatively by solving environmental problems by developing sustainable solutions (Paparoidamis et al., 2019). Individuals who are creative and have knowledge about being environmentally friendly tend to be more interested in green entrepreneurship (Cai et al., 2022).

Innovativeness drives the development of green products and implements green supply chain management, as highlighted in previous studies. Studies emphasize the significance of innovativeness in fostering the exploration of new technologies (Flores & Jansson, 2022), alternative materials, and production methods to address environmental challenges (Brodny et al., 2023; Stern & Valero, 2021). Fostering innovativeness not only enables the creation of economically viable solutions but also motivates environmental preservation efforts through the development of sustainable products and practices (Flores & Jansson, 2021).

Innovativeness and the intention to establish green ventures is deeply rooted in environmental awareness (Alshebami et al., 2023; Yasir et al., 2023). This awareness serves as a driving force, instilling individuals with the motivation, confidence, and courage needed to take risks and address the evolving needs of environmentally conscious consumers (Yasir et al., 2023). By being environmentally aware, green entrepreneurs can develop products that meet to the increasing demand for sustainable solutions, showcasing their proactive and optimistic attitudes towards green business practices (Alshebami et al., 2023; Yasir et al., 2023). This proactive stance underscores their role as agents of change, navigating the challenges of the green business landscape with a forward-thinking mindset and a commitment to sustainable innovation. Following this argument, this study hypothesizes:

Hipotesis 2a: Innovativeness has a positive effect on green entrepreneurial intention

Hipotesis 2b: Innovativeness mediates the relationship of environmental awareness and green entrepreneurial intention

Social Support and Green Entrepreneurial Intention

Social support can be obtained through family, friends, relatives, and even the community. Family, friends and partners have an important role in a person's desire to set up a business (Anwar, Jamal, & Saleem, 2021). Regarding support from family, Altinay et al. (2012) found that family support had a positive effect on students' entrepreneurial intentions. Family is the main source of emotional and even financial support for aspiring entrepreneurs. Family support can motivate someone to be brave in developing their business ideas. In fact, the role of family members is important as role models for fostering green entrepreneurial intention. For example, parents give examples to their children on how to become entrepreneurs (Prabowo et al., 2022). In an environmentally friendly context, family support can be obtained through family habits that apply environmentally friendly concepts.

Social support can also be obtained in a wider scope, for example the role of educational institutions and the government. Collaboration between academics (universities), industry and government are important to create guidelines related to the environment so as to encourage green entrepreneurs by offering resources, mentorship and financing (Papageorgiou et al., 2023). Social networks make it easier to share information so that it can play an important role in encouraging someone to become an entrepreneur (Hussain, Nazir, Hashmi, Shaheen, et al., 2021). Even the existence of role models who provide an overview of environmentally friendly living can also be an inspiration for setting up a green business.

Environmental awareness is important in fostering social support for green businesses, ultimately influencing green entrepreneurial intention. Individuals with environmental awareness tend to seek like-minded individuals, leading to the formation of environmentally concerned communities (Lei et al., 2023). This awareness also translates into environmentally friendly practices at home and in public spaces (Ma et al., 2023), creating a foundation for environmentally conscious behaviors within families. Moreover, environmental awareness positively correlates with green entrepreneurial intention because it motivates individuals to establish green ventures (Li et al., 2023). By engaging in environmentally concerned communities, individuals can share knowledge and receive support, further enhancing their commitment to sustainable practices and green entrepreneurship (Alshebami et al., 2023). Based on the explanation above, it can be hypothesized.

Hipotesis 3a: Social support has a positive effect on green entrepreneurial intention

Hipotesis 3b: Social support mediates the relationship of environmental awareness and green entrepreneurial intention

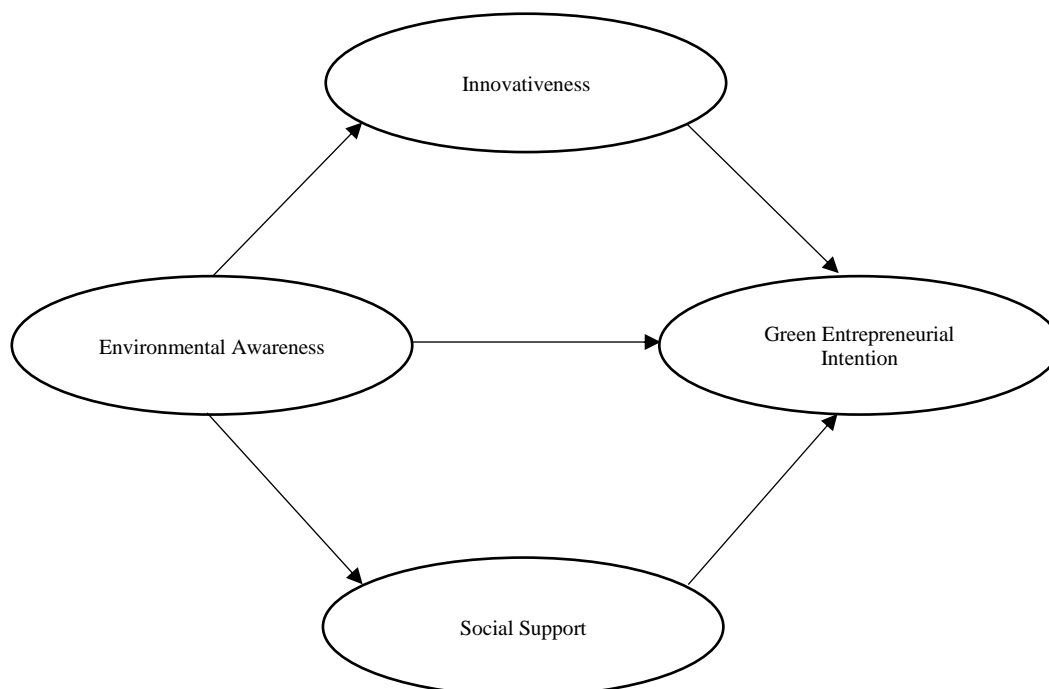


Figure 1. Research Framework

METHOD

The quantitative study was conducted to examine the influence of environmental awareness, innovativeness, and social support on green entrepreneurial intention. Environmental awareness is predicted to be the main factor that influences someone to be interested in green businesses. Green

entrepreneurial intention is researched by looking at internal and external influences. Internal factors that are thought to influence green entrepreneurial intention are apart from environmental awareness as well as innovativeness. Furthermore, the external factor that influences green entrepreneurial intention is thought to be social support. This research also tests the mediation effect where the influence of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intentions is internally mediated by innovativeness. Meanwhile, the influence of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intentions can also be mediated by social support. This is because innovativeness and social support for green entrepreneurial intention must also be preceded by an individual's environmental awareness.

The research was conducted on undergraduate students at public and private universities. Undergraduate students were selected because they were of the same age and background. Besides, individual awareness occurs among the younger generation where they are starting to switch to an environmentally friendly lifestyle. Apart from that, the younger generation is also starting to not only change their lifestyle for themselves. They started spreading it to the community through campaigns to care for the environment. Environmental awareness also has an impact on the younger generation who are starting to think about environmentally friendly businesses. Non-probability sampling (i.e., purposive sampling and snowball sampling) was chosen to decide the sampling. Questionnaires were distributed online via Google Form. Data analysis was carried out using SEM-PLS.

RESULTS

The data collected was 178 questionnaires and 171 questionnaires that could be analyzed. Questionnaires that could not be analyzed were because they did not meet the respondent's criteria. Respondents in this study were students of undergraduate programs in Indonesia. Most of them live in Java (more than 90%) and study in private universities. A total of 74 respondents were men and 97 respondents were women. To analyze the results of this research, analysis was carried out on the measurement model and structural model. Analysis of the measurement model was carried out to test the validity and reliability of the instrument. Meanwhile, the structural model is used to test the hypothesis.

Measurement Model

The indicators in every variable were adopted from previous studies. Green entrepreneurial intention consisted of 5 items (Alvarez-Risco, Młodzianowska, García-Ibarra, et al., 2021). Then, environmental awareness was adopted from Barba-Sánchez et al. (2022) and del Brío González et al. (2022) that consist of 10 items. To measure innovativeness, this study used 5 items from Anwar et al. (2021). Social support was measured by 7 items from Indarti (2004) dan Anwar et al. (2021). This study used a 5-point Likert scale to measure all instruments.

In measurement model, the validity and reliability test are conducted. This study used convergent and discriminant validity to test the validity of measurements (see Table1). The results of convergent validity indicate that several items must be removed because they are invalid, namely those with factor loading values < 0.50 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values < 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019). The items that must be removed are GEI9, EA1, EA7, and EA8. Then, the discriminant validity test shows that the instrument is valid.

This study also conducted a reliability test by assessing based on the Cronbach's alpha value. Referring to Hair et al. (2019) the Cronbach's alpha value for each variable has been > 0.70 , and the results of the reliability test indicate that all research variables have been reliable (see Table 2).

Table 1. Validity Test

	Environmental Awareness	Green Entrepreneurial Intention	Innovativeness	Social Support	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
EA10	0.819	0.525	0.538	0.584	0.553
EA2	0.607	0.495	0.397	0.477	
EA3	0.744	0.469	0.414	0.426	
EA4	0.781	0.449	0.482	0.455	
EA5	0.715	0.429	0.337	0.413	
EA6	0.739	0.580	0.485	0.452	
EA9	0.784	0.531	0.414	0.526	
GEI1	0.570	0.817	0.548	0.607	0.682
GEI2	0.557	0.851	0.572	0.625	
GEI3	0.503	0.750	0.523	0.526	
GEI4	0.396	0.730	0.420	0.447	
GEI5	0.611	0.894	0.506	0.666	
GEI6	0.558	0.884	0.495	0.613	
GEI7	0.599	0.831	0.542	0.568	
GEI8	0.613	0.833	0.567	0.565	
IN1	0.487	0.454	0.804	0.583	0.587
IN2	0.581	0.556	0.787	0.558	
IN3	0.448	0.455	0.755	0.469	
IN4	0.362	0.439	0.740	0.440	
IN5	0.362	0.508	0.743	0.509	
SR1	0.433	0.518	0.474	0.745	0.611
SR2	0.471	0.630	0.480	0.786	
SR3	0.469	0.506	0.468	0.791	
SR4	0.480	0.658	0.524	0.834	
SR5	0.581	0.527	0.541	0.790	
SR6	0.631	0.583	0.641	0.788	
SR7	0.438	0.376	0.538	0.735	

Table 2. Reliability Test

	Cronbach's Alpha
Environmental Awareness	0.864
Green Entrepreneurial Intention	0.933
Innovativeness	0.825
Social Support	0.894

Hypothesis Testing

After testing validity and reliability, this research tested the structural model. The results of this research show R Square Adjusted 0.590. This means that environmental awareness, innovativeness and social support are able to explain green entrepreneurial intention by 59%, while the remainder (100 – 59= 41%) is explained by other variables outside the research model.

Table 3 shows that all hypotheses in this study are supported. The direct effect of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intention is significantly positive ($t=4.303$; $p<0.05$). Hypothesis 1 is supported. Furthermore, innovativeness has a significant positive effect on green entrepreneurial intention or hypothesis 2a is supported ($t=2.794$; $p<0.05$). Hypothesis 3a is also supported where social support has a significant positive effect on green entrepreneurial intention ($t=4.193$; $p<0.05$).

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

	t Statistics	P Values	Result
H1: Environmental Awareness → Green Entrepreneurial Intention	4.303	0.000	Supported
H2a: Innovativeness → Green Entrepreneurial Intention	2.794	0.005	Supported
H2b: Environmental Awareness → Innovativeness → Green Entrepreneurial Intention	2.582	0.010	Supported
H3a: Social Support → Green Entrepreneurial Intention	4.193	0.000	Supported
H3b: Environmental Awareness → Social Support → Green Entrepreneurial Intention	3.919	0.000	Supported

This study also tested the indirect effect, namely the mediation of innovativeness and social support on the influence of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intention. The coefficient of the influence of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intention through innovativeness showed $t = 2.582$ with $p < 0.05$. It can be concluded that innovativeness is proven to mediate the influence of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intention or hypothesis 2b is supported. Furthermore, social support is proven to mediate the influence of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intention ($t = 3.919$; $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 3b is supported.

DISCUSSION

Green entrepreneurial intention arises from a person's awareness of environmental damage. Environmental fundamentals are followed up by many people who are starting to switch to an environmentally friendly lifestyle. Switching to an environmentally friendly lifestyle is a reflection of concern for the environment. People who care about the environment not only change their lifestyle for themselves, but also start spreading it to the community through environmental awareness campaigns. This is the reason why many green products have emerged. The emergence of environmentally friendly businesses begins with the intention of individuals who want to establish green businesses. It is indicated that environmental awareness can affect green entrepreneurial intention.

A study conducted on undergraduate students provides an explanation that environmental awareness has an impact on the interest in creating products or businesses that are in line with their outlook on life. Concern for the environment leads someone to change their lifestyle to be environmentally friendly. This lifestyle has an impact on the needs of products and services that support being environmentally friendly. This can encourage someone to read about green business opportunities. From that, environmental awareness brings interest in becoming entrepreneurs who focus on green products.

The interest in starting a business is influenced by innovativeness (Altinay et al., 2012; Zampetakis & Moustakis, 2006). This is also answered by the results of this study that innovativeness has a positive effect on green entrepreneurial intention. Innovative ability encourages a person to be able to think and produce creative ideas. Creative ideas can be the initiative to produce green products to solve environmental problems. The more innovative a person is, the more creative they are in producing green products. The results of this study also show that the effect of environmental awareness on green entrepreneurial intention is mediated by innovativeness. In thinking innovatively and creatively about green products, a person needs to be aware of the environment. Even innovative thoughts in producing green products that can solve environmental problems are motivated by awareness and knowledge about the environment (Cai et al., 2022). People who are aware of environmental conditions can read opportunities to solve environmental problems. These opportunities are captured with innovative thinking to create an interest in running a green business.

Social support from family, relatives, friends, and environmental groups also plays a role in having an interest in doing environmentally friendly business. This is in accordance with the results of this study where social support has a positive effect on green entrepreneurial intention. People who are environmentally aware tend to interact with people who have the same thoughts to find solutions and proactively seek opportunities to solve environmental problems (Barba-Sánchez et al., 2022). People who are environmentally aware look for products that do not pose health and environmental risks. They will look for products that use or final recall, consume little energy, and use a few packages that, if that is not the case, have to be at least recycled and recyclable (del Brío González et al., 2022). This way of thinking and lifestyle gets support from society. Social support followed up with the promotion of environmentally friendly practices is also carried out to raise awareness of green products (Peng et al., 2021; Siddique & Hossain, 2018). From this, environmentally friendly business opportunities arise which have an impact on increasing green entrepreneurial intention.

CONCLUSION

Green businesses start from the business owner's environmental awareness. This research shows that environmental awareness plays an important role in driving someone to want to set up a green business. However, environmental awareness not only plays a role but must also be supported by innovativeness. Creative and innovative individuals do have the opportunity to set up a business. Based on environmental awareness, individuals who have innovativeness can produce environmentally friendly business ideas. This can be reflected in green products or businesses that support recycling. Apart from individual internal factors, external factors through the role of the people around them are also no less important. Environmentally conscious individuals usually have lifestyles that support their principles. To support this, people will apply environmentally friendly behavior to their family, co-workers and friends. These individuals will also be interested in becoming members of environmentally conscious communities. Through association with individuals who share the same principles of environmental concern, a person can gain social support to encourage him to set up a green business. Therefore, external environmental awareness supported by social support will increase environmentally friendly entrepreneurial intentions.

Recommendations

The recommendation for future research is to conduct a qualitative study of people who are already involved in the green business. Future studies can be carried out to determine the motives of green business actors. Qualitative studies are recommended to analyze more deeply how environmental awareness becomes the basis for someone to pursue green businesses.

Acknowledgements or Notes

This work is supported by Center for Development of Management Studies, Department of Management, Faculty of Business and Economics, Universitas Islam Indonesia.

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