COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE INFLUENCE OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' EXPOSURE TO BUSINESS ETHICS EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Research on Business Ethics in Africa has been limited. This paper makes a contribution to this existing gap by assessing if there are significant differences between students' potential business behaviour when they are exposed to Business Ethics Education and when they are not. This is based on the backdrop that many successful business men and women in Nigeria do not take Ethics courses. Furthermore, the motivation for students to start businesses is essentially for survival. Our findings show a similar pattern for both categories of students: those who took Business Ethics courses and those who did not. Thus, it is concluded that there are no significant differences in both groups of students in terms of the size, direction and significance of the determinants of their business orientations. Nonetheless, there are nuances in the role academic status, gender and intelligence play in influencing students' business behaviour.

Keyword*: Business Ethics, Business Behavior, Academic Status, Gender, Intelligence.*

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we discuss the potentialities of students' future business behaviour given their exposure or not to Business Ethics Education (BEE). Thus, we compare students who take Business Ethics courses (BECs) with those who do not in terms of their current business values and ethics and factors responsible for this. BEE is considered important given the need to raise ethically-driven business leaders. It is essentially motivated to teach students to imbibe the culture of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as future business leaders (Tormo-Carbó et al., 2016; Ugwuozor & Otu, 2019). CSR is an aspect of BEE that seeks to make businesses deliberate in benefiting the society (Kolodinsky et al., 2010; Rupp et al., 2015). BEE, nonetheless, includes all activities that guarantee that employees and suppliers of raw materials, and all other stakeholders are not short-changed. It teaches that any action or inaction of businesses which culminates in actual and perceived loss to the society is an act of corruption. To this effect, BEE is expected to enable students to possess ethical business mentality (Claver-cortez et al., 2020).

Since students are the future business leaders and unethical business practices bedevil the current business ecosystem especially in developing countries like Nigeria, it is instructive to assess students' disposition to running or managing businesses in future. This is possibly to avoid their tendencies to perpetuate the status quo of inefficient and business malpractices. One aspect of underdevelopment is the wide gap between theory and practice in Nigeria's education

system. Many students are often taught without relevant theories focused on global best practices. This is also experienced in the BEE (Tomo-carbo et al., 2019). To this effect, many students would not consider BECs as prerequisite to their success in future business management. This is also evidenced by successful business men and women, many of whom do not have tertiary education and never had to take BECs.

In spite of the foregoing, there are several studies on potential business behaviour of students. Most of them are implicated on their CSR disposition (Chia et al., 2020; Claver-Cortés et al., 2019; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2015). These studies argue that CSR-driven companies are likely to be both altruistic and profitable. In fact, some scholars argue that CSR-motivated companies are essentially the best of ethics-driven companies (Renouard and Ezvan, 2017). Some of the existing studies have compared potential business behaviour of students in various ways. For instance, Larrán et al. (2018) compare CSR disposition of students in different departments. Similarly, comparisons were made for different religion (Fitzpatrick & Cheng, 2014) and different countries (Chung et al., 2007; González-Rodríguez et al., 2013). Some other studies have identified the determinants of CSR (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2015; Teixeira et al, 2018). Most of these studies, however, focus on ethical disposition of students in developed countries. There are, however, only a few studies that have assessed the students' business ethics disposition (CSR disposition) and even fewer that have investigated the influence of BECs or BEE on possible business ideologies of students in Africa.

An earlier study conducted by Goron-Dutse and Hilman (2012) observes that students' motive for doing business is either to profit or profiteer in both short and long term. Later, Ugwuozor and Otu (2019) linked students' ethical disposition and their perception of CSR. Ugwuozor (2020) also used ANOVA and found significant effects of gender, academic status and exposure to BEE, implying that male and female students are significantly different in their disposition to CSR. This means that those who took BEE and those who did not would run businesses differently, and students across the levels of study do not share similar understanding of CSR. But what is unclear is how differently the students exposed to BEE would run businesses from those who were not exposed to BEE, in addition to the factors responsible, if any, for the difference. This identified gap is the key motivation for this study.

This study therefore improves on Ugwuozor (2020) by categorizing the students according to their exposure to BEE and thereafter assessing the effects of gender and academic status on their potential business behaviour. Since the respondents are students, we also considered it important to assess the influence of intelligence (measured by CGPA) on business mentality or disposition of students exposed to or otherwise to BEE. We found no other study that has explored this before. Thus, for both categories of students, we first assess the determinants of their business disposition by regressing against it some select academic-related variables like academic status, gender, and CGPA and then test in both groups the within-group variations in factors; that is, to see if there are significant differences between the effect of subfactors. In each group, we assess gender effect in business mentality-that is, if male and females in each group differ in their disposition to running business. For the effect of academic status-we assess if there are differences in business opinions among students in their various years of study. For intelligence, the students are grouped into two, based on their CGPA, namely

higher intelligence and lower intelligence. We thereafter assessed the difference in business dispositions.

Results of the analysis show that all academics-related variables jointly influenced students' business behaviour significantly whether or not they were exposed to BEE. Thus, it is concluded that there is no difference in the influence of these variables given their categorizations. However, it is noteworthy that for both categories of students, academic status is the only variable that did not influence the students' behaviour; but gender and intelligence did. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: we review related studies in Section 2. In Section 3, we describe the methodology. In Section 4, we present the findings and discuss them in Section 5. In Section 6, we conclude and highlight some contributions and limitations of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students' Expected Business Behaviour

Since students will become future business leaders and managers, it is instructive to assess their potential business behaviour. Anecdotes suggest that ethical disposition of students in developed countries is reflective of the ethical disposition of the political and business leaders. This is based on the principle that people are often products of their environment. Hence, since the institutions in developed countries effectively function to meet the common good of the society, students as product and beneficiaries of these common good are implicitly primed to perpetuate same. Conversely, in less developed countries like Nigeria, where poverty and corruption are rife, students as products of the society may need stronger ethical orientation and extra empowerment to function like their counterparts in developed countries. To this effect, a priori, the business mentalities of students in developed countries and developing countries are expected to be different. For instance, students in developed countries are taught business in terms of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to benefit the wider society (external stakeholders) beyond the operators of the business (internal stakeholders) and customers (transactional stakeholders) (Larrán et al., 2018). Conversely, in Nigeria, CSR is more of a theoretical concept. Students' motivation for starting and running businesses is primarily for economic survival (Ugwuozor, 2020). Goron-Dutse and Hilman (2012) indicate that students seek either to profit or profiteer both in the short or long term. While the ethical differences exist between young people located in the developed and less developed world, we consider CSR as the zenith of a firm's business disposition since it balances the ethics and operations and profit of a firm (Carrol, 2016). Further, since on the average, the ethical disposition of students and firms in developing countries are lesser than their counterparts in the developed countries, we find it convenient to use the term "*business behaviour*" to assess their disposition and motivation for doing business. In any case, both terms are used interchangeably.

Nonetheless, there are indications that since the world are a global village and students in developing countries may come to learn business ethics as working toward a common good, the realities of CSR and business behaviour may be changing (Giacalone & Thompson, 2006). This means that changes in students' social and economic realities influence changes in their ethical perceptions, including the CSR of local firms. To this end, Giacalone & Thompson (2006)

recommend that teachers and educators must teach students Business Ethics based on their world view to sharpen their perspectives of CSR of businesses.

This idea therefore shifts the position that students who are yet to become business men and women will tend to value a firm's ethical disposition from early on based on its commitment to the welfare and satisfaction of internal, external and transactional stakeholders. This perspective feeds into the stakeholder theory which argues that it is inherent and obligatory in the firm to work ethically and to work for the common good of all stakeholders and the general society. The theory further argues that a firm is morally bound to be ethically disposed to society. If the firm acts otherwise, this will culminate in losses, bankruptcy and extinction in the long run. To this effect, students, based on their discernment of a firm's ethical disposition and CSR, will shape their intended business behaviour accordingly (Renouard & Ezvan, 2017).

Ethics and Determinants of Students' Potential Business Behaviour

Literature on students' perception of ethics and its bearing on firms' corporate responsibility are mixed. Some studies consider students' view on CSR as an ethical business responsibility (Chia et al., 2020; Pätäri et al., 2017), while some others do not (Goron-Dutse and Hilman, 2014 and Tomo-carbo et al., 2019). In addition, some other studies have a mixture of both results (Vázquez and Licandro, 2013; Teixeira et al., 2018). In some of these studies, comparisons were made between students who were exposed to business education and those who were not, and this informed or formed their perception of business behaviour.

The degree to which students perceive ethical disposition of firms and its implications for CSR varies across demographic characteristics. Eweje and Burton (2010) found that female students are more ethics-aware in New Zealand, but age was not a key determinant of their level of awareness. In a related instance, Chang and Cheng (2017) found that students' purchase intention (based on their ethical valuation of a firm) was not motivated by age. Age, however, is crucial in the ethical disposition of Spanish students as older students in both Accounting and Business Schools were more inclined to business ethics and CSR in Spain whereas gender was not (McCarthy et al., 2016).

Other demographic and socioeconomic variables that influenced ethical business disposition of students are class and department. Unlike Chang and Cheng (2017), Larran et al. (2019) identified that students with academic major in Business and Accounting were likely to run a company well and are disposed to engaging in CSR. To that effect, women were more CSR sensitive – they recognize that CSR is a primary responsibility of companies.

While these studies focused on general students' perspectives on ethics and its influence on their potential business disposition, they were not exposed to BECs or BEEs, exclusively. Literature, however, exist on the perception of students who underwent BEEs and the effect that their perception of CSR and general business behaviour had. Asghar et al. (2015) found that among some Pakistani students, exposure to managerial ethics courses and Ethics education made students more inclined to engage in CSR. The study was limited by lack of other demographic variables that contributed to this effect. Exposure to managerial or business ethics does not necessarily guarantee positive or ethical business behaviour.

Fitzpatrick and Cheng (2013) compared the potential business behaviour of Hong Kong and US students. Overall, Hong Kong students showed propensity to be less sensitive to CSR

issues than US despite having higher training on Business Ethics Education. Also, Kaya et al (2014) found no significant difference in ethical disposition between students who have taken business courses in general. However, women were found to be more disposed to be ethically aware for social acceptance. In addition, among the firms, the corporate image is the major reason for which they consider engaging in CSR. Generally, it can be inferred that students' ethical disposition may be as a result of how they perceive firms fairly contributing to the welfare of her staff and how they have managed their reputation by appearing so. In this regard, Vasquez et al. (2013) found that students viewed firms' CSR in terms of their relationship, commitment and welfare to internal stakeholders, then to their proximal stakeholders before their wider stakeholders.

Some other studies observe that some students, whether exposed to ethics courses or not, are hardly inclined to engage in CSR. Chang and Leung (2006) found no significant relationship between students' ethical sensitivity and ethical reasoning and thus ethical intervention in terms of exposure to BECs. This means that exposure to BECs did not develop students' ethical sensitivity in terms of gender and age. Texieria et al. (2018) figured that students in general were mainly aware of their ethical responsibility but were indisposed or unwilling to commit to them. Consequently, gender, age and academic degree did not influence their CSR sensitivity. In a related development, Tomo-Carbo et al. (2016) had earlier wondered "*how business ethics courses are in Higher Education Institutions?"* They found that business ethics courses did not significantly influence or increase ethics awareness. In fact, an inverse result was generated, which is the fact that students who did not take the course had a higher level of ethics awareness than those who took the course. Alzankawi (2017) observes that it is easier to teach students ethics than to make them ethical. Deer and Zaresky (2016) observes that exposure to ethics is not very significant among students of ethics. They observe that it may make them initially passionate but may not translate to real impact.

Some studies, however, have mixed results. Adda et al. (2016) found that BEE improved students' perception, higher productivity at work, improved employee relationships. However, the study did not suggest that ethics of companies lead to overall stronger and healthier community. To this end, it may be implied that there are no particularized ways of teaching ethics; and how the curriculum is developed is crucial to enhancing students' perspectives.

Considering the diversity of students' perspective on learning ethics, and their sensitivity to CSR, Giacalone (2006) had earlier recommended that ethics should be taught by adapting it to students' current realities since their worldviews differ in time and space. This concurs with Tomo-Carbo et al's (2018) recommendation that stylized training should always be adopted in teaching ethics. This stylized training implies that teachers are saddled with the responsibility of profiling the ethical backgrounds and prevailing ethical realities of the students. For this to take place, Chavan and Carter (2018) suggest that participatory approaches in teaching and learning ethics be adopted. A participatory approach to learning generally carries every learner along and hence favours all forms of inclusiveness and fosters a conducive learning environment. Turker and Selcuk (2008), however, believe that students will learn ethics more if there are sustained assurances of supportive learning environments and more so for self-confident students.

It is noteworthy, however, that there are by far fewer studies that examine African students' ethical disposition. For instance, Gorosn-Dutse and Hilman (2014) examined business

students' perception in terms of effectiveness of social responsibility and profitability of companies, in the short, medium and long term. The study found that students did not consider any significant relationship between long term successes and profitability; however, the study indicated that there is significant relationship between profitability and short-term success. This implies that students' idea of business is essentially to make profit even at the expense of CSR or welfare-driven motivations. Moreover, Nigerian students are narrow in their concept of CSR. Amaeshi, et al (2006) note that many Nigerian students view CSR as a way for businesses, especially the multinational ones, to give back to society. This act of 'giving back' is considered more altruistic and philanthropic, rather than legal and obligatory. However, a recent study by Ugwuozor and Otu (2019) shows that business students who took BECs perceived that increased exposure to BEE will stimulate CSR. This present study seeks to contribute to the literature by identifying students' disposition to ethical business behaviour given their exposure, or not, to business ethics education in the Nigerian context specifically, and African context in general.

METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

Students of Business Administration from five federal universities in the south east part of Nigeria constitute the population for the study. A sample of 718 students was selected with a stratified sampling and with the Yamane (1967) formula for representative sampling.

$$n = fx/1 - N(e)^2$$

Where: n = Sample size; N = Population of the study; e = level of precision of 5%.

Ethical Consideration

We ensured that the participants or respondents of this research consented to being a part of this research after being informed about the research and its implication. With the permission of the HoDs of the academic departments chosen, we briefed the students on the objectives of the study and the rationales of the question items in the questionnaire. In accordance with the Ethical Guidelines and Procedures for Research Involving Human Participants, we respected participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time. We also ensured their rights to dignity and protection from harm was respected. The HoDs determined the sitting arrangements of the respondents in the classroom. As a result, the students responded to the questions in an exam-like setting. Following ethical approval and approval from the heads of department, all the students returned the questionnaire within 50 minutes time frame. The sampling and data collection exercise took place in the fall of 2017/2018 academic session.

Measures

The Perceived Role of Ethics and Social Responsibility Scale (PRESORS) is the instrument used for this study. It was developed by Singhapakdi at al. (1996) to assess

marketers' perception of ethical disposition of businesses either to profit decently or to profiteer. It was formalized and extended by other authors to become a leading inventory that assesses businesses' disposition to engaging in CSR (Etheridge, 1999). Basically, it is a 13-item inventory that broadly assesses three aspects of organizations: 1) organizations' trade-off between social responsibility and profitability; 2) their motivation for pursuit of long-term gains; and 3) their motivation for pursuit of short-term gains. These therefore sum up the motivations for setting up any business. The first subscale tradeoff between social responsibility and profitability – is about trading ethics for business survival in a competitive global environment. The second subscale on "*Long-term Gains*" concerns primacy or preference of ethics over long term profitability and the third group of subscales are on meeting the benefits of the shareholders over profit and social responsibility.

We reckoned that the presors inventory is a robust assessment of business behaviour in terms of its tendency to make profit morally or ethically while contributing to the overall development of the society. Thus, we did not limit presor to assessing students' disposition to CSR. Further, since CSR is not an issue that is often discussed among intending business persons (example, students) in Nigeria, we preferred to examine the possible business motivations of students in Nigeria, like other less developed countries, chief of which is either to profit or to profiteer (Goron-Dutse and Hilman, 2012). Very few students will likely to be CSR-driven since most of them will start their businesses in the informal sector before becoming "*corporate*", that is, regularizing their status and play in the formal sector. In Nigeria, it is the "*corporate*" firms (the Cs) that may have "*social responsibilities*" (the SRs).

For less cumbersomeness in their responses, the students were required to respond to the questions in 4 – point likert scale (ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 4 – strongly agree) than the 9 – point likert scale in the original questionnaire. All items on the questionnaire were collapsed to a mean value to represent the potential business behaviour of students. Following Luthar and Karri (2005), Ugwuozor and Otu (2019), and Ugwuozor (2020), we extended the inventory to include academic-related variables such as academic status and gender.

A major departure from related studies is grouping students into those exposed to BEE and those who are not and from there; we assessed the influence of selected academic-related variables on their potential business behaviour. Ugwuozor (2020) and Vázquez & Licandro (2013) tested for the difference between students exposed to BEE and those who were not. Rather than use exposure to BEE as one of the independent variables to assess its influence on students' business behaviour, for us, it was a variable for sorting the students. Thus, for each of the groups of students, their potential business behaviour was assessed based on effect of academic status, gender and intelligence.

Academic status is a proxy combination for age and experience. As noted by previous authors (Teixeira et al., 2018 and Tormo-Carbó et al., 2019), age is not a good indicator of experience, although older persons are expected to be more experienced in personal and professional life. Nonetheless, older students are found in lower classes and vice versa; hence, older students in this regard may not possess more life skills or experience than younger ones. Consequently, academic status (that is, year of study) is a preferred variable for replacing both age and experience. In each group of students sorted according to their exposure to BEE, three

categories of students were selected for responses: the freshmen, the final year students and postgraduate students.

Like many studies, gender is a variable that assesses the difference in effects between males and females. Previous related studies assessed the ethical differences or disposition of males and females (Ugwuozor, 2020; Larrán et al., 2018, Tormo-Carbó et al., 2018 and Tormo-Carbó et al., 2019). Gender dispositions to ethics are critical to targeting policies and strategies on improving business practices (Ballantine et al., 2016; Price and Van-der-Walt, 2012). Therefore, we assessed the gender differences in business behaviour among those students exposed to BEE and those who were not.

We also departed from other studies by comparing the influence of CGPA-our measure of students' intelligence on business potentials of students that took BECs and those who did not. For each of the groupings, students were sorted into two categories: those with higher scores, that is, ranging from the CGPA scores of 3.5 to the maximum score and those with lower scores ranging from 3.49 to the minimum score. We tested if there is a significant difference between higher intelligence and lower intelligence on business behaviour of students exposed or not to BEE. In sum, the summary statistics of the variables used are shown in Table 1.

		Business Ethics Education				Total
		Exposed		Not Exposed		
#	Variables/Factors	N	%	N	%	
1	Gender					
	Male	208	61.54	146	38.42	354
	Female	130	38.46	234	61.58	364
2	Class					
	Freshmen	150	51.37	142	48.63	292
	Final Year	118	51.53	111	48.47	229
	Postgraduate	86	43.65	111	56.35	197
3	Intelligence					
	Higher CGPA	224	46.47	258	53.53	482
	Lower CGPA	130	55.08	106	44.92	236
	Mean					3.28
	Highest					1.99
	Lowest					4.23

Table 1
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

However, PRESORS has been extended to include demographic and socioeconomic variables (Fitzpatrick and Cheng, 2014; Larrán et al., 2018). Hence, it is now used to assess the effect of these variables on business dispositions of individuals and groups. Users have found it to possess high inter-rater reliability value above 0.71. We find its value for this study to be 0.72.

Three hypotheses undergirded our study:

Ho₁ There is no difference in the influence of academic status on potential business behaviour between students exposed to BEE and those who were not.

Ho₂   *There is no difference in the influence of gender on potential business behaviour between students exposed to BEE and those who were not.*

Ho₃   *There is no difference in the influence of CGPA (intelligence) on potential business behaviour between students exposed to BEE and those who were not.*

Analytical Techniques

Data was analyzed by testing the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Analyses was done for those exposed to BEE, those who were not and then for the pooled sample of both. Regression analyses using the OLS examined the effects of academic related variables – academic status, gender and intelligence on the possible business behaviour of students exposed to BEE and those who were not. The analytical framework for the regression analyses is:

$$y_i = \alpha_i + \alpha_i x_i + \mu_i \tag{1}$$

Where *y* is the grand mean value of PRESOR (students' potential business behaviour) and x_i are the independent variables the academics related variables academic status, gender and intelligence. Then t tests were used to test for any difference between male students and female students and among those exposed to BEE and those who were not. The same was done for higher scoring students and lower scoring students.

Because there is more than one sub factor for academic status, i.e. first year, final year and postgraduate students, the ANOVA was used to assess if there are any differences in the disposition of these categories of students in both groups – those exposed to BEE and those who were not.

$$y_i = \mu_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{2}$$

where, y_i is the grand mean score of the observations, *i* is the observed mean for each observation, and *i* is the variability within the sample. Each of the hypotheses as indicated earlier is tested: $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3$

RESULTS

Determinants of Potential Business Behaviour

This section discusses the influence of students' academics-related characteristics on their possible business disposition in future. Table 1 depicts the determinants of this behaviour between students exposed to BEE and those who were not and for the overall sample when both groups of students were pooled. The results are similar for the groups and in the pooled sample. For all categories, only gender and intelligence influenced students' business behaviour. Academic status did not. The results for the gender variable indicate that being male was more

likely to influence positive business behaviour. Although with almost equal units, students who were not exposed to BEE had the highest parameter estimate of 0.24 implying that adding one more male to their cohort will influence their overall business behaviour.

Like the gender variable, the parameter estimate for intelligence is identical. Thus, for each group of students, intelligence as measured by CGPA, significantly influenced behaviour. Thus, a unit increase in the CGPA positively influenced students' business behaviour by 0.45.

However, in each group, all variables jointly, significantly, and positively influenced students' disposition to business ($F = 0.000$). Furthermore, the R^2 value of about 0.47 across the groups indicated that the variables account for about 47% of factors that could influence students' possible business disposition in future. Table 2 shows the size and significance of these academic-related variables on students' business thinking. The next section tests the differences in influence of each of the subfactors on students' business behaviour.

Table 2						
DETERMINANTS OF POTENTIAL BUSINESS BEHAVIOUR						
IVs	**Exposed to BEE**		**Not Exposed to BEE**		**Pooled**	
	Coeff ()	**Z Stat**	**Coeff ()**	**Z Stat**	**Coeff ()**	**Z Stat**
Gender	0.193*** (-0.027)	0.000	0.238*** (-0.026)	0.000	0.213*** (-0.018)	0.000
Academic Status	0.026 (-0.016)	0.103	0.005 (-0.015)	0.728	0.016 (-0.011)	0.158
CGPA	0.446*** (-0.028)	0.000	0.445*** (-0.028)	0.000	0.45*** (-0.019)	0.000
() = Standard Error, *** = 1% , ** = 5% and * = 10% levels of significance						
R2 = 0.478			R2 = 0.480		R2 = 0.478	
Adj. R2 = 0.473			Adj. R2 = 0.475		Adj. R2 = 0.476	
F = 0.0000			F = 0.0000		F = 0.000	

Influence of Academic Status on Students' Business Behaviour

Results in Table 3 show that students who were exposed to BEE and those who were not are not essentially different in their disposition to business. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no difference in the influence of academic status on potential business behaviour of students exposed to BEE (F (2,351) = 6.19, p = 0.002) and those who were not (F (2,361) = 6.19, p = 0.038) is rejected. This means that difference in academic status influenced potential business behaviour of both categories of students those exposed to BEE and those who were not. Thus, the postgraduate, undergraduate and final year students in both groups possess significantly different dispositions to business for the future.

Table 3										
ANOVA SHOWING NO DIFFERENCE IN BUSINESS THINKING BETWEEN STUDENTS EXPOSED TO BEE AND THOSE WHO WERE NOT										
Exposed to BEE						**Not Exposed to BEE**				
Source	SS	Df	MS	F	Prob > F	SS	Df	MS	F	Prob > F
Between groups	1.19	2	0.59	6.19	0.002	0.641	2	0.32	3.29	0.038
Within groups	33.8	351	0.09			35.24	361	0.097		

Influence of Gender on Students' Potential Business Behaviour

Table 4 shows that whether students were exposed to BEE or not, they differed significantly on their business ideologies in terms of their gender. Thus, the hypothesis that gender is of no effect in potential business behaviour of students exposed to BEE and those not who is rejected (t (352) = -5.7, p = 0.000 and (t (362) = -6.89, p = 0.000 for students exposed to BEE and those who were not respectively). However, among students who took BECs, males showed higher disposition than females to business (Males: M = 3.15, SE = 0.025, and Females: M = 2.96, SE = 0.02). Conversely, for students who didn't take BEC, females showed higher disposition to business than males (Males: M = 2.94, SE = 0.026, and Females: M = 3.12, SE = 0.019).

Table 4
T-TEST RESULTS SHOWING NO DIFFERENCE IN GENDER EFFECTS ON BUSINESS THINKING BETWEEN STUDENTS EXPOSED TO BEE AND THOSE *WHO WERE* NOT

Groups (Gender)	Exposed to BEE						Not Exposed to BEE					
	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	T	df	(T > t)	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	T	df	(T > t)
Male	146	3.15	0.025	-5.7	352	0.000	130	2.934	0.026	-6.89	362	0.000
Female	208	2.96	0.02				234	3.157	0.019			

Influence of Intelligence on Students' Potential Business Behaviour

Also, the hypothesis that higher scoring students do not differ from lower scoring students whether exposed to BEE or not is rejected (see Table 5 below). This means that higher scoring students differed from lower scoring students in their potential business behaviour whether exposed to BEE (t (352) = -9.9, p = 0.000) or not (t (362) = -8.72, p = 0.000). However, within the group exposed to BEE, students with higher intelligence are more disposed to positive business behaviour (Higher scoring students: M =3.15, SE =0.025. lower scoring students: M =2.96, SE =0.02). But this is not so within the group who were not exposed to BEE (Higher scoring students: M =2.99, SE =0.020. lower scoring students: M =3.27, SE =0.017).

Table 5
T-TEST RESULTS SHOWING NO DIFFERENCE IN INFLUENCE OF INTELLIGENCE ON STUDENTS EXPOSED TO BEE AND THOSE WHO WERE NOT

Group (Intelligence)	Exposed to BEE						Not Exposed to BEE					
	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	T	df	(T > t)	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	t	df	(T > t)
Higher Intelligence	224	3.15	0.025	-9.9	352	0.000	258	2.99	0.020	-8.72	362	0.000
Lower Intelligence	130	2.96	0.02				106	3.27	0.017			

DISCUSSION

This study is arguably the first of its kind to group students according to their exposure to BEE or otherwise. The study explored the influence of academics-related variables to the young people's disposition to business – ethically and otherwise, in Nigeria. Previous studies had explored exposure to BEE as a significant variable and tested for differences in exposure (Luthar and Karri, 2005; Rosnan et al., 2013; and Tormo-Carbó et al., 2018). Results of this study, however, have shown, first, that gender and intelligence influenced current and potential business dispositions of students whether they had BEE or not. Academic status, that is, students' levels of study did not have any influence. However, within both groups, students according to their levels of study differed in their disposition to business. A few existing studies such as Alonso-Almeida et al. (2015) had found that academic status significantly influenced students in terms of their ethical disposition and social responsibility. Another related finding is from Tormo-Carbó et al. (2016). Without classifying the students according to those who took BECs and those who did not, the authors sorted students according to their perception of the potential relevance of BEEs to their disposition to ethics. They found that more than 70% of the students do not consider BEE as relevant to becoming upstanding morally.

However, these results represent the developed world. For Africa, Ugwuozor (2020) found that academic status influenced students' disposition to CSR. That is, students in different levels of study differed in their disposition to CSR. This, however, differs from the present study. While Ugwuozor (2020) tested the difference in students' disposition to CSR, this study, in addition to assessing the influence of academic status on students' possible CSR behaviour, compared the effect of academic status on students' potential CSR behaviour among students who took BECs and those who did not in terms of size, significance and direction by OLS.

The finding of this study in terms of gender is similar to many other studies. Male and female undergraduate students therefore differ significantly in their possible business behaviour. For instance, Haski-Leventhal (2015) finds that female students showed more positive attitude toward CSR and ethical responsibility of business while male students were more disposed to financial responsibility. This finding is also similar to Tomo-carbo et al (2019) who found that female students were more ethically disposed in business than male students. The study sorted students according to their willingness to enroll in CSR courses, and by implication, the possible effect of this on their business morality. For this present study, however, the conversation is extended by arguing that exposure to BEE does not make any difference. This means that whether having taken BECs or not, male and female students would do businesses differently. Khalife and Chalouhi (2013) however do not see any difference between male and female students' disposition to doing business. However, they found differences in their actual business operations – in the size of their businesses and the revenues that accrued.

Regression results show that on the average students with higher intelligence (in terms of CGPA) are more likely to be better business men and women in the future irrespective of having taken BECs or not. However, ANOVA results show that higher scoring students will do business better when exposed to BEE. Conversely, when not exposed to BEE, lower scoring students, on the average, showed that they would do better in business.

There are virtually no existing studies that have linked intelligence measure by CGPA to students' disposition to CSR or general business mentality. Nonetheless, studies have linked

business intelligence to business education performance. For instance, Kissi et al. (2017) found that students who scored high in Business Intelligence (BI) course tend to be savvier in identifying strategies for profitability of businesses. Apraxine and Stylianou (2017) corroborate that BI softwares help in decision making especially for large businesses. Nevertheless, this is just one tool for profitability. It does not represent the students' overall disposition to business or business behaviour. Moreover, Presthus and Bygstad (2012) had earlier found that adapting or simulating software learning to real life requires creativity especially in decision making. The foregoing therefore suggests that some of these tools may not contribute to students' ethical disposition especially in doing business.

There are real-life anecdotes which suggest that many successful business men and women did not do well academically and that many higher scoring and intelligent students preferred to work as highly paid employees of large and well established companies built by low scoring students or dropouts. Thus, it may require more than academic CGPA to influence positive and successful business behaviour of students. In any case, education policy makers are increasingly advocating the need for students to learn entrepreneurial skills. Many primary and secondary schools in Nigeria have included Entrepreneurship as one of the subjects students must take. What is unclear, however, is its contribution to students' business behaviour in the long term.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION OF STUDY

We sought in this study to figure out if students exposed to BEE are better or worse than those who were not exposed to BEE, in terms of their future business behaviour or disposition. We found the PRESOR instrument useful in measuring students' business behaviour inasmuch as many other studies used it to measure their disposition to CSR. This is because, in sum, it assesses one's profit or profiteer – the binary motivation for many students in Nigeria. Based on this, we make three contributions to students-business literature.

Firstly, we examined the difference between the determinants of business behaviour of students who have been exposed to BEE and those who were not, in Nigeria, an underexplored developing country. This is different from other studies that only tested the difference between exposure to BEE and non-exposure to BEE on CSR (Ugwuozor, 2020; Tomo-Carbo et al., 2019; Texeira et al., 2017). We therefore examined two categories of students – those exposed to BEE and those who were not – and assessed the effect of academics-related variables such as academic status, gender and intelligence of students on their potential business behaviour. We first used OLS and found that gender and intelligence influenced students' business behaviour, but academic status did not. This is irrespective of whether or not they took BECs. We therefore conclude that there is no difference in factors influencing business motivations of students who took BECs and those who did not. This is also indicative of the fact that many successful business men and women in Nigeria and elsewhere did not possess tertiary education and hence, may not require BEE to succeed. Nonetheless, the findings suggest that taking BECs may influence business orientations.

Secondly, we included an uncommon variable the academic CGPA of students as one of the determinants of students' business motivation or disposition. OLS results show that the CGPA as a proxy measure for intelligence did not differentiate students exposed to BEE and

those who were not. Thus, for both students exposed to BEE and those who were not, intelligence played significant role in their business dispositions or orientations. However, within each group, results show that students with higher intelligence would run businesses differently from students with lower intelligence. How both categories of students will run the businesses calls for further investigation.

Thirdly, the study stimulates further discussions on factors responsible for motivating successful business behaviour among students. We have thus far examined determinants of potential business behaviour in terms of academic variables. All the variables significantly influenced a positive business disposition in the young people whether they took BECs or not. However, we recommend that more variables be included in the model. Some of these variables are demographic characteristics like age, and more importantly, experience in and propensity to run business in the future. This is to avoid limiting students' disposition to CSR to academics-related variables. There are other factors that can influence students to run businesses ethically.

The study is however limited in its scope. The study employed five higher education institutions in the southeast part of Nigeria. Sample selection from more universities across Nigeria may reflect more complexity in the business disposition of students. Another limitation had to take the mean scores of the PRESOR as the measure for the overall students' business behaviour. This approach generalizes the students' behaviour. For a more detailed analysis, we consider it imperative to assess the students' business disposition by decomposing the PRESOR and to assess students based on the individual items on the inventory.

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