

**IMPACT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP ANTECEDENTS ON SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPETENCY**

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Abstract: Understanding the importance of experiential learning in enabling students' entrepreneurial mindset is crucial and seen as a novel driver of entrepreneurial competencies that was overlooked in the entrepreneurship literature. Thus, this study addresses and fills this emerging gap and extends the body of literature and theories. Applying underpinning theory, this research seeks to assess the impact of four components of social entrepreneurship antecedents (SEA) namely moral obligation, empathy, self-efficacy, and social support on students' entrepreneurship competency (EC); and to test experiential learning (EL) as a moderating variable between SEA and EC. The study used stratified random sampling at one time yielding to collect 384 questionnaires representing 73.8% ENACTUS students and university members in the Guangdong province, China. The results indicated that moral obligation, self-efficacy, and social support possess significant effects on SEC. Even though empathy has no effect on SEC, moderating of EL between empathy and SEC shows a positive relationship suggesting that moderating variable strengthens student empathy entrepreneurship competency. Furthermore, the moderating variable suggests a positive impact on entrepreneurship competency substantially. This research validates the importance of experiential learning as an external factor to strengthen students' competencies to lead entrepreneurial activities. The present study extends the body of planned behavior theory by determining the importance of experiential learning to level up students' entrepreneurial competencies.

Keywords: Empathy; Self-efficacy; Social entrepreneurship competency; Theory planned behavior; Experiential learning theory

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Introduction

This research emphasizes the importance of educational social entrepreneurship on students' entrepreneurial competencies focusing on students' at ENACTUS universities in the Guangdong province, China. The study addresses the critical role of social entrepreneurship antecedents and experiential learning on the student's entrepreneurial competencies. Low productivity levels and inefficient social organizations, individuals' poor performance, majority of governments seek to support and encourage social entrepreneurs as a strategic solution preventing further social negative implications (Amini et al., 2018; Makhloufi et al., 2018b). Several studies (Bornstein, 2007; Cukier et al., 2011) acknowledged that social entrepreneurship plays an important in job creation, enhancing human welfare, enabling societal, and economic development (Cantaragiu et al., 2014). Governments and societies see social entrepreneurship as a critical driver to overcome socioeconomic issues (Brock and Steiner, 2009). Importantly, social entrepreneurship possesses a significant role in educational institutions as well where several researchers (Short et al., 2009) emphasized the importance of acquiring valuable knowledge, skills, and sufficient competencies in order to improve the impact of social entrepreneurship outcomes on society and economy (Makhloufi et al., 2018a).

Kay and Dyson (2006) have argued about the critical effect of experiential learning and teaching techniques in fostering entrepreneurship education and empowering students' mindsets to observe challenges and tackle issues related to socio-economic. Consequently, it is estimated that this should help students to acquire entrepreneurial mindset spirituality as a proactive action responding to socio-economic challenges and problems (Bell and Bell, 2020). Importantly, this is more crucial because to entrepreneurially succeeded (Makhloufi et al., 2018), and university students should be ready to track and knows future entrepreneurial opportunities (Makhloufi, et al., 2021). To this end, this study argued that educational managers at universities must level up students' entrepreneurial knowledge and competencies (Makhloufi, et al., 2021) by developing experiential learning skills and improving students entrepreneurial spirituality to engage in entrepreneurship activities before and after graduation (Anwar and Abdullah, 2021).

Building on the above discussion, this study intends to explore specific competencies relevant to social entrepreneurship in particular targeting Chinese students enrolled in ENACTUS universities. By standing on social entrepreneurship literature and experiential learning theory, this research has presented a new model to foster students' social competencies and skills. By focusing on student's entrepreneurial skills and knowledge, the outcome of this paper should be of interest to develop students' social entrepreneurship. The paper introduction emphasized relevant issues related to social entrepreneurship, followed by a literature review, an explanation related theories to of the research model, and then the study method. In the end, the study elaborates on most outcomes, suggestions, and implications presented.

Empathy and social entrepreneurship competencies

A study by Jolliffe and Farrington (2006) argued that empathy is one of the utmost important determinants of social entrepreneurship and is regarded as a key driver of social business and individual mindset. It is the capability that leads to absorbing and understanding the thoughts, feeling, and emotions of others (Amini et al., 2018). Hence, empathy viewed as one of the major components of core competencies leads to empowering an entrepreneur's knowledge and behavior to acquire valuable appreciation and kindness toward others (Korte et al., 2018). It reflects social human interactions and the spirituality of a successful entrepreneur. The model "prosocial behavioral" developed by Batson (1987) was applied to explain the progress of how empathy works and fosters social entrepreneur outcomes (Smith and Stevens, 2010). The model suggests that sympathy for those marginalized people may not be sufficient to generate social enterprise intention. To generate prosocial motivation in potential social entrepreneurs, it is necessary to feel the compassion of a marginalized group for a specific group, especially when the beneficiary is located in an unsociable realm (Tukamushaba et al., 2011). In this research, empathy is seen as a key emotional contributor leading students enrolled in ENACTUS universities to feel responsible and kind toward helping others and spreading high social values (Korte et al., 2018).

H1: Empathy significantly influences social entrepreneurship competencies.

Moral obligation and social entrepreneurship competencies

Studies such as (Beck and Ajzen, 1991; Leonard et al., 2004) have defined moral obligation as an individual behavior encountering particular moral situation which the decision to deal with it probably will be influenced by their emotions, feeling, and social values. Patzelt and Shepherd (2011) argue that individual moral antecedents, such as ethical value and altruism, are important to sustainable entrepreneurship. Moral competencies are crucial influencers in the sustainable entrepreneurial process (Ploum, et al., 2018). Authorities in China are aware of the importance of moral education on students' entrepreneurial skills. MOE PRC (2014, 2018b) also pointed out that high education must base on students-oriented, moral education as the fundamental task of education (Vasilache et al., 2012) and increase students' sense of social responsibility, innovation and practical capability. Along with including Chinese social culture, it will lead to improving students' sense of morality. Tsui (2013) proposed that the essence of the concept of "social entrepreneurship" is to combine the two aspects of "good" with "everything is good". "Being good" is the expression of "benevolence", and "everything is good" is the expression of "can". Thus, the researchers hypothesize:

H2: Moral obligation significantly influences social entrepreneurship competencies.

Self-efficacy and social entrepreneurship competencies

Authors (Gist, 1987; Schunk, 1984) viewed self-efficacy as human perception and capacities to perform and deal with specific behavior. Thus, it is associated with human belief and values that influencing their performance (Bandura, 1982). Researches argued that self-efficacy can be used to anticipate the performance of entrepreneurial activities (Chen et al., 1998). Mair and Marti (2006) argued that the more self-efficacy is high, the more it will improve individuals ability to estimate and understand associated social risk, hence, which leads to build positive behavioral intention. In social entrepreneurship, self-efficacy plays a predominant role because various social problems are so great that people can undoubtedly suspect that they can produce any significant impact. As a result, this research assumes whether an individual self-efficacy would significantly influence social impacts or not.

H3: Self-efficacy significantly influences social entrepreneurship competencies.

Social support and social entrepreneurship competencies

To achieve the desired planned goals, establishing good networks with sufficient support should be crucial based on action psychology. Previously, corporation networks have been recognized for their contribution (Davidsson and Honig, 2003). Hence, it is important to note that social support motivates and enhances social corporations' intentions (Mair and Marti, 2006). Thus, in light of social entrepreneurship, individuals will account for people's support and efforts to level up the performance of their networks. Moreover, social entrepreneurs are lucky which receiving funds from different social partners (Bugg-Levine and Emerson, 2011; Tjornbo and Westley, 2012). All these investments will upgrade the likelihood of individual capacity to identify social enterprises (Nga and Shamuganathan, 2010).

H4: Social support significantly influences social entrepreneurship competencies.

Experiential learning and social entrepreneurship competencies

Educational institutions must use sufficient methods, techniques and advanced curriculum design to enhance the desired outcomes of social entrepreneurship (Weimer, 2002). Hence, entrepreneurship pedagogy must engage in experiential learning to foster self-based supervision, sufficiency, orientation and deliberation (Huq and Gilbert, 2013). From a learning process point of view, experiential learning is an effective technique to combine social entrepreneurship into an academic curriculum to reduce the gaps that exist between theoretical knowledge and practical skills to enable students to entrepreneurial skills and competencies (Awaysheh and Bonfiglio, 2017; Makhoulfi et al., 2022). Students skills and competencies are not inherent but variable and learnable for an individual, so their acquisition and nurturance are time-consuming if intervention is in terms of choice and teaching (Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2010). Lackeus and Middleton (2015) believe that acquiring entrepreneurial competencies is the main goal of entrepreneurship education. Hence, it is hypothesized as follows:

H5: *Experiential learning significantly influences social entrepreneurship competencies.*

Although experiential learning help and motivate student readiness to involve in and bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, leading to improve entrepreneurial competencies. Empathic plays a crucial role in developing students' deep understanding of peoples' feelings, emotions, proactive actions, and expectations (Korte et al., 2018). These cognitive capacities and skills help students solve social problems and be entrepreneurially oriented (Makhloufi et al., 2018). While empathy help student capacity to estimate people's feeling, emotions, and expectation. Besides, empathy help entrepreneurs to understand and estimate customer behavior, users, and stakeholders, leading to enhanced firms and innovation teams (Humphrey, 2013). Experiential learning develops students' capacity to find new ways, discover, and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. Another study (Caulfield and Woods, 2013) found that experiential learning possesses a long-term impact on socially responsible behavior. It is important to develop empathy in students not only as part of entrepreneurship education but also as part of becoming an engineer. In a compelling argument, Walther, Miller, and Sochacka (2017) advocated recognizing and developing empathy as a core skill in engineering.

Furthermore, moral obligation describes a person's sense of responsibility to the social norms of their social counterparts in the face of moral challenges (Beck and Ajzen, 1991). By assessing whether an individual believes that social rules require society to help underprivileged groups, the measure focuses on the desirability of such behavior and avoids misunderstanding with observed probability. Little attention has been observed to address the effect of moral obligation on social entrepreneurship competency. Besides, past studies failed to predict the interaction impact of moral obligation and experiential learning on social entrepreneurship competency. Hence, this study aims to fill this gap and extending the social entrepreneurship body of knowledge. Thus, the study hypothesizes the following:

H6: *Experiential learning moderates the relationship between empathy and social entrepreneurship competencies.*

H7: *Experiential learning moderates the relationship between moral obligation and social entrepreneurship competencies.*

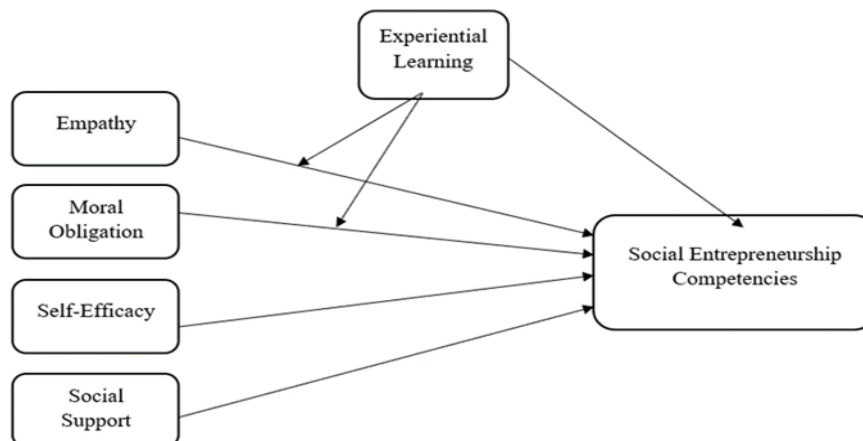


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Research Methodology

Following Morgan (1970) formula and applying the stratified random sampling technique, the study distributed several 520 surveys at one time targeting students enrolled in ENACTUS universities in the province of Guangdong, China. Starting from 1ST May to the end of August 2019, the study successfully collected 384 surveys representing 73.8% indicating that the response rate is sufficient. Based on past studies relevant to the research model constructs, the survey consists of 60 items to measure all variables of the study. Antecedents of social entrepreneurship were adapted from (Hockerts, 2015), while social entrepreneurship competency was measured by using items from a study (Capella-Peris, et al., 2020). Experiential learning is based on the items developed by (Young et al., 2008).

Research Results

The study used PLS-SEM software because of its relevancy and efficiency in estimating the research model relevance (Hair Jr, et al., 2014). The study assess convergent validity and the sorted results indicated that the loading items ranged between 0.505 and 0.932 (Hair Jr et al., 2014); while At the composite reliability recorded a value of 0.7 and above (Chin, 1998). In addition, the discriminant validity test was achieved where all values are matching the minimum requirement (Kline et al., 2012; Makhloufi, et al., 2020). The study confirms that both convergent and discriminant validity are fulfilled suggesting that the measurement tool is validated. Structural model results are presented in Figure 2 and Table 1. Based on the output of the smart PSL tool, the study hypotheses were addressed. Table 1 reveals that experiential learning (EL) positively and significantly ($B = 0.44$, $t = 8.31$, $p < 0.001$) influences social entrepreneurship competency (SEC). Hence, H1 is supported. In

contrast, the results show that empathy (EM) is negatively and statistically insignificant ($B = -0.075$, $t = 1.55$, $p < 0.001$) on SEC, and thereby H2 is not supported. In addition, as presented in Table 2, moral obligation (MOB) has a positive and significant ($B = 0.128$, $t = 3.08$, $p < 0.001$) impact on SEC. Thus, H3 is supported. Besides, Figure 2 and Table 2 show that self-efficacy (SS) has a negative path but is statistically significant on SEC ($B = -0.087$, $t = 1.97$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that H4 is supported. Finally, Table 2 shows social support has a significant impact and is positively correlated ($B = 0.514$, $t = 11.12$, $p < 0.001$), inferring that H5 is supported.

Table 1. Structural model analysis results

H	Beta	T-Values	P-Values	Decision	
1	EM -> SEC	-0.075	1.557	0.141	Not Supported
2	MOB -> SEC	0.128	3.081	0.013	Supported
3	SE -> SEC	-0.087	1.978	0.034	Supported
4	SS -> SEC	0.514	11.126	0.000	Supported
5	EL -> SEC	0.430	7.497	0.000	Supported
H6	EM*EL -> SEC	0.099	2.578	0.006	Supported
H7	MOB*EL -> SEC	-0.154	3.865	0.000	Supported

Source: PLS Algorithm.

EL: experiential learning, EM: empathy, MOB: moral obligation, SE: self-efficacy, SS: social support, SEC: social entrepreneurship competencies. ** $p < 0.01$ T values > 1.64 (p values < 0.01).

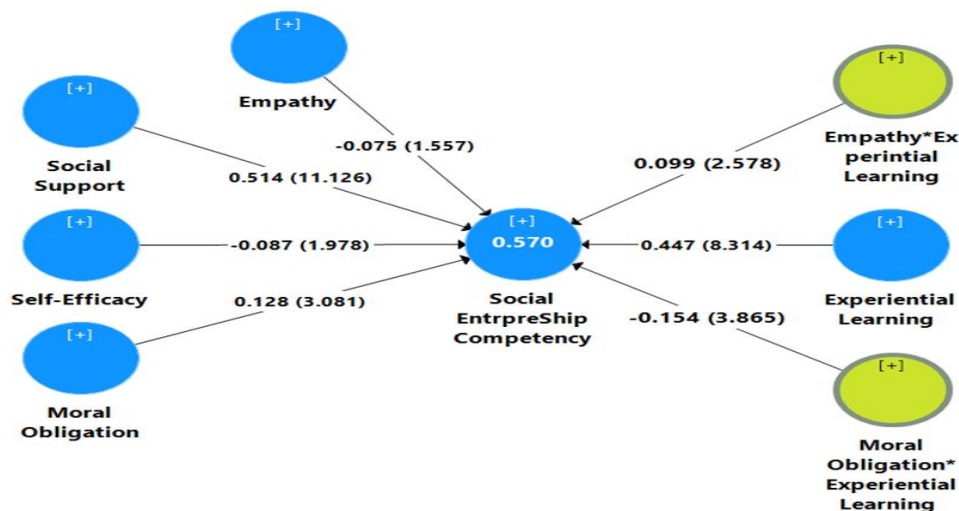


Figure 2: Full Structural Model with the Moderating Effect of Experiential Learning

Figure 2 presents the moderation interaction effect of EM*EL on SEC, which indicates that the moderation effect is positive and statistically significant ($B = 0.09$, $t = 2.57$, $p < 0.05$), referring that H6 is supported. At the same time, the interaction effect of the moderating construct EL between MOB and SEC is significant ($B = -0.154$, $t = 3.86$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that the H7 is supported. The strength of the moderating effects and predictive relevance of the model Q^2 is as follows:

Table 2. Predictive relevance and strength of the moderating effect

	R^2	Q^2	Effect Size
SEC	0.551	0.356	Medium

Discussion

The study aims to examine and predict the effect of four antecedents of social entrepreneurship on students' entrepreneurial competencies and to validate the critical role of experiential learning as the moderating variable. Drawing on the theory of planned behavior and experiential learning lens, this study extends knowledge relevant to social entrepreneurship by introducing and examining the impact of experiential learning as a moderating variable between SEA and SEC. Based on the presented findings above, three dimensions of SE except for empathy significantly and positively influence SEC. Furthermore, the moderating role of EL possesses a positive and significant impact on SEC, confirming that hypotheses (e.g., H2, H3, H4, and H5) are accepted. Moreover, even though empathy has recorded a negative and insignificant impact on SEC, the moderation path and the role of EL have strengthened the relationship between empathy and SEC. Moreover, the interaction effect of experiential learning and moral obligation has significantly impacted SEC. Thus, both moderation hypotheses are supported.

This study is expected to verify experiential learning as an effective social entrepreneurship education approach to the formation of SEC among university students in China. For the cause of Guangdong province's economic aggregate ranks first in China for a long time, and its universities have won the Enactus World Cup China championship several times. It can show that students are enthusiastic about social entrepreneurship activities. The data were collected from 384 students who engaged in ENACTUS China from 25 universities in Guangdong Province, China. We can learn from the model of Enactus and create the curriculum structure in universities in China. It can expect to provide a scope for developing an effective ecosystem of social entrepreneurship education, including university students, government education policymakers, universities entrepreneurship educators, social enterprises, and even the community in China.

This study provided a theoretical implication by offering additional empirical evidence in the domain of social entrepreneurship, experiential learning, and planned behaviour theories. The research findings and the nature of the study context have extended the body of knowledge of the theory of planned behaviour (Tran and Von Korflesch, 2016). By doing so, this research responds to several calls to advance the TPB theory by adding experiential learning theory to explain social entrepreneurship behaviour. Consequently, it is seen as further support for subsequent studies to validate the relationships among these factors. Second, prior studies have reported the relationships between SEA and entrepreneurship behaviour and intention. However, the results were mixed or inconsistent. Despite the increasingly documented literature exploring the antecedents of social entrepreneurship antecedents (Hockerts, 2015, 2017; Lacap et al., 2018), studies linking social entrepreneurship antecedents (e.g., empathy, moral obligation, self-efficacy, and social support) and social entrepreneurship competencies (e.g., personnel features, social features, and innovative features) are not well documented and examined. The results of this study demonstrate new evidence and plant a strong empirical study as a solid platform for future studies. The results of the moderation effect of experiential learning in this study offer a better understanding of how students' social entrepreneurship enables student entrepreneurship competencies among ENACTUS students in China. This study focused on how educational entrepreneurship programs can elevate students' entrepreneurial competencies to empower social needs. The study argued that students' self-efficacy, social support, empathy, and moral obligation would be important to support their competencies and facilitate integration with society.

This study is seen as a first attempt that used a cross-sectional design to empirically investigate social entrepreneurship antecedents, experiential learning, and SEC in a single model. Hence, future studies might consider employing professional investigators to collect data among these respondents to avoid the potential sampling bias and longitudinal study to validate the model relevancy. In addition, subsequent studies advised extending the present study and searching for potential competencies that are suggested to be acquired by students, entrepreneurs and educators. Finally, the result of this study is quite new and provides important evidence in the SEC, which needs to be tested, extended and deeply examined, and in particular, it is suggested to be replicated in other contexts.

Conclusion

This research confirms and validates important insights about the strategic role of developing students' social entrepreneurship to increase their competencies through integrating and developing educational entrepreneurship curricula. The study emphasized the role of empowering students' empathy, self-efficacy, and social support to own and leverage good practical entrepreneurial skills. This can lead to helping societies and achieving socioeconomic welfare. In addition, because this study covers the scope of China, implications for educator managers, policymakers,

and lecturers are suggested to develop entrepreneurship curricula to fit industry demands and social needs. The study has a theoretical implication for both theories that cover the scope of the research model.

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WPLYW UCZENIA SIĘ PRZEZ DOŚWIADCZENIE I PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚCI SPOŁECZNEJ NA KOMPETENCJE W ZAKRESIE PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚCI SPOŁECZNEJ

Streszczenie: Zrozumienie znaczenia uczenia się przez doświadczenie w kształtowaniu przedsiębiorczego nastawienia studentów jest kluczowe i postrzegane jako nowy czynnik napędzający kompetencje przedsiębiorcze, który został pominięty w literaturze dotyczącej przedsiębiorczości. W związku z tym, niniejsze badanie dotyczy i wypełnia tę wyłaniającą się lukę oraz rozszerza zbiór literatury i teorii, opierając się na teorii planowanego zachowania i teorii uczenia się przez doświadczenie. Badanie ma na celu (1) przewidzenie wpływu empatii, moralnego obowiązku, poczucia własnej skuteczności i wsparcia społecznego na kompetencje w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej oraz (2) zbadanie moderującego wpływu uczenia się przez doświadczenie na związek między uwarunkowaniami przedsiębiorczości społecznej a kompetencjami w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej. Wykorzystując warstwowy dobór próby i przekrojowy projekt badawczy, w badaniu zebrano i przeanalizowano 384 kwestionariusze ze wskaźnikiem odpowiedzi wynoszącym 73,8%. Respondentami byli studenci uniwersytetu ENACTUS w prowincji Guangdong w Chinach. Badanie wykazało, że moralny obowiązek, poczucie własnej skuteczności i wsparcie społeczne istotnie wpłynęły na kompetencje w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej. Chociaż empatia ma nieistotny wpływ na kompetencje w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej, ścieżka interakcji empatii i zmiennej moderującej ma znaczący wpływ na kompetencje w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej, co sugeruje, że zmienna moderująca wzmacnia empatię studentów w zakresie kompetencji w obszarze przedsiębiorczości społecznej. Wyniki wskazały również, że zmienna moderująca istotnie pozytywnie wpływa na kompetencje w zakresie przedsiębiorczości. Badanie to dotyczyło kluczowej roli uczenia się przez doświadczenie we wzmacnianiu kompetencji studentów w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej. Badanie rozwija teorię planowanego zachowania poprzez opracowanie nowych spostrzeżeń w celu określenia znaczenia uczenia się przez doświadczenie i umiejętności studentów w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej w rozwijaniu istniejących kompetencji w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej.

Słowa kluczowe: Empatia; Poczucie własnej skuteczności; Kompetencja w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej; Teoria planowanego zachowania; Teoria uczenia się przez doświadczenie

体验式学习和社会企业家精神的影响 社会创业的前因后果对 社会创业 能力的影响

摘要：了解体验式学习在促成学生创业心态方面的重要性至关重要，并被视为创业能力的一个新的驱动因素，但在创业文献中却被忽略了。因此，本研究解决并填补了这个新的空白，并扩展了文献和理论体系。应用基础理论，本研究试图评估社会创业前因（SEA）的四个组成部分，即道德义务、移情、自我效能和社会支持对学生创业能力（EC）的影响；并测试体验式学习（EL）作为SEA和EC之间的调节变量。该研究采用分层随机抽样的方式，一次性收集了384份问卷，代表中国广东省73.8%的ENACTUS学生和大学成员。结果表明，道德义务、自我效能感和社会支持对SEC有显著影响。尽管同理心对SEC没有影响，但同理心和SEC之间的EL调节显示出正向关系，这表明调节变量能加强学生的同理心创业能力。此外，调节变量对创业能力也有很大的积极影响。这项研究验证了体验式学习作为一种外部因素对于加强学生领导创业活动的能力的重要性。本研究通过确定体验式学习对提高学生创业能力的重要性，扩展了计划行为理论的体系

关键词 同理心；自我效能感；社会创业能力；计划行为理论；经验学习理论