

The Impact of Entrepreneur Education Oon Business Performance in Selangor

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of entrepreneurial education on business performance among entrepreneurs in Selangor, employing a qualitative research design to explore participant experiences and perspectives. Through semi-structured interviews and document analysis, the research identifies key themes, including the impact of continuous learning, and leadership development on business efficiency and customer engagement. Findings reveal that targeted entrepreneurial education enhances decision-making, adaptability, and operational competencies, directly contributing to improved business outcomes. However, challenges such as limited digital skills and resource constraints impede broader benefits. The study underscores the importance of accessible, tailored educational initiatives to foster a resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem. These findings inform policymakers and educational institutions on the necessity of investing in practical training programs to support sustainable economic growth and innovation.

Keywords: *Education, Business Performance Continuous Learning, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Leadership and Decision-Making*

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1 INTRODUCTION

Business performance is a critical area of study that encompasses the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization in achieving its goals. The importance of this topic extends beyond mere financial metrics; it reflects the overall health of an organization and its capacity to adapt to changing market conditions. In society, strong business performance is vital as it contributes to economic growth, job creation, and innovation. However, the main issue related to business performance lies in the complexity of its measurement and the multifaceted nature of the factors influencing it. Many organizations struggle with identifying the appropriate metrics that accurately reflect their performance, leading to a gap in understanding how to effectively leverage performance data for strategic decision-making (Sidhu et al., 2021; Vij & Bedi, 2016). This lack of clarity can result in missed opportunities for improvement and growth, highlighting the need for more robust frameworks and methodologies to assess business performance comprehensively.

In today's environment, the significance of business performance is further amplified by the rapid pace of technological advancement and globalization. Organizations are increasingly viewed through the lens of their performance metrics, which are often scrutinized by stakeholders, including investors, customers, and regulatory bodies. The importance of business performance is underscored by the growing emphasis on ethical practices and corporate social responsibility, which are now integral to how performance is perceived ("undefined", 2018; Zhang & Berhe, 2022). Despite this recognition, there remains a research gap in understanding the interplay between ethical considerations and business performance metrics, particularly in how these factors influence consumer trust and brand loyalty. The challenge lies in integrating ethical performance indicators with traditional financial metrics to provide a holistic view of organizational success ("undefined", 2018).

The concept of business performance significantly influences the current situation of organizations as they navigate a landscape characterized by uncertainty and competition. The ability to measure and analyze performance effectively allows businesses to identify strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to make informed strategic decisions. For instance, the implementation of performance management systems can enhance operational efficiency and drive innovation, thereby influencing overall business outcomes (Tate et al., 2021). However, organizations often face challenges in aligning their performance measurement systems with their strategic objectives, leading to a disconnect between intended outcomes and actual performance (Tate et al., 2021; Tang & Tang, 2010). This misalignment can hinder an organization's ability to respond to market changes and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

The role of business performance extends beyond internal metrics; it encompasses the broader impact organizations have on their stakeholders and the environment. Effective business performance management can lead to improved employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and community relations, all of which contribute to a sustainable competitive advantage (Tate et al., 2021; Bouaoula et al., 2019). Furthermore, organizations that prioritize performance management are better positioned to adapt to regulatory changes and societal expectations, which are increasingly demanding transparency and accountability in business practices (Zhang & Berhe, 2022). This highlights the necessity for organizations to not only focus on financial performance but also consider the social and environmental implications of their operations.

Several factors influence business performance, including leadership styles, organizational culture, and market dynamics. Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the strategic direction of an organization and fostering a culture of performance excellence (Paudel, 2020). Additionally, external factors such as economic conditions, technological advancements, and competitive pressures can significantly impact performance outcomes (Tang & Tang, 2010). Understanding the level of influence these factors have on business performance is crucial for organizations seeking to enhance their operational effectiveness and achieve long-term success. Research indicates that organizations that adopt a proactive approach to performance management, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative measures, tend to outperform their peers (Vij & Bedi, 2016; Tate et al., 2021; Tang & Tang, 2010).

A review of previous studies on business performance reveals a diverse array of methodologies and frameworks employed to assess and enhance performance outcomes. Research has explored various dimensions of performance, including financial metrics, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction (Sidhu et al., 2021; Tate et al., 2021). However, many studies highlight the ongoing challenges in establishing universally accepted performance indicators and the need for context-specific approaches that consider the unique characteristics of different industries and organizations (Williams,

2018; Tang & Tang, 2010). This underscores the importance of continued research in developing comprehensive performance measurement frameworks that can adapt to the evolving business landscape.

The objective of this study is to explore the multifaceted nature of business performance and its implications for organizations in today's dynamic environment. By examining the interplay between various performance metrics, leadership styles, and external factors, this research aims to provide insights into effective performance management practices that can drive organizational success. The implications of this research extend to practitioners and policymakers alike, as understanding the nuances of business performance can inform strategies that promote sustainable growth and competitiveness in an increasingly complex marketplace (Tate et al., 2021; Bouaoula et al., 2019).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Business Performance in Selangor

The historical development of research in Business Performance has undergone significant evolution, marked by various milestones that have shaped the field. Initially, the focus was primarily on financial metrics, with scholars emphasizing profitability and return on investment as key indicators of performance. Over time, this perspective expanded to include non-financial metrics, such as customer satisfaction and employee engagement, reflecting a more holistic understanding of what constitutes business performance. A notable contribution to this evolution is the Resource-Based View (RBV), which posits that a firm's resources and capabilities are critical determinants of its performance (Amram, 2023). Furthermore, the introduction of dynamic states theory by Levie and Lichtenstein has provided a fresh lens through which to view business growth, suggesting that businesses do not necessarily follow a linear path of development but instead navigate through various dynamic states (Levie & Lichtenstein, 2010). Recent theoretical frameworks have incorporated concepts such as stakeholder theory and sustainability, emphasizing the importance of balancing economic, social, and environmental outcomes in assessing performance (Levie & Lichtenstein, 2010). Methodologically, contemporary research employs a variety of designs, including case studies, surveys, and quantitative analyses, to explore the multifaceted nature of business performance (Sari et al., 2022; Osuigwe & Eresia-Eke, 2022). This shift towards a more integrated approach reflects a growing recognition of the complexities involved in measuring and managing performance in today's dynamic business environment.

Definitions of Business Performance vary widely among scholars, reflecting the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. For instance, some researchers define business performance in terms of financial outcomes, such as profitability and revenue growth, while others emphasize operational efficiency and market share (Giang, 2022; Parnell, 2010). A synthesis of these definitions reveals common themes, such as the importance of both financial and non-financial indicators in assessing performance. Moreover, definitions often highlight the role of innovation and customer orientation as critical drivers of performance (Park et al., 2017). This thematic convergence suggests that a comprehensive understanding of business performance must encompass a range of dimensions, including financial results, operational effectiveness, and strategic positioning within the market. The interplay between these elements underscores the necessity for businesses to adopt a balanced approach to performance measurement, integrating various indicators to capture the full spectrum of organizational effectiveness (Duțescu & Stănilă, 2019).

Recent trends in the study of Business Performance have seen the emergence of new constructs and models that seek to explain the complexities of performance in contemporary business contexts. For example, the integration of innovation and market orientation into performance models has gained traction, with studies indicating that firms that prioritize these elements tend to achieve superior performance outcomes (Giang, 2022; Parnell, 2010). Additionally, the role of digital transformation and e-business practices has been increasingly recognized as a significant factor influencing performance, with research demonstrating that organizations that effectively leverage technology can enhance their operational efficiency and customer engagement (Meftahi et al., 2012). Theoretical developments in this area have also included the adoption of frameworks that consider the impact of external environmental factors on performance, such as market challenges and competitive dynamics (Park et al., 2017). These advancements reflect a broader trend towards

understanding performance as a dynamic and context-dependent construct, necessitating ongoing research to explore the interplay between various internal and external factors influencing business success.

Several factors contribute to Business Performance, each playing a distinct role in shaping outcomes. Key contributors include organizational culture, leadership styles, and employee engagement, which collectively influence the effectiveness of operational processes and strategic initiatives (Bakator et al., 2019; Amegayibor, 2021). For instance, effective leadership has been shown to enhance employee performance and motivation, thereby driving overall business success (Amegayibor, 2021). Additionally, the availability of financial resources and investment in training and development are critical for fostering an environment conducive to high performance (Amram, 2023; Adebisi & FRANCIS, 2022). The level of contribution from these factors can vary significantly depending on the specific context of the business, including its size, industry, and market conditions. Research indicates that firms that prioritize employee development and maintain a strong organizational culture tend to outperform their peers, highlighting the importance of human capital in driving performance (Bakator et al., 2019; Sidek et al., 2016). Furthermore, external factors such as market conditions and competitive pressures also play a crucial role, necessitating a comprehensive approach to performance management that considers both internal capabilities and external challenges (Lee, 2019).

Recent trends in research methods used in Business Performance studies have shifted towards more sophisticated and integrative approaches. Qualitative methods, including case studies and interviews, are increasingly employed to gain deeper insights into the contextual factors influencing performance (Herlinawati & Machmud, 2020). Additionally, quantitative methods, such as structural equation modeling and regression analyses, are utilized to test complex relationships between variables and assess the impact of various factors on performance outcomes (Osuigwe & Eresia-Eke, 2022; Amram, 2023). The implications of these trends are significant for the future of Business Performance research, as they enable scholars to develop more nuanced and contextually relevant models that reflect the complexities of modern business environments. Moreover, the integration of big data analytics and machine learning techniques is poised to revolutionize the field, allowing for more precise measurements and predictions of performance (Duțescu & Stănilă, 2019). As researchers continue to explore innovative methodologies, the potential for advancing theoretical frameworks and practical applications in Business Performance will expand, paving the way for more effective performance management strategies.

In summarizing the main findings of previous studies on Business Performance, it is evident that while significant progress has been made, several limitations persist. Many studies have relied heavily on quantitative measures, often overlooking the qualitative aspects that contribute to performance (Herlinawati & Machmud, 2020). For instance, while financial metrics are essential, they do not capture the full picture of organizational effectiveness, particularly in service-oriented industries where customer satisfaction and employee engagement are critical (Giang, 2022; Parnell, 2010). Additionally, the focus on specific sectors or geographical regions may limit the generalizability of findings, highlighting the need for more diverse and inclusive research designs (Herlinawati & Machmud, 2020). Unique contributions from various studies include the identification of key performance drivers, such as innovation and leadership, yet these findings often come with limitations related to sample size and methodological rigor (Amram, 2023; Bakator et al., 2019). Future research should aim to address these gaps by exploring under-researched areas, such as the impact of digital transformation on performance across different industries and the role of corporate social responsibility in shaping business outcomes (Duțescu & Stănilă, 2019). By expanding the scope of inquiry and employing more integrative methodologies, scholars can enhance the understanding of Business Performance and its determinants in an increasingly complex business landscape.

2.2 Entrepreneur Education

Entrepreneurship education (EE) has garnered significant attention in academic literature, leading to various definitions that reflect its multifaceted nature. One prominent definition posits that EE encompasses the development of competencies that enable individuals to recognize opportunities, mobilize resources, and create value through

entrepreneurial ventures (Morris et al., 2013,). This perspective emphasizes the importance of equipping students with practical skills and knowledge that can be applied in real-world contexts (Tahir et al., 2024). Another definition highlights EE as a systematic process aimed at fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, which includes creativity, risk-taking, and resilience (Arruti & Paños-Castro, 2020). This definition underscores the psychological and behavioral aspects of entrepreneurship, suggesting that education should not only impart knowledge but also cultivate the attitudes necessary for entrepreneurial success. Furthermore, EE is often described as a key competence that transcends the mere creation of businesses, extending its relevance to various professional and personal spheres (Arruti & Paños-Castro, 2020). This broader view aligns with the notion that entrepreneurial skills are increasingly valuable in a dynamic and competitive job market.

The relationship between entrepreneurship education and business performance, particularly in the context of Selangor, is a critical area of inquiry. Previous research indicates that higher levels of education, including entrepreneurship education, positively influence the business performance of entrepreneurs (Tasman, 2023). For instance, studies have shown that women entrepreneurs with robust educational backgrounds exhibit greater confidence and improved business outcomes, suggesting that education serves as a catalyst for entrepreneurial success (Tasman, 2023). Additionally, the development of specific human capital through targeted education enhances entrepreneurs' knowledge of financial alternatives, which is crucial for making informed business decisions (Seghers et al., 2011). This correlation is particularly relevant in Selangor, where a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem exists, and the demand for skilled entrepreneurs is high. The findings suggest that entrepreneurship education can lead to improved business performance by equipping entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate challenges effectively.

Despite the promising findings regarding the impact of entrepreneurship education on business performance, there are notable limitations and gaps in the existing research. One significant limitation is the lack of consensus on the definitions and frameworks used to evaluate entrepreneurship education (Arruti & Paños-Castro, 2020). This ambiguity can lead to inconsistencies in research findings and hinder the development of effective educational programs. Moreover, many studies have focused primarily on quantitative measures of business performance, neglecting qualitative aspects such as entrepreneurial mindset and personal growth (Fenton & Barry, 2014). This gap highlights the need for more comprehensive research that considers both quantitative and qualitative outcomes of entrepreneurship education. Additionally, while there is substantial evidence linking education to business performance, the specific mechanisms through which education influences performance remain underexplored (Ratzinger et al., 2017). Understanding these mechanisms is crucial for developing targeted educational interventions that can effectively enhance entrepreneurial outcomes.

The contributions of this study to the field of entrepreneurship education are multifaceted. Firstly, it aims to provide a clearer definition of entrepreneurship education that encompasses both theoretical and practical dimensions, thereby addressing the existing ambiguity in the literature (Arruti & Paños-Castro, 2020). By synthesizing various definitions and perspectives, this study seeks to establish a comprehensive framework that can guide future research and educational practices. Secondly, the study intends to explore the relationship between entrepreneurship education and business performance in Selangor through empirical analysis, thereby filling a critical gap in the literature. This empirical focus will allow for a nuanced understanding of how education impacts entrepreneurial outcomes in a specific regional context. Furthermore, the research will investigate the qualitative aspects of entrepreneurship education, such as the development of an entrepreneurial mindset, which has been largely overlooked in previous studies (Fenton & Barry, 2014). By addressing these gaps, the study aims to contribute valuable insights that can inform policymakers, educators, and practitioners in the field of entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, entrepreneurship education is a vital component of fostering entrepreneurial capabilities and enhancing business performance. The definitions of entrepreneurship education reflect its complexity and the need for a holistic approach that integrates knowledge, skills, and mindset development. The positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and business performance, particularly in regions like Selangor, underscores the importance of investing in

educational initiatives that empower entrepreneurs. However, the existing research landscape reveals significant limitations and gaps that must be addressed to fully understand the impact of entrepreneurship education. This study aims to contribute to the field by providing a clearer definition, exploring empirical relationships, and investigating qualitative outcomes, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in fostering successful entrepreneurs.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Participants

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to explore the influence of entrepreneurial education on business performance among entrepreneurs in Selangor. Purposive sampling was used to select entrepreneurs who had completed an entrepreneurial education programme, owned or managed a business in Selangor, and had operated their business for at least two years after completing the programme. Approximately four participants were interviewed, with the final sample determined by data saturation.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews to explore participants' experiences of entrepreneurial education and its contribution to business performance. Relevant documents, including training certificates and business records, were also reviewed to support the interview findings. All interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2006). NVivo software was used to facilitate data coding, organisation, and theme development.

3.3 Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

The trustworthiness of the study was ensured through member checking, an audit trail, detailed descriptions of the research context, and researcher reflexivity. Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Participants provided informed consent prior to the interviews, participation was voluntary, and confidentiality was maintained by anonymising participants' identities and securely storing all research data.

3.4 Expected Outcome

The study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how entrepreneurial education contributes to business performance and to offer practical recommendations for policymakers and educational institutions in designing more effective entrepreneurship education programmes.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Data Analysis

The research focuses on how entrepreneurial education influences business performance in Selangor. Using qualitative methods, the study explores themes such as the reliance on ICT tools, adaptability, and continuous learning among entrepreneurs. Findings highlight that ICT adoption enhances efficiency, customer engagement, and decision-making, although challenges like limited digital skills, financial constraints, and inconsistent infrastructure hinder widespread adoption. Entrepreneurs with strong ICT competencies or access to training tend to outperform others, showcasing the importance of education and skill development. Demographic data reveals diverse workforce compositions and business scales, underscoring varying levels of ICT utilization. The study suggests that targeted initiatives like affordable training programs, improved infrastructure, and financial support could bridge gaps, enabling broader ICT integration and fostering competitive, sustainable business growth.

4.2 Descriptive Statistic Analysis

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Respondent	Name of Business	Number Of Employee	Gender Distribution
Entrepreneur 1	TechFusion	20	Male: 50%
	Solutions		Female: 50%
Entrepreneur 2	Klasik Kraf	5	Male: 40%
	Selangor		Female: 60%
Entrepreneur 3	EcoSmart	10	Male: 60%
	Innovations		Female: 40%
Entrepreneur 4	Flora & Fizz	1	Male: 100%
			Female: 0%

4.3 Research Finding: Staying Update on Business Operation

4.3.1 Continuous Learning on Staying Update

In Selangor, some entrepreneurs focus on continuously staying updated with industry trends. They spend time daily reading industry news, following experts, and networking with other entrepreneurs. By attending startup events, both in-person and online, they learn about market changes and innovations. This constant effort helps them stay prepared for challenges and spot new opportunities, keeping their business flexible and competitive.

"Staying updated with the latest industry trends is absolutely essential in the startup world. I spend time every day reading industry news, following thought leaders, and networking with other entrepreneurs. I attend startup-focused events, both in person and online, to hear about innovations and market shifts. It's important to know where the market is headed, and being aware of emerging trends helps me anticipate challenges and seize opportunities. Whether it's a new technological advancement or changing customer preferences, I make it a point to stay informed." Respondent Entrepreneur 3.

4.3.2 Experiential Learning: Limited Time

In Selangor, some entrepreneurs have limited time to stay updated on industry trends because of other commitments, like a full-time job. They mainly rely on customer feedback to guide their business decisions. While they occasionally read articles or check social media, they don't actively research trends, focusing instead on making changes based on customer needs and their own experience.

"To be honest, I don't have much time to stay updated on industry trends. My full-time job takes up most of my attention, and I run the business during evenings and weekends. I do occasionally read articles or browse social media to see what's happening in the market, but I mostly rely on customer feedback to make changes to my business. If I notice that customers are asking for new products or services, I'll consider making adjustments, but I don't actively research market trends." Respondent Entrepreneur 4.

"I don't actively seek out the latest industry trends, but I hear about them occasionally, mostly through word of mouth or customer feedback. I run a local business, so I focus more on the needs of my immediate community rather than the broader market. If something really important comes up, like a new regulation or major market shift, I'll look into it, but I generally rely on my experience to keep my business steady. I've seen many trends come and go, and I prefer to stick to what I know works." Respondent Entrepreneur 2.

4.3.3 Continuous learning

Continuous learning in business performance involves the ongoing development of skills and knowledge within an organization. It encourages employees to stay updated with industry trends, adapt to new challenges, and improve their competencies. This commitment to learning fosters innovation, enhances problem-solving, and keeps the company competitive. When businesses prioritize continuous learning, they build a skilled workforce that drives sustained growth and adapts effectively to changing market demands.

"Yes, I strongly believe in the importance of continuous education for personal and business growth. I regularly enroll in online courses and attend workshops that focus on various aspects of entrepreneurship, such as digital marketing, customer service, and financial management. For example, I recently took a course on data analytics to better understand customer patterns. These learning opportunities help me refine my strategies and introduce new ideas into my business model." Entrepreneur 1.

"Continuing education is a big part of my entrepreneurial journey. I've taken courses in areas like digital marketing, leadership, and even coding, which have proven to be invaluable. I believe that entrepreneurship is a constant learning process, and staying educated helps me refine my strategies and make smarter decisions. I'm also involved in a startup accelerator program, which gives me access to mentors and resources that push me to keep growing and learning. Without ongoing education, it would be hard to stay competitive in this fast-paced environment." Entrepreneur 3.

4.3.4 Self-improvement

Self-improvement in business performance involves individuals continually enhancing their skills, knowledge, and abilities to contribute more effectively to the organization. By focusing on personal growth, employees become more productive, adaptable, and motivated, which positively impacts teamwork and innovation. This commitment to self-improvement leads to higher performance levels, driving the business toward greater success and resilience in a competitive environment.

"Continuing education is a big part of my entrepreneurial journey. I've taken courses in areas like digital marketing, leadership, and even coding, which have proven to be invaluable. I believe that entrepreneurship is a constant learning process, and staying educated helps me refine my strategies and make smarter decisions. I'm also involved in a startup accelerator program, which gives me access to mentors and resources that push me to keep growing and learning. Without ongoing education, it would be hard to stay competitive in this fast-paced environment." Entrepreneur 3

"I haven't had the chance to participate in any formal business courses, but I do enjoy reading books on entrepreneurship when I have spare time. I find that self-education, like reading blogs or listening to podcasts, is a good way for me to pick up tips and tricks without committing to a full course. In the future, I'd love to take some workshops or short courses, especially on marketing and financial management, to help me grow my business, but right now, time is a constraint." Entrepreneur 4.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Interpretation of Findings

The findings of this research, focusing on education, directly address the research questions and the theoretical framework underpinning the study. The study reveals that entrepreneurial education enhances business efficiency and customer

engagement by equipping entrepreneurs with vital skills such as leadership, decision-making, and financial management. These findings bridge the research gap by illustrating how education directly impacts SME performance in Selangor (Hamdan et al., 2023; Marani et al., 2022). The results align with the resource-based view theory, emphasizing the strategic importance of human capital in achieving competitive advantage.

Comparison with Prior Research

The results align with prior studies, such as those by Seghers et al. (2011), which identified education as crucial for developing entrepreneurial competencies and improving decision-making processes. This study emphasizes the significant impact of entrepreneurial education in Selangor, similar to findings in regions where structured educational initiatives have led to improved business outcomes. However, it also highlights unique regional challenges, such as access to training and the quality of educational programs, which are less emphasized in studies from more developed regions.

Implications

Practical Implications: Policymakers should prioritize the creation of accessible and targeted educational programs for entrepreneurs. These programs should focus on developing practical business skills and adaptability to market trends.

Theoretical Implications: The study contributes to the literature by emphasizing the integral role of education in driving SME performance. It reinforces the theoretical link between education and enhanced entrepreneurial outcomes, offering a basis for future research to expand on this relationship.

Policy-Related Implications: Governments should develop initiatives to improve the accessibility and quality of entrepreneurial education. This includes funding for workshops, mentorship programs, and integration of entrepreneurial studies into formal education systems, addressing skill gaps that hinder SME growth.

6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study revealed a strong correlation between entrepreneurial education and enhanced business performance among entrepreneurs in Selangor, highlighting the pivotal role of leadership, decision-making, and ICT adoption. Findings demonstrate that continuous learning and targeted training programs significantly improve operational efficiency and customer engagement, underscoring the transformative impact of education in a competitive and evolving market environment.

The study underscores the importance of entrepreneurial education not only as a catalyst for business success but also as a foundation for building a resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem. By fostering critical skills and adaptability, education equips entrepreneurs to address industry challenges effectively, thereby contributing to regional economic development and innovation.

Future research should delve deeper into the specific mechanisms through which entrepreneurial education impacts business performance. Exploring longitudinal studies to evaluate sustained effects and examining sector-specific applications of ICT integration can provide valuable insights. Additionally, assessing the role of government policies in scaling educational access could further enhance the entrepreneurial landscape in emerging economies.

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