Sustainable Practices in Enterprises Led by Women.

A.Sarlin Venotha
Research Scholar, Department of Commerce,
St. Joseph's College (Autonomous), Trichy-2.
Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichy.
Mail ID: sarlinvenotha@gmail.com
Dr.K. Alex
Associate Professor, Department of Commerce,
St. Joseph's College (Autonomous), Trichy-2.
Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichy.

Abstract:

This research paper investigates the adoption and attitudes towards sustainable practices within enterprises, focusing on the influence of demographic factors A questionnaire comprising 14 items was designed to gather data on various aspects of sustainable practices, including waste reduction, energy efficiency, renewable energy adoption, sustainable sourcing, employee engagement, and organizational transparency. The survey was administered to entrepreneurs representing diverse sectors and backgrounds. The findings reveal insights into the interplay between demographic variables and attitudes towards sustainability initiatives. Key factors such as marital status, age group, and education level are shown to influence perspectives on sustainable practices within enterprises. The study underscores the importance of tailored sustainability strategies to forward the specific challenges and opportunities inherent in each sector, fostering a more holistic approach to sustainable entrepreneurship. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of the drivers and barriers to sustainable practices in enterprises and provides valuable insights for policymakers, business leaders, and stakeholders seeking to promote environmental and social responsibility in the business ecosystem.

Keywords: Sustainable practices, Enterprises, Attitudes, Environmental responsibility.

Introduction:

Modern businesses prioritize sustainability to address environmental and social issues. Understanding enterprise sustainability dynamics is crucial as organizations realize their role in creating a more sustainable future. This study examines demographics, attitudes, and business sustainability.

Demographic aspects can greatly impact corporate sustainability viewpoints. Marriage may influence sustainability because married people value stability and long-term planning. Age also influences environmental responsibility and creativity through various experiences and viewpoints. Sustainable company practices are often affected by education level and sustainability consciousness.

Corporate sustainability attitudes shape organizational behaviour and decision-making. Satisfaction with the business, value of sustainability, and readiness to invest in green technologies might affect how much sustainable practices are implemented and prioritized. Organizational culture and principles like openness, employee involvement, and social responsibility can also greatly affect sustainable operations.

This study analyzes enterprise survey data on demographics, sustainability attitudes, and sustainable practices. This study examines demographics and attitudes that influence company sustainability initiatives. Finally, understanding sustainability drivers and impediments to adoption can help future firms become more resilient, responsible, and ecologically mindful.

Review of Literature:

Bartkus and Glassman (2008) examine the relationship between mission statements and stakeholder management practices in firms. Their study investigates whether firms align their actions with their stated missions, providing insights into the role of organizational values in guiding decision-making for men-led enterprises.

Bhuiyan and Shamil (2019) present empirical evidence on the relationship between sustainability reporting and firm performance, focusing on the context of Bangladesh. Their findings contribute to understanding the

potential benefits of transparent reporting on sustainability practices for men-led enterprises operating in emerging markets.

Boiral and Heras-Saizarbitoria (2019) analyze sustainability reports as boundary objects in the forestry sector, exploring their role in facilitating communication and collaboration among diverse stakeholders. Their study offers insights into the use of sustainability reporting as a tool for enhancing transparency and accountability in men-led enterprises.

Boulouta and Pitelis (2014) examine the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on national competitiveness, shedding light on the broader implications of CSR initiatives for men-led enterprises and their respective economies. The review underscores the importance of CSR in enhancing competitiveness and sustainable development.

Clark and Watson (2019) provide an introductory overview of the evolving landscape of corporate governance, emphasizing the need to incorporate sustainability considerations into governance frameworks. Their chapter sets the stage for understanding how governance structures can facilitate sustainable practices in men-led enterprises, promoting long-term value creation.

Flammer and Bansal (2017) investigate the relationship between long-term orientation and firm value, providing empirical evidence to support the notion that a focus on long-term sustainability contributes to enhanced financial performance. Their study offers valuable insights for men-led enterprises on the benefits of adopting a forward-looking approach to sustainability.

Hu and Wang (2018) investigate the contribution of male executives to sustainable development in China's listed firms, particularly in the context of environmental pollution incidents. Their empirical analysis sheds light on the gender dynamics of corporate sustainability leadership, offering implications for men-led enterprises striving to address environmental challenges.

Iatridis and Kesidou (2017) conduct a meta-analysis to examine the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and financial performance. Their calibration-based approach provides robust evidence of a positive correlation between CSR activities and financial outcomes, offering valuable insights for men-led enterprises on the business case for sustainability.

Lee and Choi(2008) analyze the relationship between corporate sustainability management practices and market performance using data from Korean firms. Their study provides evidence of the positive impact of sustainability management on financial performance, offering valuable insights for men-led enterprises seeking to enhance their market competitiveness through sustainable practices.

Lee (2011) explores opportunities for green marketing targeting young consumers, investigating the preferences and behaviours of this demographic segment towards environmentally friendly products and brands. His findings offer strategic insights for men-led enterprises seeking to engage with environmentally conscious consumer segments through effective green marketing initiatives.

Marquis and Qian (2014) analyze corporate social responsibility (CSR) reporting practices in China, examining the extent to which CSR reports represent symbolic gestures or substantive actions. Their study provides insights into the complexities of CSR implementation in emerging economies relevant for men-led enterprises operating in similar contexts.

Objective

1.   Determine the demographic characteristics of enterprise leaders to analyze their correlation with attitudes towards sustainability.

2.   Assess the diversity of businesses and the evolution of sustainable practices over time.

3.   Evaluate enterprise attitudes and practices towards specific sustainability initiatives to identify strengths and areas needing improvement.

Methodology:

Research Design: This study adopts a quantitative research design to gather numerical data on the attitudes and practices of enterprises towards sustainability. A cross-sectional survey approach will be used to collect data from a sample of 100 respondents.

Sampling Technique: Convenience sampling will be employed to select participants for the study. Enterprises will be approached through various channels, such as professional networks, online forums, and business associations.

Data Collection Instrument: A structured questionnaire will be used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire will consist of close-ended questions covering various aspects of sustainable practices within enterprises. Questions will be designed to elicit responses related to demographics, attitudes, and behaviours towards sustainability.

Questionnaire Development: The questionnaire will be developed based on a review of relevant literature and existing research instruments. Care will be taken to ensure that the questions are clear, concise, and address the specific objectives of the study. Pre-testing of the questionnaire will be conducted with a small sample of respondents to identify any potential issues or ambiguities.

Limitations: The study may be limited by factors such as sample size, self-reporting bias, and the use of convenience sampling. Additionally, the findings may not be generalizable to all enterprises due to the specific characteristics of the sample population.

Results and Interpretation

Marital status: dominant companies, with 72.5% married and 65.2% single. The sample is 7.2% separated, 1.4% divorced, and 1.4% widowed. This marital status diversity reveals entrepreneurs' diverse origins and experiences, which can greatly impact business sustainability attitudes. Stability and support may help married people adopt sustainable practices.

Age group: Each age group in enterprises adds a particular colour to sustainable practices, creating a rich picture of entrepreneurial diversity. The bold stroke of 48.91% of the canvas symbolizes the 20-30 age bracket, indicating youth vitality and inventiveness. Experience and adaptability are blended by the 31-40 age group, which makes up over 30% of the makeup. Though modest (13.04% and 4.35%, respectively), the 41-50 and 51-60 age groups provide richness and maturity to the canvas, bringing professional guidance from years of experience. Finally, the youthful sparks below 20 (10.87%) provide excitement, indicating a new generation of change-makers. These diverse brushstrokes build a sustainable enterprise artwork that shows how variety may shape a better, more innovative future.

Highest degree of education: Enterprise workers have varied origins and education levels. 19.57% have completed higher secondary school, whereas 17.39% have advanced diplomas or university degrees. The 8.70% with master's degrees and 10.87% without formal schooling show resiliency. Most, 38.04%, have completed primary school, while 15.22% have a secondary school leaving certificate. This diversity emphasizes the need to involve various educational backgrounds in sustainable activities.

Type of business: Entrepreneurs run a wide range of enterprises. About 35% pursue non-listed ventures, demonstrating ingenuity and innovation. Shops dominate, with 50% of answers highlighting their importance in sustainable consumer behaviour. At 8%, suppliers emphasize the need for sustainable supply chain sourcing. Nearly 7% work in wood-related industries, emphasizing eco-friendly production. This variety of business kinds emphasizes the necessity for sector-specific sustainability measures to ensure a holistic approach to sustainable entrepreneurship.

The company started: Business startup dates show different entrepreneurial timetables. About 24% of enterprises started 11-15 years ago, indicating mature growth, whereas 17% started 1-5 years ago, indicating early growth. Approximately 12% were founded 16-20 years ago, indicating a long history and possible evolution of sustainability strategy. With only one respondent, firms created 21-25 years ago are longstanding entities with a strong sustainable practices history. The largest cohort, 41%, is 6-10-year-old enterprises, which is crucial to

scaling sustainable activities and consolidating market presence. These timelines help businesses grow and innovate in ecologically and socially responsible ways by revealing the evolution of sustainable practices.

Individual business satisfaction varies. Only 6% were "Not at All" satisfied, indicating areas for development. 62% were "All the Time," showing excellent overall satisfaction. About 34% are satisfied with "Sometimes," indicating a mix of positive and bad experiences. These various opinions demonstrate the complexity of entrepreneurship and the need to overcome obstacles and grow to improve business success.

The organization promotes waste reduction and recycling: About 18% support these efforts, indicating support for sustainability initiatives, while 10% disagree, suggesting disagreement or differing priorities. The majority, 63%, are neutral, showing no strong view or involvement. Only around 2% strongly agree, indicating great support, while about 3% strongly disagree, suggesting significant worries or opposition. These diverse perspectives emphasize the necessity for effective communication and engagement tactics to increase organizational alignment and commitment to sustainable practices.

The organization's commitment to energy efficiency in daily operations is reflected in attitudes: 49% agree, recognizing its importance in sustainable practices, while 4% disagree, indicating potential issues. About 34% are neutral, indicating a lack of opinion or involvement. Around 4% strongly agree that energy-efficient projects should be supported. These diverse perspectives emphasize the significance of effective communication and engagement tactics to increase organizational alignment and commitment to sustainable practices.

The company promotes renewable energy sources: About 27% agree, recognizing their relevance in sustainability, while 9% disagree, signalling possible concerns. About 46% are neutral, indicating a lack of opinion or involvement. About 7% strongly agree supporting renewable energy programs, while less than 1% strongly disagree, suggesting limited opposition. These diverse opinions emphasize the need for strong communication and engagement tactics to increase company collaboration on renewable energy adoption.

Sustainable sourcing of materials is a priority for the organization: About 31% agree, recognizing the importance of sustainability in material sourcing practices, while about 11% disagree, suggesting potential conflicting priorities. 45% of respondents are neutral, showing no strong opinion or involvement in sustainable sourcing activities. 11% strongly agree, suggesting substantial support for sustainable material sourcing, while 2% strongly disagree, indicating moderate resistance. These different opinions highlight the necessity of effective communication and engagement tactics to increase organizational alignment and commitment to sustainable material sourcing.

Employee participation in sustainability initiatives is encouraged: About 32% agree, acknowledging the importance of employee involvement, while about 7% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or differing priorities. Most responders, about 50%, are ambivalent about increasing employee participation. 10% strongly agree, suggesting substantial support for staff sustainability activities, while 1% strongly disagree, indicating minor opposition. These diverse perspectives emphasize the necessity of good communication and engagement tactics to increase alignment and commitment to employee sustainability programs.

The company minimizes single-use plastics: About 31% agree, acknowledging the importance of reducing plastics for environmental sustainability, while about 9% disagree, suggesting disagreement or differing priorities. About 42% of respondents are neutral on reducing single-use plastics. About 14% strongly agree, supporting efforts to eliminate single-use plastics, while 4% strongly disagree, opposing these programs. These diverse perspectives highlight the significance of good communication and engagement tactics to increase organizational alignment and commitment to reducing single-use plastics.

The organization encourages sustainable transportation options for commuting: About 35% agree, acknowledging the importance of promoting sustainable commuting practices for environmental and social benefits, while about 3% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or differing priorities. With 49% of respondents neutral, the largest group is not involved in promoting sustainable transportation solutions. About 10% strongly agree, supporting sustainable commuting, while 3% strongly disagree, opposing similar programs. These diverse perspectives emphasize the necessity of effective communication and engagement tactics to increase organizational alignment and commitment to sustainable commuting options.

The organization invests in green technologies to reduce its carbon footprint: About 40% agree, recognizing the importance of investing in green technologies for environmental sustainability, while about 8% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or priority differences. The largest group, 36%, is ambivalent toward the organization's green technology investment. About 13% strongly agree, supporting such investments, while 3% strongly disagree, opposing them. These diverse perspectives emphasize the significance of good communication and engagement tactics to increase alignment and commitment to investing in green technologies to lower the organization's carbon footprint.

Social responsibility is integrated into the company's core values: About 37% agree, recognizing the importance of embedding social responsibility into the organization's ethos, while about 2% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or differing priorities. The majority of respondents, 44%, are neutral on integrating social responsibility into core principles. About 15% strongly agree, suggesting high support for such integration, while about 2% strongly disagree, indicating strong resistance. These perspectives emphasize the necessity of effective communication and engagement tactics to increase alignment and commitment to integrating social responsibility into the company's basic principles.

The company supports local community development projects: About 35% agree, recognizing the importance of investing in local communities for social impact and sustainability, while about 4% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or differing priorities. The largest group, 44%, is neutral, suggesting no strong view or interest in local community programs. About 16% strongly agree, suggesting high support for such programs, while 1% strongly disagree, indicating strong opposition. These diverse perspectives emphasize the necessity of good communication and engagement tactics to increase company alignment and commitment to local community development programs.

The organization is transparent about its sustainability efforts: About 36% agree, acknowledging the importance of transparency in sustainability practices for accountability and trust-building, while about 5% disagree, suggesting potential concerns or differing perceptions. About 45% of respondents are indifferent, suggesting no strong view or involvement in the organization's sustainability transparency. Nearly 12% strongly agree, supporting openness, while 2% strongly disagree, opposing it. These diverse perspectives emphasize the need for good communication and participation to increase transparency and awareness of the organization's sustainability activities.

Employees receive training on sustainable practices: About 40% agree, recognizing the importance of equipping employees with knowledge and skills for sustainable initiatives, while about 6% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or differing priorities. The majority of responders, 35%, are neutral about sustainable practice training. About 17% strongly agree, supporting such training, while 2% strongly disagree, opposing it. These diverse perspectives emphasize the significance of effective communication and engagement tactics to increase alignment and commitment to sustainable practice training for employees.

The company sets specific targets for reducing its environmental impact: About 34% agree, recognizing the importance of setting clear objectives to mitigate environmental harm, while about 8% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or differing priorities. The largest group, 42%, is neutral, showing no strong view or engagement in defining environmental impact reduction targets. Nearly 13% strongly agree, supporting such goal-setting, while 2% strongly disagree, opposing these activities. These diverse perspectives emphasize the need for good communication and engagement tactics to increase alignment and commitment to setting company-wide environmental impact targets.

The organization considers product lifecycles in its design and production: About 42% agree, recognizing the importance of lifecycle considerations for sustainable product development, while about 5% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or differing priorities. The largest group, 39%, is neutral, showing no strong view or engagement in product lifecycles. About 13% strongly agree, supporting lifecycle considerations, whereas 1% strongly disagree, opposing these efforts. These varied perspectives emphasize the necessity of effective communication and engagement tactics to increase organizational alignment and commitment to product lifecycles in design and production.

The company implements water conservation measures: 36% agree, recognizing the importance of conserving water resources for sustainability, while 4% disagree, suggesting potential disagreements or differing priorities. The largest group, 42%, is neutral, suggesting no strong view or interest in water conservation. About 16% strongly agree, supporting water conservation measures, while 2% strongly disagree, opposing them. These different perspectives emphasize the need for effective communication and involvement to increase company-wide water conservation commitment.

Major Findings

1. Most people are married (72.5%), followed by singles (65.2%). This marital status variety reveals entrepreneurs' histories and experiences, which may affect sustainability perspectives.

2. Age Group: 48.91% of responders are 20-30, demonstrating youth's enthusiasm and vitality in creativity. The thriving entrepreneurial scene includes other age groups with unique ideas and expertise in sustainable practices.

3. Highest Level of schooling: People have advanced diplomas, university degrees, upper secondary school certificates, master's degrees, and even no formal schooling. Diversity shows the need for inclusivity in encouraging sustainable behaviours across all educational backgrounds.

4. Type of Business: Shops, suppliers, wood-related enterprises, and others differ greatly. This variability underscores the necessity for sector-specific sustainability policies to address problems and possibilities.

5. Firm Establishment Date: Firm establishment dates show how sustainable practices have changed throughout time. These timescales assist in driving sustainable entrepreneurship growth and innovation initiatives.

6. Business Satisfaction: About 62% of respondents are highly satisfied with their businesses, while 6% are "Not at All" satisfied. Addressing difficulties and promoting growth are essential to corporate success and satisfaction.

7. Sustainable Practice Attitudes: Waste reduction, energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable sourcing, employee involvement, and other sustainability activities are viewed differently in firms. Collaboration and dedication to sustainable practices require effective communication and engagement tactics.

8. Expressing Sustainability Goals: 74% of respondents agree with the organization's transparency in expressing sustainability goals to stakeholders. This emphasizes the necessity of open communication in building trust and accountability.

9. Investment in Eco-Friendly Infrastructure: 28% of respondents support the company's eco-friendly office infrastructure and facilities, while 49% are neutral. This shows that the company's eco-friendly infrastructure investment selections lack significant opinion or involvement.

10. Financial Support for Sustainable Initiatives: 35% of respondents support the organization's financial assistance for sustainable initiatives, while 45% are neutral. This suggests that many respondents don't care about funding sustainability activities.

11. The organization's active participation in environmental conservation activities is viewed with 28% agreement and 47% neutral. This shows varying engagement or awareness of such efforts' importance.

12. Employee Feedback on Sustainable Practices: 32% of respondents support the organization soliciting employee feedback on sustainable practices, while 46% are neutral. This suggests more active participation or communication methods to involve employees in feedback on sustainability initiatives.

13. Waste Reduction and Recycling: 34% of respondents support the organization's waste reduction and recycling efforts, while 39% are neutral. This shows that improved communication or engagement tactics are needed to increase waste reduction and recycling alignment and commitment.

14. Regarding the organization's energy efficiency commitment, 34% agree, and 44% are neutral. This shows that energy efficiency awareness and involvement differ within the organization.

15. Renewable Energy Support: 32% of respondents support the organization's renewable energy sources, while 47% are neutral. More active communication or participation may be needed to increase alignment and commitment to renewable energy.

16. Sustainable Material Sourcing: 38% agree, and 48% are neutral on the organization's sustainable material sourcing priority. This suggests that the organization needs clearer communication or engagement initiatives to improve sustainability sourcing alignment and commitment.

Suggestions

1. Customized Sustainability Programmes: Create programmes that meet the different needs and preferences of organization employees. Consider age, education, and business type when designing sustainability programs to appeal to different demographics.

2. Engagement participation: Motivate employees to participate in environmental efforts. Allow staff to offer ideas, criticism, and suggestions for enhancing sustainability.

3. Transparency: Communicate the organization's sustainability goals, activities, and progress. Inform employees about their behaviours and the importance of sustainability in long-term corporate performance. Update via newsletters, meetings, and intranets.

4. Recognition & Rewards: Reward sustainability-focused personnel with incentives and recognition. Celebrate environmental, eco-friendly, and community achievements. Honour exemplary sustainability efforts.

5. Partnerships and Collaboration: Partner with sustainable suppliers, customers, and community organizations. Promote environmental conservation, social responsibility, and ethical corporate practices through cooperative projects and campaigns.

6. Leadership & Role Modeling: Set an example and show a strong commitment to sustainability across the organization. Empower managers and executives to promote sustainability and incorporate it into strategic decision-making. Set clear objectives, provide resources, and help achieve sustainable goals.

Conclusion

The findings of this research shed light on the complex interplay between demographic factors, attitudes, and the adoption of sustainable practices within enterprises. Key insights gleaned from the survey data highlight the diverse landscape of sustainability within businesses and underscore the importance of tailored strategies to foster greater alignment and commitment towards sustainable practices. Marital status emerged as a significant demographic factor influencing attitudes towards sustainability, with married individuals exhibiting a higher propensity for stability and long-term planning, potentially enhancing their commitment to sustainable practices. Similarly, age played a crucial role, with different age groups contributing unique perspectives and experiences to the sustainability narrative within enterprises.

Education level also proved to be influential, with higher levels of education often correlating with greater awareness and understanding of sustainability issues. This underscores the importance of education and training initiatives in equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary for integrating sustainable practices into business operations. Attitudes towards sustainability initiatives varied widely among enterprises, with factors such as satisfaction with the business, perception of the importance of sustainability, and willingness to invest in green technologies shaping organizational behaviour. Organizational culture and values, including transparency, employee engagement, and social responsibility, emerged as crucial determinants of the extent to which sustainable practices were embraced and prioritized.

Overall, the research underscores the need for holistic approaches to sustainability that consider the diverse demographic makeup of enterprises and address the underlying attitudes and values driving decision-making.

By understanding the nuanced dynamics at play, businesses can develop more operative strategies for promoting and enhancing sustainable practices, ultimately contributing to a more resilient, responsible, and environmentally conscious future.

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