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Environment-friendly Practices in Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development: Insights from a Qualitative Study

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to critically examine the key obstacles hindering the implementation of environmentally sustainable entrepreneurial practices for sustainable development in Sylhet, Bangladesh, to assess the alignment of entrepreneurial initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to propose evidence-based, context-specific strategies for overcoming regional challenges and fostering sustainable entrepreneurship.

Methodology: This research utilized a qualitative technique, comprising 25 in-depth interviews (IDIs) with local businesses and 5 key informant interviews (KIIs) with policymakers and environmental specialists. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to reveal stakeholders' opinions on the obstacles to implementing sustainable practices.

Findings: Regulatory uncertainty, limited training opportunities, financial constraints, and weak policy enforcement hinder the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices, further compounded by cultural resistance and fragmented policy coordination. The findings highlight a clear linkage between local entrepreneurial challenges and the broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Originality/Value: The research offers new perspectives on the relationship between entrepreneurship and sustainability in emerging economies. By addressing region-specific difficulties, it underlines the important significance of eco-friendly practices in attaining SDGs.

Practical Implications: The findings provide implementable suggestions for politicians, non-governmental organizations, and industry players. Essential methods encompass policy changes, capacity-building programs, community involvement efforts, and enhanced cooperation among stakeholders to foster sustainable entrepreneurship.

Limitations: This study is confined to the Sylhet area, which may restrict the generalizability of the results. Subsequent research may broaden the scope to encompass comparison analysis across areas and employ mixed-method techniques for improved validation.

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1. Introduction

The notion of sustainable entrepreneurship has garnered considerable attention in recent decades as global enterprises are increasingly urged to tackle environmental issues while sustaining economic development. Eco-friendly methods, which seek to mitigate environmental damage and foster long-term sustainability, are essential in this shift. Many organizations in underdeveloped nations, particularly those with constrained resources and infrastructure, have significant challenges in adopting these practices (Schaltegger et al., 2012). In Bangladesh, the significance of eco-friendly business is heightened by the necessity to conform to the sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially those pertaining to climate action and sustainable industrial practices.

Sustainable entrepreneurship is essential for the nation's long-term development; yet, the effective execution of environmentally friendly practices is obstructed by several impediments, especially in areas with inadequate infrastructure and institutional support (Huy et al., 2022). This research examines Sylhet, a region in Bangladesh that illustrates these issues. The local economy of Sylhet predominantly relies on agriculture, small-scale industry, and tourism, sectors that are especially susceptible to environmental fluctuations. Entrepreneurs in this region have challenges like regulatory ambiguity, financial limitations, and inadequate governmental assistance, which hinder the implementation of sustainable practices. The trend of women entrepreneurship is also growing slowly. They are involved in generic skill based business like tailoring, handicrafts, boutique shop, beauty parlor, catering, clothing, and flower business (Hani, 2015).

Notwithstanding the increasing need for sustainable business models, Sylhet's entrepreneurial ecosystem is comparatively underdeveloped relative to other metropolitan centers such as Dhaka, which benefits from more robust infrastructure and official backing for sustainable business practices (Ahmed et al., 2020). This study seeks to enhance the larger conversation on sustainable entrepreneurship in underdeveloped nations by analyzing the distinct constraints encountered by entrepreneurs in Sylhet. A study shows that barrier from family was the main challenge to be an entrepreneur. On the other hand, to run the venture successfully, the non-cooperation of the suppliers were identified by the researcher (Hani, 2015). The rate of married women entrepreneurship (72.6%) in this region is also noticeable. More than 80% of them like to run the business as sole proprietor (Al-Hossienie, 2011).

The study aims to emphasize the unique socio-cultural and economic characteristics of Sylhet that influence the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices. The results will not only elucidate Sylhet's setting but will also act as a benchmark for analogous places in Bangladesh and other emerging economies, where entrepreneurial innovation and environmental sustainability are essential for future progress. This study's theoretical approach is based on sustainable development theory (Elkington, 1997) and the entrepreneurial ecosystem model (Isenberg, 2010). These frameworks facilitate the analysis of the interplay between entrepreneurial activity and sustainability concerns within a particular regional environment. This study concentrates on Sylhet, positioning its results within the broader research on sustainable entrepreneurship and providing significant insights into the challenges and possibilities encountered by entrepreneurs in resource-limited areas (Spigel, 2017).

2. Literature Review

Sustainable development integrates environmentally friendly and social economic class anxiety, concentrating on sustainable employment, welfare, and everlasting ecological sustainability. Sustainable development is a economic, environmental and social development that fulfills current necessity and does not avert future genesis from satisfying their requirements (Baumgartner & Rauter, 2017). Anand and Sen (2000) and Giddings et al. (2002) recommend that sustainable development is a versatile conceptualization that focuses on equality environmentally friendly sustainability, fairness in society and monetary advancement while considering multi-generational integrity and the preservation of natural resources.

Sustainable practices aim to develop and implement the best processes that minimize wastefulness through developed quality of goods, methods, and practices. Optimizing resource utilization for the whole life cycle of the procedures. Sustainable education aims to grow academic quality, unify anxiety for perfection with impartiality, and assure idea preparation for the future world. Antle & Ray (2020) point out same view of environmental anxiety, economic durability of smaller farms, and society challenges like laborer security, rural society viability, and animal well-being are very serious threats to sustainable farming development in rich countries. Finite knowledge about sustainable development, scarcity in policy combination, intersectoral teamwork, municipal stakeholder integration, and urban management operations are reasons for feeble governance executed in sustainable development.

Besides, another study indicates that the obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs—including impracticable loan prerequisites, substantial collateral requirements, concealed expenses, and rigid credit policies—substantially influence their adverse view of bank-financed loans. The ramifications of these findings indicate a necessity for adjustments in banking lending regulations and support initiatives especially aimed at facilitating women's access to financial resources (Chowdhury et al., 2018).

Overall, these studies illustrate that governance challenges in sustainable development. In contrast, Barbier and Burgess (2020) point out that developing countries can acquire sustainable development by executing inventive policy systems like nonrenewable energy sources subsidization exchange, distributing irrigation financial aid, and a severe carbon duty. Eliminating the necessity of combination global outgrowth and informing quantified objectives for assets use per capita with substantive minimization in wealthy Nations can support solve the inconsistencies between growth and environmentally friendly sustainability (Hickel, 2019). Sustainable entrepreneurship requires cooperation among communities and customer-centric business models as well as entails ecopreneurs to commence institutional converts to conquer ongoing institutional partiality (Rosário et al., 2022).

Overall, these studies highlight and need for sustainable entrepreneurship and suggest that it provides new advantages for corporate responsibility, connecting environmental and social perspectives into business systems. Entrepreneurship for sustainable development embraces multistage circumstances integrating environmental, societal, and monetary dimensions, with multilayer casual operations suggested for attaching present literature and future research. Entrepreneurs can help social transformation on the side of more sustainable goods and services. Sustainable intention of entrepreneurship influences the sustainable development goals and avert environmental degradation.

However, the sustainable development program can also impact entrepreneurship (Apostu & Gigauri, 2023). Sarkar (2013); Gupta & Dharwal (2022) these studies concluded that eco innovations are inevitable for acquiring green growth and suitability by utilizing green eco technologies and putting up environmentally friendly industries also supported in optimizing waste, preserving energy, protecting biodiversity. Eco innovations motivate the generation of environmentally friendly goods that can be traded, innovating niche markets for such goods. The green market's influence on sustainable development and green entrepreneurship has not been experienced largely. Creating a green culture in learning-based enterprises can promote green entrepreneurship & sustainable development. The increase of the green market is seen as a noteworthy positive impact on sustainable development. Therefore, environment-friendly entrepreneurship research has become a monumental subfield of research and focuses on the causes and challenges of green business management, tactical actions, results, and activation (Gast et al., 2017).

Moreover, Green entrepreneurship pays attention to creating environmentally friendly products, utilizing sustainable development & enhancing socially accountable inhabitants (Gupta & Dharwal, 2022). Environmentally friendly goods can perform an inevitable role in acquiring a sustainable green economy, with environmental literacy being a significant forecaster and regulator in developing countries (Mustafa et al., 2022). Jayasinghe et al. (2020) draws on an extensive range of sources that Eco-enterprises attain economic, social and environmental influence through waste diminishing, providing job availability, and informing eco-friendly substitutes to the market. Green entrepreneurship reduces environmental contamination & promotes economic development and credit control internationally.

Eco innovative Entrepreneurship is also the principal factor of social & the economy growth (Hamburg, 2017; Mondal, 2023). Kiefer et al. (2018) identifies some barriers or challenges of eco-friendly practices such as trust & financial issues, corruption, legal complexity, physical resources, organizational learning, green supply chains, ISO ecological certification & technological path dependency. But Salami et al. (2023) thinks that government plan and action involvement & budgetary policy is firmly related to entrepreneurship extension and enlargement in small-scale businesses.

However, consumer awareness is most important and considering this. Kuźniar et al. (2021) suggests raising consciousness and enlarging consumers understanding about ecological cultivation and environmentally friendly goods can energize demand for eco-friendly products. Gupta & Dharwal (2022) also proposes consumer perception and demand for eco-friendly goods subscribe to the widening of green entrepreneurship and sustainable development. Consumer demand for environmental friendliness generates recent advantages for businesses and marketing techniques and policy focused on the growth of environmental consciousness can enhance company rivalry & profits (Gupta & Dharwal, 2022).

However, green enterprises contribute to social responsibility and corporate image. Green enterprises influence sustainable preservation of the environment through elements for instance education, obedience, and cooperation. Sustainable entrepreneurship practices, executed by pair Indian companies, influence social encouragement & positive impression the environment, producing value Added goods for everlasting profitability & growth.

3. Research Gaps

This paper examines a significant research gap at the convergence of environmentally sustainable practices and entrepreneurship for sustainable development, specifically in Sylhet, Bangladesh. Although there is a substantial body of literature on eco-friendly practices and entrepreneurship as distinct fields, research that amalgamates these notions within the framework of sustainable development is limited, especially in emerging economies such as Bangladesh.

Moreover, the distinctive socio-cultural, infrastructural, and economic attributes of Sylhet have been largely overlooked in previous research, despite their considerable impact on sustainable entrepreneurship. Furthermore, there is a paucity of comprehension about the implementation and scaling of eco-friendly methods in entrepreneurial endeavors, especially in the face of obstacles such as insufficient infrastructure, legislative inefficiencies, and resource limitations. This study seeks to address these deficiencies by examining the obstacles and facilitators of eco-friendly entrepreneurial activities and their impact on sustainable development in Sylhet.

4. Methodology

The research used a qualitative technique to thoroughly investigate the difficulties and possibilities related to sustainable entrepreneurship practices in Sylhet. This method is effective for comprehending the intricate viewpoints of stakeholders and for examining the complex relationship between entrepreneurship and sustainability in this area.

Semi-structured interviews facilitated flexibility in examining each participant's distinct experiences while maintaining consistency throughout the interviews. This method corresponds with Kvale's (2007) proposal, which posits that semi-structured interviews strike a balance between directed questioning and participant-led replies. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select participants based on criteria pertinent to the research objectives. This method aligns with Patton's (2015) recommendations, which endorse purposive sampling to obtain insights from individuals with specialized knowledge of the research topic.

Guest et al. (2005) examined sample size in qualitative research and determined that 25 interviews are adequate to attain data saturation in most qualitative investigations, particularly in exploration or case study contexts. Saturation denotes the stage at which no further information or themes are arising from the data. The method encompassed many steps, including data familiarization, coding, and the identification of principal themes that represent the participants' perspectives on sustainability concerns. Inter-coder dependability was established by the verification of results by two researchers, adhering to the guidelines set out by Elliott et al. (1999) to improve the reliability and consistency of the findings.

Table 1. *Summary of In-depth and Key Informant Interviews*

Interview No.	Interview Type	Stakeholder Type	Designation of Respondent	Years of Experience	Sector/ Field	Interview Duration (Minutes)
1	IDI	Entrepreneur	Tea Estate Owner	15	Tea Industry	40
2	IDI	Entrepreneur	Bamboo Handicrafts Producer	8	Handicrafts	35
3	IDI	Entrepreneur	Organic Fertilizer Manufacturer	10	Agriculture	45
4	IDI	Entrepreneur	Eco-tourism Resort Operator	12	Tourism	40
5	IDI	Entrepreneur	Sustainable Fish Farming Owner	9	Fisheries	50
6	IDI	Entrepreneur	Herbal Medicine Producer	7	Herbal Products	35
7	IDI	Entrepreneur	River Cruise Tour Organizer	6	Tourism	45
8	IDI	Entrepreneur	Jute Product Manufacturer	10	Eco-friendly Product Development	40
9	IDI	Entrepreneur	Village Homestay Operator	11	Community Tourism	50
10	IDI	Entrepreneur	Organic Tea Blender	10	Tea Industry	40
11	IDI	Entrepreneur	Stone Quarry Business Owner	15	Mining	35
12	IDI	Entrepreneur	Sustainable Furniture Designer	9	Furniture Manufacturing	40
13	IDI	Entrepreneur	Eco-friendly Packaging Producer	8	Packaging	45
14	IDI	Entrepreneur	Fair Trade Artisan Exporter	13	Handicrafts	40
15	IDI	Entrepreneur	Urban Organic Farm Owner	5	Urban Farming	30
16	IDI	Entrepreneur	Cultural Heritage Tour Operator	10	Tourism	40
17	IDI	Entrepreneur	Local Argo-products Distributor	7	Agriculture	50
18	IDI	Entrepreneur	Stone Artifacts Producer	6	Handicrafts	35
19	IDI	Entrepreneur	Renewable Energy Innovator	9	Renewable Energy	40
20	IDI	Entrepreneur	Eco-friendly product Producer	14	Eco-friendly Product Development	40
21	IDI	Entrepreneur	Green Building Material Supplier	12	Construction	45
22	IDI	Entrepreneur	Local Cuisine Specialist	8	Culinary Tourism	40

Interview No.	Interview Type	Stakeholder Type	Designation of Respondent	Years of Experience	Sector/ Field	Interview Duration (Minutes)
23	IDI	Entrepreneur	Hill Farming Specialist	6	Agriculture	50
24	IDI	Entrepreneur	Eco-friendly Transport Provider	7	Transportation	35
25	IDI	Entrepreneur	Tea Producer	10	Tea Industry	40
26	KII	Environmental Expert	Director, Environmental NGO	18	Environmental Conservation	60
27	KII	Community Leader	President, Local Tourism Association	15	Eco-tourism Development	55
28	KII	Academic	Professor of Sustainable Development	20	Education and Policy Development	50
29	KII	Government Official	Deputy Director, Sylhet Tourism Board	12	Tourism Policy and Regulation	45
30	KII	NGO Representative	Project Manager, Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative	10	Community and Rural Development	50

Source: Author's field data (2025)

5. Results and Discussions

The data were subsequently categorized using an inductive methodology, wherein codes were derived directly from the data instead of relying on predetermined categories. The preliminary codes were developed by emphasizing remarks from the interview transcripts pertinent to essential themes, like financial constraints, knowledge deficiencies, regulatory ambiguities, and others. The first codes were categorized according to their similarity and pertinence to the study issues. After the preliminary coding, the researchers categorized analogous codes into overarching themes. This technique entailed discerning trends across several interviews and finding recurrent concerns regularly articulated by the participants. The nascent concepts were re-examined and enhanced by a method of continual comparison. This entailed evaluating the themes to ensure they were unique, thorough, and appropriately reflected the obtained data.

5.1 Monetary Limitations and Funding Issues

Financial limitations and finance obstacles appeared as significant impediments to the implementation of environmentally sustainable practices among enterprises in Sylhet (Chowdhury et al., 2018). The restricted access to financing and the significant upfront expenses associated with sustainable investments hinder several enterprises from adopting ecologically friendly practices.

Sustainable efforts need long-term investment; yet, funding alternatives frequently emphasize short-term rewards, resulting in limited feasible financing possibilities. The intricate application procedures and elevated financing rates impede access, becoming a significant obstacle to sustainability- oriented growth. In the absence of patient capital or focused assistance, sustainable entrepreneurship remains financially inaccessible for most individuals (Interview NO 01, 02).

In Sylhet, Bangladesh, emerging entrepreneurs encounter significant obstacles in obtaining start-up capital due to inadequate personal savings, elevated interest rates, and the hesitance of banking institutions to extend loans owing to substantial default risks. Access to public finances and fiscal incentives a firm's ability for eco-innovation, especially when both internal and external financing sources are substantial. Furthermore, receptiveness to change, self-improvement, and self-transcendence significantly affect problem awareness, which propels social entrepreneurship goals in Bangladesh (Fazal et al., 2023).

The results indicate critical policy implications for promoting sustainable entrepreneurship in Sylhet, highlighting the necessity for specific financial assistance, including low-interest loans and access to public funding for young entrepreneurs. Augmenting economic incentives for eco-innovation can substantially enhance enterprises' competencies in sustainable practices. Moreover, cultivating entrepreneurial characteristics that enhance problem awareness, such as adaptability, might further stimulate social entrepreneurship, thereby advancing larger sustainable development objectives.

5.2 Awareness and Education Gaps

The research highlights substantial deficiencies in awareness and education as primary obstacles impeding the implementation of sustainable entrepreneurial techniques in Sylhet. Restricted access to specialized education and awareness initiatives hinders entrepreneurs' comprehension of sustainable practices and the advantages of eco-innovation. Rectifying these deficiencies is essential for cultivating an informed entrepreneurial community that aligns with sustainable development objectives.

A significant number of individuals within the business sector lack access to dependable information on sustainable practices, so they constrained their capacity to make educated decisions that correspond with environmental objectives. Training programs focused on eco-innovation are few, and when available, they are sometimes inaccessible or prohibitively expensive for small company proprietors. In the absence of adequate direction and tools, the adoption of sustainable practices appears daunting, resulting in missed chances to include eco-friendly methods that might advantage both our enterprises and the community. The absence of fundamental information hinders our capacity to stay abreast of global sustainability trends, placing us at a disadvantage in a swiftly evolving industry (Interview NO 03, 04 & 05).

Environmental education in Bangladesh presently lacks the necessary depth to substantially impact students' actions, hence hindering the attainment of sustainable development. Research indicates that environmental values and perceived behavioral control are crucial in influencing sustainable entrepreneurial ambitions. In the Bangladeshi RMG industry, environmentally sustainable business methods can yield competitive benefits and enhance sustainability. Moreover, consumer environmental apprehensions and favorable dispositions increase the propensity to acquire organic cotton apparel, while green entrepreneurship, bolstered by environmental principles and education, cultivates a positive perspective on sustainability among young adults (Uddin, 2023; Yasir et al., 2023; Sarkar et al., 2020; M. M. Hasan et al., 2022; Nuringsih & Mn, 2021).

The study's findings highlight the necessity of enhancing environmental education in Bangladesh to promote increased public knowledge and behavioral transformation about sustainability. Improved educational programs might foster environmentally aware customers, therefore bolstering markets for eco-friendly products and promoting sustainable entrepreneurship. Moreover, specific policy interventions, such as incentives for environmentally friendly corporate practices, may provide competitive advantages in sectors like ready-made garments, therefore advancing overarching sustainable development goals.

5.3 Complexity of Supply Chains

The research identified supply chain complexity as a major obstacle to the adoption of sustainable practices among SMEs in Sylhet. Effectively managing eco-friendly supply chains necessitates intricate coordination and transparency among many suppliers and partners, a challenge that many small firms find difficult to overcome. This intricacy obstructs the efficient implementation of green practices, constraining the scalability of sustainable businesses.

Sustainable procurement necessitates collaboration with many suppliers, many of which frequently lack the infrastructure or transparency essential for supporting environmentally friendly activities. Monitoring materials, guaranteeing ethical procurement, and upholding ecologically sustainable standards across the supply chain are resource-intensive and expensive, particularly for smaller enterprises such as ours. Collaborating with suppliers who do not emphasize sustainability complicates the establishment of a dependable, environmentally responsible supply chain. This intricacy hinders our progress and increases expenses, constraining our capacity for sustainable scaling (Interview No. 06, 07 & 08).

In Bangladesh's timber sector, research and development, supplier relationships, and sustainable technologies are crucial for attaining supply chain sustainability. Nevertheless, inadequate customer demand, financial limitations, and insufficient governmental regulation are significant obstacles to the implementation of green supply chain techniques. In the textile industry, a green entrepreneurial mindset improves supply chain sustainability, hence benefiting business performance. However, intricate supply networks, compromised by inadequate infrastructure, disjointed logistics, and corruption, impede MSMEs' transition to sustainable models. Furthermore, whereas supply chain relational capital indirectly facilitates sustainability via governance, its efficacy wanes in extremely intricate networks (Paul et al., 2022; Tumpa et al., 2019; (Habib et al., 2020).

Emphasizing investment in research and development, supplier collaboration, and environmentally sustainable technology might substantially enhance sustainable practices. Moreover, stimulating green demand by specific government policies and rectifying infrastructural inefficiencies will enable MSMEs to manage intricate supply chains more efficiently. Implementing sophisticated governance frameworks may enhance the beneficial effects of relational capital, even across complex networks, hence fostering a robust and sustainable supply chain ecosystem.

5.4. Regulatory Uncertainty and Inefficient Support

Regulatory ambiguity, coupled with inadequate institutional assistance, constitutes a significant obstacle to sustainable business in Sylhet. Ambiguities in regulation, uneven enforcement, and little government support create a tough environment for sustainable business operations. This combined problem not only discourages investment but also jeopardizes the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of development projects.

The ambiguity of regulations and the absence of enabling infrastructure to render our endeavor exceedingly challenging. Initially, rules on environmentally sustainable practices are ambiguous and inconsistent; we frequently lack clarity on which regulations pertain to our enterprises, and when we request elucidation, replies from authorities are sluggish or conflicting. This ambiguity hinders our ability to formulate long-term strategies and significantly increases the risk associated with our investments in sustainable practices (Interview No. 09 and 10).

Numerous studies highlight the adverse impacts of regulatory ambiguity and inadequate assistance on environmentally sustainable business in Bangladesh. Research indicates that inconsistent policy directions and confusing laws deter entrepreneurs from investing in sustainable practices due to a lack of confidence in regulatory stability. Moreover, insufficient governmental support—evidenced by restricted access to green financing, convoluted bureaucratic procedures, and lax enforcement of environmental regulations—impedes the scalability of sustainable enterprises (Kulsum & Huda, 2017; Guang-Wen & Siddik, 2022; Rupa & Saif, 2021). The results indicate that in the absence of simplified rules, explicit regulatory guidance, and accessible governmental backing, sustainable entrepreneurship may face challenges in attaining scalability and enduring sustainability. Confronting these problems is crucial for cultivating an atmosphere that promotes sustainable practices while aligning with Bangladesh's overarching environmental and economic development objectives.

5.5 Consumer Understanding and Market Demand

The limited consumer knowledge of sustainable products, along with ambiguous demand for eco-friendly alternatives, hampers corporate success in this segment. The deficiency in customer interaction hinders the potential expansion of sustainable enterprises, affecting their market viability and enduring success.

We encounter significant obstacles stemming from inadequate customer comprehension and erratic market demand for sustainable products. A significant number of consumers remain uninformed about the advantages and availability of eco-friendly alternatives, complicating our ability to rationalize the elevated costs associated with sustainable production. For instance, one of us invested in biodegradable packaging; nonetheless, clients frequently overlook the extra value, concentrating just on price. The demand for sustainable products is erratic, varying with trends instead of indicating a solid market (Interview No. 11 and 12).

Research on Bangladeshi consumers indicates that environmental awareness, favorable perceptions of eco-friendly products, and a belief in consumer efficacy are crucial in promoting sustainable consumption and green purchasing choices. Consumer inclinations towards organic and eco-friendly items, such as organic cotton and jute, indicate an increasing readiness to buy responsibly when authenticity and style coincide with environmental principles. Comprehending these behavioral factors is crucial for effective green marketing strategies, as they underscore the importance of awareness, consumer attitudes, and perceived advantages in fostering sustainable consumption in Bangladesh (M. M. Islam & Xiaoying, 2016; Karmokar et al., 2021; Nekmahmud & Fekete-Farkas, 2020; Lotfi et al., 2018).

The study's results on customer attitudes and environmental issues highlight essential insights for enhancing green marketing tactics in Bangladesh. By comprehending the determinants of sustainable consumption—such as perceived efficacy, authenticity, and awareness—marketers may more effectively customize eco-friendly products to satisfy customer demand. This linkage promotes the market viability of green products and helps larger environmental objectives by promoting responsible consumer habits.

5.6 Community and Cultural Norms

Established traditions and local customs frequently hinder the adoption of sustainable practices, while community expectations may occasionally contradict environmental business goals. Cultural hurdles hinder the adoption and integration of eco-friendly projects, adversely affecting the development of sustainable enterprise in the region.

Navigating community and cultural norms presents ongoing hurdles. Numerous local cultures exhibit resistance to change, complicating the introduction of sustainable products and behaviors that are new or deemed superfluous. For instance, one individual implemented reusable packaging; nonetheless, community members frequently favored conventional single-use alternatives, perceiving them as handier and more familiar. In our communities, there is frequently a pronounced focus on preserving family-operated enterprises and traditional methodologies, which might render innovation in sustainable practices seemingly disruptive (Interview No. 13, 14 & 15).

Research on sustainable business in Bangladesh indicates that cultural norms, such as risk aversion and familial dynamics, both facilitate and hinder eco-friendly activities in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Indigenous culture and local resources significantly influence entrepreneurship; nonetheless, a disparity persists between environmental aspirations and the practical execution of sustainable goods. Research indicates that cultural tourism and social entrepreneurship enhance environmental sustainability by promoting social value and cross-cultural comprehension.

Identifying these cultural factors is crucial for reconciling environmental aspirations with realistic implementations in sustainable enterprise (Emon & Khan, 2023; Gobena & Kant, 2022; Li et al., 2022). By comprehending the influence of risk aversion, familial dynamics, and indigenous customs on entrepreneurial choices, governments and enterprises may formulate strategies that align with community values. This cultural connection promotes the adoption and efficacy of sustainable practices while fostering broader socio-economic development in accordance with environmental objectives in Bangladesh.

5.7 Human Resource and Training

Numerous enterprises face challenges due to a deficiency of qualified workers and inadequate training programs designed for sustainable practices, constraining their development potential. The skills gap hinders the successful execution of eco-friendly activities, obstructing the advancement of sustainable enterprise.

We consistently encounter issues related to human resources and training that impede our progress. Qualified professionals proficient in sustainable practices are scarce, resulting in the frequent hiring of individuals with insufficient skill in sustainability. Efforts to enhance our teams' skills are hindered by a lack of inexpensive and accessible training programs, with most available resources failing to meet the distinct requirements of green entrepreneurship. Due to the absence of local programs providing this knowledge, we were compelled to depend on expensive foreign trainers or online courses (Interview No. 16, 17 & 18).

Investigations into sustainable jute micro-enterprises in Bangladesh reveal considerable obstacles, such as a deficiency of skilled workers, elevated labor expenses, and insufficient financial and resource assistance. Research demonstrates that stringent restrictions, ongoing monitoring, and thorough training programs, in conjunction with financial incentives, are crucial for the effective execution of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices. In industries such as ready-made clothes, the incorporation of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) through systematic supervision, education, and incentives may cultivate a more sustainable workforce, highlighting the significance of institutional backing and skill enhancement in promoting green entrepreneurship (M. M. Islam & Xiaoying, 2019; M. A. Islam et al., 2019; Azad et al., 2022b).

The results underscore the necessity for specific legislative frameworks, training initiatives, and financial incentives to promote environmentally sustainable practices in Bangladesh's micro-enterprises and textile industries. Mitigating labor shortages, skill deficiencies, and financial limitations using Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) might substantially improve sustainability results. This strategy enhances the capabilities of sustainable firms while aligning industry practices with national environmental objectives, so fostering a robust green economy.

5.8 Inadequate Infrastructure and Policy Coordination

Restricted access to vital amenities, like dependable transportation and energy supplies, impedes operating efficiency for environmentally sustainable enterprises. Moreover, disjointed rules and inadequate coordination among regulatory agencies impede the efficient execution of sustainable practices, thus affecting overall business growth.

We encounter significant obstacles stemming from insufficient infrastructure and poor policy cooperation. Fundamental resources such as dependable transportation and energy are frequently inadequate, hindering the maintenance of operational efficiency and the fulfillment of eco-friendly business model requirements. One, for instance, contends with recurrent power outages, which impair manufacturing timelines and elevate expenses. Inconsistent regulations and little cooperation among regulatory bodies complicate our efforts (Interview No. 19, 20 and 21).

Research on entrepreneurship in Bangladesh identifies significant obstacles, such as inadequate governmental backing, poor human capital development, and a constrained entrepreneurial attitude among the underprivileged population. Cooperative investment policies and governmental action plans may stimulate savings and investments among low-income demographics; nevertheless, impediments such as regulatory hurdles, insufficient higher education, and a lack of social support hinder entrepreneurial development. While marketing activities assist small-scale entrepreneurs, rivalry from bigger sectors and erratic government backing impede their effectiveness, highlighting the necessity for specific policies and educational frameworks to cultivate an inclusive entrepreneurial environment (Sarkar, Rabby, et al., 2020; Alam et al., 2019; Sadekin, 2023).

The study's findings underscore the essential requirement for comprehensive legislative frameworks, focused educational assistance, and community-oriented investment strategies to promote entrepreneurship among marginalized people in Bangladesh. Mitigating regulatory obstacles and enhancing human capital development can boost small-scale enterprises, therefore advancing economic inclusion and alleviating poverty. This strategy corresponds with overarching national objectives, indicating that synchronized governmental and institutional efforts might substantially enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem and promote sustainable economic growth.

5.9 Weak Organization, Corruption and Poor Enforcement of Laws

Fragile organizational frameworks, pervasive corruption, and inadequate law enforcement are significant obstacles to sustained enterprise in Sylhet. These problems diminish company efficiency, foster distrust among entrepreneurs, and let unethical actions proliferate unrestrained. The expansion of eco-friendly firms is limited in the absence of robust institutions and clear enforcement mechanisms.

We often confront the widespread problems of inadequate organizational frameworks, corruption, and ineffective law enforcement. Corruption engenders considerable obstacles; one individual recently had to maneuver through many unauthorized payments only to secure a fundamental operational permission, depleting resources and morale. Inadequate organizational structures result in a lack of dependable support and explicit direction, rendering company operations needlessly convoluted and susceptible to manipulation. Inadequate enforcement of legislation allows unscrupulous rivals to operate without repercussions, granting them an unfair edge while we strive to adhere to environmental and regulatory norms (Interview No. 22, 23, 24 & 25).

Studies demonstrate that political instability, corruption, and insufficient infrastructure pose substantial obstacles to the growth of SMEs and sustainable business in Bangladesh. Corruption undermines faith in market and governmental institutions, diminishes innovation, and obstructs effective economic cooperation. Inadequate governance and insufficient law enforcement further undermine Bangladesh's resistance to climate change and restrict its adaptive potential. Specific policy interventions aimed at improving governance, enforcing the rule of law, and upgrading infrastructure are crucial for cultivating a stable climate conducive to entrepreneurship, hence bolstering future growth and economic resilience (M. S. Chowdhury, 2007; Anokhin & Schulze, 2009; M. A. Rahman, 2018; Barai, 2020).

The report emphasizes the essential requirement for substantial governance reforms, efficient law enforcement, and infrastructure enhancement to create a favorable climate for entrepreneurship in Bangladesh. By combating corruption and fortifying institutional frameworks, the nation can augment creativity and resilience, especially regarding climate change issues. The findings indicate that targeted policy interventions are essential for realizing the whole potential of SMEs, fostering sustainable economic growth, and guaranteeing long-term development.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study underscores the considerable obstacles encountered by entrepreneurs in Sylhet in their efforts to adopt eco-friendly practices. The outcomes suggest using financial incentives, like low-interest loans and tax reductions to promote and adopt sustainable practices among small enterprises. Furthermore, capacity-building initiatives must be implemented to provide entrepreneurs with the requisite knowledge and skills for eco-innovation. Ultimately, policy improvements are essential to diminish regulatory ambiguity and improve enforcement, so fostering a more conducive atmosphere for sustainable business. These initiatives will assist individual enterprises and also advance the overarching objectives of sustainable development in Bangladesh.

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