

Effect on Attitude Towards Sustainable Entrepreneurship, Green Entrepreneurial Motivation and Ecological Awareness on Sustainable Entrepreneurial Intention

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Abstract

Sustainability is increasingly recognized as a vital aspect of entrepreneurship, drawing focus to the attitudinal and motivational factors that influence environmentally responsible business intentions. This study explores the impact of attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurial motivation, and ecological awareness on the sustainable entrepreneurial intention of women entrepreneurs in Kodagu district. A quantitative approach was employed, using survey data collected from 458 participants through a structured questionnaire. The instrument consisted of three items measuring attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship, four items on green entrepreneurial motivation, three items on ecological awareness, and seven items on sustainable entrepreneurial intention, all rated on a Likert-type scale. Data collection was based on convenience sampling, and statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS version 23. Reliability testing showed satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70. Regression analysis revealed that both attitude and green entrepreneurial motivation exert significant positive effects on sustainable entrepreneurial intention, while ecological awareness did not demonstrate statistical significance. These outcomes highlight the stronger role of psychological and motivational elements compared to awareness alone in predicting sustainability-driven entrepreneurial behaviour, lending support to the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The study provides practical insights for policymakers, educators, and support institutions to enhance favourable attitudes and motivations among potential entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Attitude Towards Sustainable Entrepreneurship; Green Entrepreneurial Motivation and Ecological Awareness on Sustainable Entrepreneurial Intention.

1. Introduction

Sustainable entrepreneurship integrates opportunity pursuit with explicit, measurable social and environmental value creation alongside economic outcomes, extending classic intention models by embedding sustainability-related beliefs and norms into entrepreneurial cognition (Vuorio, Puumalainen, & Fellnhofer, 2018). Conceptually, sustainable entrepreneurial intention (SEI) adapts the theory of planned behavior: attitudes toward sustainable venturing, perceived social expectations about sustainability, and perceived control over eco-inclusive action co-determine intention (Vuorio 2018). Recent springboard studies show that pro-environmental values and solidarity orientations shape these proximal cognitions, thereby channeling opportunity recognition toward sustainability goals (Giménez-Jiménez & Harc, 2024). Emerging evidence also indicates that ecological awareness, individuals' knowledge of and concern for environmental problems, heightens the perceived desirability and feasibility of founding sustainability-oriented ventures. Meta-analytic synthesis further demonstrates that sustainability-related values and attitudes are robust, cross-context correlates of intention, suggesting that SEI is neither episodic nor niche but a generalizable feature of contemporary entrepreneurial decision-making (Zhang, Atienza-Barba, & Lechuga-Sancho, 2024). Empirically, the field has scaled quickly: a decade-wide review identified 363 peer-reviewed articles on sustainable entrepreneurship, evidencing a sharp global research uptick (Patel & Mehta, 2024). A recent meta-analysis covering 37 independent studies and 192,015 observations reports consistent, medium-sized links between sustainability-oriented values/attitudes and SEI across regions and methods (Zhang et al., 2024). Within India, Springer-published work documents intensified sustainability adoption among SMEs, particularly around green innovation, signaling an expanding domestic opportunity set for sustainability-driven new ventures (Goswami, Alagh, Adnan, & Pokhriyal, 2025). Turning to determinants, SEI reflects a constellation of motivational, attitudinal, and awareness-based factors. First, the attitude toward sustainable entrepreneurship, the evaluative stance that founding a venture can jointly create ecological, social, and economic value, is a consistent, positive predictor of intention, mirroring the attitude intention pathway established in entrepreneurial cognition and validated in sustainability contexts (Vuorio et al., 2018; Zhang, 2024). Second, green entrepreneurial motivation, intrinsic motives to address ecological challenges and advance pro-social impact channels values into goal-directed commitment, strengthening the

intention to act sustainably (Giménez-Jiménez & Hanc, 2024; Singh, Gupta, & Varma, 2023). Third, ecological awareness elevates perceived opportunity attractiveness and efficacy beliefs for sustainability-oriented ventures, with recent cross-national evidence showing stronger intention when environmental concern and knowledge are salient (Atienza-Barba et al., 2025). Beyond these focal drivers, complementary antecedents including perceived behavioral control, institutional and educational supports, and risk/value mediations further reinforce SEI's formation, underscoring the multi-level nature of sustainable venturing decisions (Giménez-Jiménez & Hanc, 2024; Chishty, 2025).

Sustainable entrepreneurial intention (SEI) has emerged as a central construct in advancing environmentally responsible venture creation, yet empirical evidence on its antecedents remains fragmented across contexts (Zhang, Atienza-Barba, & Lechuga-Sancho, 2024). While attitude toward sustainable entrepreneurship has been validated as a key predictor of SEI, existing studies predominantly examine student samples in Europe and Latin America, limiting transferability to emerging economies like India, where sustainability challenges are acute (Vuorio, Puimalainen, & Fellnhöfer, 2018; Giménez-Jiménez & Hanc, 2024). Similarly, green entrepreneurial motivation representing intrinsic drives to address ecological problems has been shown to influence intention, but evidence remains sparse and inconsistent in developing-country contexts, where institutional and socio-cultural dynamics may reshape motivational pathways (Singh, Gupta, & Varma, 2023). Moreover, ecological awareness is increasingly recognized as a value-laden antecedent that fosters sustainable entrepreneurial desirability, yet gender, discipline, and cultural moderators complicate its effects, requiring further cross-contextual validation (Atienza-Barba, Bustamante-da Silva, & Lechuga-Sancho, 2025). Collectively, these gaps highlight the need for integrative research that simultaneously assesses attitude, motivation, and ecological awareness in shaping SEI, particularly within India's evolving entrepreneurial ecosystem, to extend theoretical models and inform policy interventions targeting sustainability-driven enterprise development (Goswami, Alagh, Adnan, & Pokhriyal, 2025). The objective of the study is to examine the effect of attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurial motivation, and ecological awareness on sustainable entrepreneurial intention.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship

Attitude toward sustainable entrepreneurship refers to an individual's evaluative disposition, favourable or unfavourable, toward founding ventures that intentionally integrate economic viability with social and environmental value creation, typically theorized within the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Wu, Chen, & He, 2022). In recent work disaggregating "attitude" into general attitudes toward sustainability and domain-specific attitudes toward sustainable entrepreneurship, scholars demonstrate that these appraisals are distinct yet interactively shape pro-sustainability action pathways that influence entrepreneurial choice (Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023). A growing body of research reports that more positive attitudes toward sustainable entrepreneurship are consistently associated with stronger sustainable entrepreneurial intention (SEI), particularly among university students and early-career entrepreneurs (Khan, Shah, & Yasir, 2021). In emerging economies, studies further observe that favorable sustainable-entrepreneurship attitudes often fostered through sustainability education, cultural values, and environmental awareness significantly elevate SEI outcomes (Popescu & Popescu, 2022). Extending TPB, evidence from Latin American contexts confirms that traditional predictors, attitude, perceived behavioural control (PBC), and subjective norms jointly explain SEI, with attitude playing a significant role (Alwakid, Aparicio, & Urbano, 2021). Complementing these findings, research linking sustainable values and cultural orientations to SEI underscores that attitudinal mechanisms remain central within intention formation across diverse ecosystems (Kummitha, 2022). However, not all studies position attitude as the dominant driver: recent comparative analyses in Business Strategy and the Environment reveal contexts where SEI is more strongly influenced by social norms and perceived control beliefs, with attitude playing a comparatively weaker role (García-Villaverde, Elche, Martínez-Pastor, & Ruiz-Ortega, 2021). Meta-analytic and multi-country syntheses also indicate that the strength of the attitude SEI link varies depending on contextual moderators such as resource availability, cultural norms, and institutional support, highlighting boundary conditions on attitudinal influence (Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023). Collectively, the literature provides strong support for a positive attitude–SEI relationship while acknowledging that its magnitude is contingent upon contextual and ecosystem factors (Wu 2022). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is formed.

H₁: Attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship significantly affects the sustainable entrepreneurial intention

2.2. Green entrepreneurial motivation

Green entrepreneurial motivation denotes the cluster of intrinsic (e.g., ecological concern, prosocial values) and extrinsic (e.g., market opportunity, financial reward) motives driving individuals to consider founding ventures with explicit environmental goals (Khan, Shah, & Yasir, 2021). Empirical research grounded in Self-Determination Theory and TPB reports that intrinsic green motives such as personal fulfillment, environmental passion, and value congruence consistently strengthen Sustainable Entrepreneurial Intention (SEI) by enhancing perceived desirability and commitment (Wu, Chen, & He, 2022). Several large student-sample studies in emerging economies reveal that green motivation both directly predicts SEI and operates indirectly through attitude and perceived behavioral control, indicating clear mediation pathways (Popescu & Popescu, 2022). Complementary evidence from Discover Sustainability (Springer) shows that entrepreneurship education and university-provided green cues amplify the effect of intrinsic motives on SEI, effectively converting values into actionable intention (Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023). However, the literature also records qualified or contradictory findings: in contexts where extrinsic, reward-oriented work values dominate, green motivation can be attenuated or even negatively associated with SEI, suggesting underlying value conflicts and measurement heterogeneity (Alwakid, Aparicio, & Urbano, 2021). Finally, cross-national and recent meta-analytic syntheses underscore the role of important moderators such as institutional support, cultural norms, and educational exposure—concluding that green entrepreneurial motivation typically promotes SEI, but its magnitude and direction vary depending on contextual boundary conditions (García-Villaverde, Elche, Martínez-Pastor, & Ruiz-Ortega, 2021).

H₂: Green entrepreneurial motivation significantly affects the sustainable entrepreneurial intention

2.3. Ecological awareness

Ecological awareness denotes an individual's knowledge of, sensitivity to, and concern about ecological systems and environmental problems, combined with an informed appreciation of how human activities impact natural resources (Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023). Within the sustainable entrepreneurship literature, ecological awareness or environmental concern is frequently treated as a value-laden antecedent

that elevates the perceived desirability of eco-oriented ventures, thereby fostering Sustainable Entrepreneurial Intention (SEI) (Popescu & Popescu, 2022). Large-scale SEM studies using student samples report significant positive direct effects of environmental concern on eco-entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta \approx .62$), often with mediators such as self-efficacy or belief in nature-based solutions transmitting that influence (Khan, Shah, & Yasir, 2021). Cross-national and sectoral analyses further indicate that region-level increases in environmental awareness correlate with higher rates of green firm formation, suggesting a macro-level signaling effect in which public ecological concern informs opportunity recognition among entrepreneurs (García-Villaverde, Elche, Martínez-Pastor, & Ruiz-Ortega, 2021). Complementary integrated models identify that ecological awareness exerts an indirect effect on SEI via attitudes and perceived behavioral control, with educational exposure and supportive entrepreneurial ecosystems strengthening these pathways (Kummitha, 2022). Nevertheless, contrasting findings reveal that ecological awareness, while necessary, is not always sufficient: in some contexts, social norms, availability of resources, or strong outcome expectations overshadow awareness and may render its statistical effect weaker or even non-significant (Alwakid, Aparicio, & Urbano, 2021). Taken together, these high-quality studies demonstrate a generally positive ecological-awareness \rightarrow SEI relationship that is robust but contingent upon mediators (e.g., attitudes, self-efficacy) and contextual moderators like institutional support, norms, and resource availability (Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023).

H₃: Ecological awareness significantly affects the sustainable entrepreneurial intention

3. Methods

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate how attitudes towards sustainable entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurial motivation, and ecological awareness influence sustainable entrepreneurial intention. The research was carried out in Kodagu district, focusing exclusively on women entrepreneurs. A total of 458 participants were selected through a convenience sampling technique, chosen for its practicality and ease of reaching the target group within the given time and resource constraints.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed to capture the core constructs of the study. The instrument consisted of three items assessing attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship, four items measuring green entrepreneurial motivation, three items focusing on ecological awareness, and seven items evaluating sustainable entrepreneurial intention. Responses were recorded on a Likert-type scale, ensuring comparability and consistency across participants.

Once collected, the data were systematically coded and processed using SPSS version 23. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of respondents and examine the overall data distribution. Reliability analysis was conducted to confirm the internal consistency of the measurement scales. Further, regression analysis was applied to determine the predictive influence of the independent variables on sustainable entrepreneurial intention.

4. Analysis

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

SI No.	Scale	Items	α
1	Attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship	3	0.828
2	Green Entrepreneurial Motivation	4	0.862
3	Ecological Awareness	3	0.742
4	Sustainable Entrepreneurship Intention	7	0.827

Source: Primary data.

The reliability analysis presented in Table No. 1 shows that all the constructs used in the study demonstrate acceptable to high internal consistency, as indicated by Cronbach's alpha (α) values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship ($\alpha = 0.828$), green entrepreneurial motivation ($\alpha = 0.862$), and sustainable entrepreneurial intention ($\alpha = 0.827$) exhibit strong reliability, indicating that the items effectively capture the respective constructs. Ecological awareness also reflects satisfactory reliability ($\alpha = 0.742$), confirming its suitability for further analysis. These results establish that the measurement scales are both consistent and reliable for examining the proposed objectives.

Table 2: a) Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.502 ^a	.252	.248	4.31260

a. Predictors: (Constant), Attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship, Ecological awareness, Green entrepreneurial motivation

Source: Primary data.

Table No. 2a presents the model summary, where the R value of 0.502 indicates a moderate positive relationship between the predictors—attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship, ecological awareness, and green entrepreneurial motivation—and sustainable entrepreneurial intention. The R-squared value of 0.252 reveals that approximately 25.2% of the variance in sustainable entrepreneurial intention is explained by the independent variables. The adjusted R-squared of 0.248 confirms the model's reliability with minimal shrinkage, ensuring its suitability for generalization. The standard error of the estimate, 4.31260, shows an acceptable level of variability, indicating that the model provides a reasonably good fit for prediction.

Table 2: B) Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3815.939	3	1271.980	68.391	.000 ^b
	Residual	11326.501	609	18.599		
	Total	15142.440	612			

a. Dependent Variable: SEI

b. Predictors: (Constant), ASE, EA, GEM

Source: Primary data.

Table No. 2b indicates that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 68.391$, $p < 0.001$). Attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship, ecological awareness, and green entrepreneurial motivation collectively explain a meaningful variance in sustainable entrepreneurial intention, confirming the predictors' strong contribution and the model's overall validity.

Table 2: c) Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	10.240	2.193		4.670	.000
	EA	.145	.093	.057	1.550	.122
	GEM	.532	.085	.245	6.272	.000
	ASE	.280	.031	.337	8.959	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable entrepreneurial intention

Source: Primary data.

Table No. 2c explains how ecological awareness, green entrepreneurial motivation, and attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship individually influence sustainable entrepreneurial intention. The findings clearly show that attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship and green entrepreneurial motivation significantly shape entrepreneurial intention, while ecological awareness does not have a meaningful effect.

Attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship emerges as the strongest predictor, indicating that individuals who hold positive beliefs about sustainability-oriented business practices are more likely to develop intentions to engage in such ventures. When sustainability is viewed as valuable and achievable, it encourages entrepreneurs to align their business goals with environmental responsibility. This finding supports Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, which emphasizes attitude as a key driver of behavioral intention, and is consistent with studies highlighting the influence of pro-sustainability attitudes on entrepreneurial decision-making (Kuckertz & Wagner, 2010; Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011).

Green entrepreneurial motivation also plays a significant role, suggesting that individuals driven by ecological concern and a sense of environmental responsibility are more inclined to pursue sustainable ventures. Motivation acts as an internal force that transforms sustainability values into entrepreneurial intention, supporting earlier research on sustainable entrepreneurial orientation (Bacq & Alt, 2018; Hall, 2010).

In contrast, ecological awareness alone does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intention. Although individuals may be aware of environmental issues, awareness without supportive attitudes and motivation may not lead to action (Sharma & Gupta, 2020). Differences from earlier findings (Muralidharan & Pathak, 2018) may reflect contextual variations. Overall, the results highlight that attitudes and motivation are more influential than awareness in shaping sustainable entrepreneurial intention.

5. Discussion

This study explored how attitudes towards sustainable entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurial motivation, and ecological awareness influence sustainable entrepreneurial intention. The findings clearly show that psychological and motivational factors play a more decisive role than mere awareness in shaping sustainability-oriented entrepreneurial intentions (Khan 2021, Popescu & Popescu, 2022; Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023).

The intended constructs provide a reliable basis for further statistical analysis (Hair, 2020). The regression results reveal that the model explains 25.2% of the variance in sustainable entrepreneurial intention. In the context of entrepreneurship research, where intentions are shaped by a combination of personal, social, and institutional influences, this level of explanatory power is considered meaningful (Krueger 2020; Alwakid 2021). The significant F-value further confirms that the selected variables jointly contribute to predicting sustainable entrepreneurial intention.

Among the independent variables, attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship emerged as the strongest predictor. This suggests that individuals who perceive sustainability-oriented business practices positively are more inclined to pursue entrepreneurial activities that integrate environmental responsibility. This finding aligns well with the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which emphasizes attitude as a key determinant of intention (Alwakid 2021; Wu 2022). It also reinforces earlier studies that highlight the importance of positive sustainability attitudes in encouraging environmentally responsible entrepreneurial behaviour (Popescu & Popescu, 2022; Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023).

Green entrepreneurial motivation was also found to significantly influence sustainable entrepreneurial intention. This indicates that individuals motivated by environmental concern, ethical responsibility, and the desire to create positive societal impact are more likely to translate sustainability values into entrepreneurial goals. Motivation appears to act as a driving force that transforms favourable attitudes into concrete entrepreneurial intentions, a finding that is consistent with prior research on green and sustainable entrepreneurship (Khan 2021; Wu, 2022; Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023).

Ecological awareness, however, did not show a statistically significant effect on sustainable entrepreneurial intention. Although respondents may be well informed about environmental issues, awareness alone may not be sufficient to stimulate entrepreneurial intent. From a theoretical perspective, ecological awareness can be viewed as a foundational cognitive factor that supports intention indirectly rather than directly. Without supportive attitudes, strong motivation, and confidence in one's ability to act, awareness may remain passive (Alwakid 2021; García-Villaverde 2021). This supports existing literature suggesting that knowledge does not automatically lead to behaviour change unless reinforced by psychological and contextual factors (Sharma & Gupta, 2020; Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023).

The non-significant effect of ecological awareness may also reflect certain limitations of the study. The model does not account for other potentially influential variables such as perceived feasibility, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, social norms, institutional support, or access to resources. These factors may mediate or moderate the relationship between awareness and entrepreneurial intention, as highlighted in recent sustainable entrepreneurship studies (Alwakid 2021; García-Villaverde 2021; Kummitha, 2022). In addition, the study relies on cross-sectional data from a specific population, which may limit the generalizability of the findings across different regions or contexts (Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023).

Overall, the findings suggest that sustainable entrepreneurial intention is shaped more by how individuals think and feel about sustainability than by what they know alone. This highlights the need for interventions that focus on mindset development and motivation, rather than relying solely on awareness-building efforts (Popescu & Popescu, 2022; Kummitha, 2022; Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2023).

6. Conclusion

The study examined the influence of attitude towards sustainable entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurial motivation, and ecological awareness on sustainable entrepreneurial intention. The results show that attitude and green entrepreneurial motivation play a significant role in shaping entrepreneurial intentions, while ecological awareness, although important, does not directly influence intention. This indicates that awareness of environmental issues must be supported by positive attitudes and strong intrinsic motivation to encourage sustainable entrepreneurial behaviour.

These findings underline the importance of psychological drivers in sustainability-oriented entrepreneurship and support the relevance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour in explaining entrepreneurial intentions within a sustainability context. They also align with the discussion, which suggests that ecological awareness alone may remain passive unless reinforced by favourable attitudes and motivational factors. From a practical standpoint, the study suggests that universities, policymakers, and entrepreneurship support institutions should move beyond information-based approaches and focus on fostering positive attitudes, motivation, and experiential learning related to sustainable entrepreneurship.

Future research could examine the indirect role of ecological awareness by incorporating mediating or moderating variables such as self-efficacy, social norms, and institutional support. Longitudinal studies may also provide deeper insight into how awareness, attitudes, and motivation evolve to influence actual entrepreneurial behaviour.

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