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ROLE OF GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN DHARMAPURI DISTRICT

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Abstract: The significant rise in global consumption of goods and services has contributed to global warming, increased environmental pollution, and a decline in flora and fauna. With each day that passes, concerns regarding the natural environment are increasingly becoming a vital aspect of business operations. In response to this environmental awareness, companies are adopting various business strategies. By implementing necessary measures to provide an environmental context and development opportunities, green entrepreneurship helps to ensure environmental stability. In this regard, researchers have sought to investigate the role of green entrepreneurship in promoting environmental sustainability in Dharmapuri district. The primary aim of this study is to analyze the impact of green entrepreneurship on environmental sustainability in the Dharmapuri district. For the survey, the researchers employed a multistage sampling method. In the first stage, five blocks, representing 50% of the total blocks, were randomly selected. In the second stage, 30 green entrepreneurs were chosen based on purposive sampling from each block. Consequently, the total sample size comprised 150 green entrepreneurs. This study is grounded in empirical research and survey methodologies. It uses both primary and secondary data sources. The data for the research was gathered through structured questionnaires. Green entrepreneurs from the Dharmapuri district were selected for this study, and data was collected via a questionnaire. Out of 150 questionnaires distributed, 137 were returned completed. However, 13 questionnaires were deemed incomplete. Therefore, only 137 questionnaires were included in the analysis. Secondary data was sourced from the internet, books, journals, theses, and research articles. To derive meaningful insights, the researchers employed statistical methods including the student t-test, analysis of variance, coefficient of variation, multiple regression analysis, mean, and percentage analysis. The findings indicated that the primary function of green entrepreneurship in promoting environmental sustainability is to "enhance resource utilization," succeeded by “reduced possibility of natural disasters" and "green entrepreneurship positively influences the environment."

Index Terms: Green entrepreneurs, environmental sustainability, eco-entrepreneurship, sustainable development, corporate social responsibility.

I. INTRODUCTION

The environmental challenges currently affecting the global community pose a significant risk to future generations. To achieve sustainable development, a model of economic growth focused on environmental sustainability is essential. Consequently, development should progress alongside both environmental and economic goals. This aligns with the concept of a circular economy, which asserts that businesses are

obligated to adhere to the principles of social and environmental sustainability while consistently engaging with stakeholders. The circular economy represents a strategy for economic development aimed at minimizing pollution and maximizing waste recycling. The green economy, which previously emphasized the balance between benefiting from natural resources and mitigating environmental risks, plays a vital role in this context. Green entrepreneurship fosters business practices that align with principles of equity and environmental stewardship. For entrepreneurs aiming to operate successful businesses with a strong emphasis on social and environmental impact, green entrepreneurship is essential for establishing business support. The green entrepreneur has taken on the responsibility of ensuring that their workplace is environmentally sustainable. Similar to other countries, India rapidly exploits its natural resources for industrialization and economic advancement. Therefore, India requires green entrepreneurs who can serve as catalysts for change and contribute to sustainable economic development by integrating innovation with sustainability. The significant rise in global consumption of goods and services has resulted in global warming, increased environmental pollution, and a decline in bio-diversity. The demand for green products and services is driven by these environmental changes. Over the past decade, the consumer and capital markets for green products, services, and enterprises have experienced rapid growth.

II. Green Entrepreneurship

"Green entrepreneurship," also referred to as "eco-entrepreneurship" or "sustainable entrepreneurship," represents a business model that integrates social, economic, and environmental factors into its strategic framework while simultaneously offering innovative and unconventional solutions for responsible production and consumption. The term "green entrepreneurship" was first introduced in Gustav Berle's book "The Green Entrepreneur: Business Opportunities that Can Save the Earth and Make You Money" (1991). These traits are intrinsic to green entrepreneurs, as they pursue high-risk initiatives that yield environmental benefits. By generating profits from their ventures, they are able to uphold the social and environmental values for which they strive in the pursuit of sustainable development. The goal should be to foster a nurturing environment for green entrepreneurs, enabling them not only to thrive but also to inspire other businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices. According to Dean and McMullen, green entrepreneurship involves recognizing and capitalizing on pre-existing business opportunities that are environmentally sustainable and address market inefficiencies. Mathur and Tandon describe green entrepreneurship as a worldwide movement aimed at translating knowledge into action to tackle environmental challenges, global warming, and resource scarcity. Rosca, et al. (2020) characterize green entrepreneurship as "a community intervention that generates solutions based on market mechanisms, enhancing access to opportunities in remote areas while simultaneously valuing their natural and cultural heritage." The concept of "green entrepreneurship" embodies the essential components of entrepreneurship: creativity, risk-taking, innovative business ideas, and the social and environmental accountability of business practitioners. A green entrepreneur intentionally tackles an environmental or social issue or requirement. The objective of the green entrepreneur is to advance the green ecosystem while also offering consumers eco-friendly products or services.

III. Statement of the Problem

The notion of a green entrepreneur was motivated by environmental challenges such as climate change, pollution, resource scarcity, depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, and other natural disasters caused by disruptions in ecosystems. As public awareness of environmental issues increases, consumers are increasingly purchasing eco-friendly or green products. The green market is an expanding sector that offers numerous opportunities across various domains, including green manufacturing, supply chain management, and design. Companies that implement green practices tend to be successful in their everyday operations. Amidst these developments, new management models are emerging that not only meet consumer demands but also contribute to the vision of a clean and green environment. With each day, concerns regarding the natural environment are becoming an integral part of business operations. In response to this environmental awareness, companies are adopting diverse business strategies. The concept of green marketing was developed for this purpose and is now starting to gain momentum in the marketplace. Entrepreneurs who focus on product innovation and green redesign may view this as a significant opportunity. For those looking to engage in the burgeoning green industry, this represents an ideal moment to act. A green entrepreneur can thrive if consumer purchasing behaviours shift towards favouring eco-friendly products and services.

Contemporary green entrepreneurs are esteemed for their capacity to initiate, innovate, implement, and develop new concepts, as well as for their swift adaptation to changes. They are regarded as a pivotal force in transforming consumer behaviour and significantly contribute to the nation's economic development. Indeed, there exists a notable disparity in the perceptions of green entrepreneurship between industrialized and developing countries. Green entrepreneurs who launch eco-friendly products and advocate for sustainable technologies can facilitate the green growth of the industry. Historically, most green growth policies have focused on identifying technological innovations that reduce human impact on the environment, climate change, and biodiversity loss; however, there has been insufficient emphasis from policymakers on the commercialization of green technologies and the role of green entrepreneurship.

Three dimensions of environmentalism namely, compliance-based, market-driven, and values-driven can be utilized to classify the forces that impact environmental change and green entrepreneurship. Governments enforce compliance-based environmentalism via legal and regulatory frameworks. Market-driven environmentalism emphasizes the provision of incentives for corporations to prioritize environmental concerns. Value-driven environmentalism reflects customer demand for environmentally sustainable products and services. The swift decline of biodiversity, the evolving impacts of climate change, the widespread destruction of wildlife and natural habitats, along with rising unemployment, all pose significant challenges for policymakers, as already strained ecosystems are becoming increasingly susceptible. Sustainability has become a fundamental component of business strategies on a global scale and is essential for the success of their operations in the future. Nevertheless, the shift towards a green economy remains in its nascent stages, and the planet cannot afford to delay. The industrialization of the global population and economic expansion are expected to accelerate in the coming decades. The only means for them to fulfill their commitments to provide effective and secure operations in a socially and environmentally responsible manner is through green entrepreneurship. The main objective of environmental entrepreneurship is to effectively address the increasing demands from institutions, consumers, and the environment to ensure environmental sustainability. In contemporary times, developing countries face numerous challenges associated with economic development and environmental conservation that require suitable contextualization in diverse settings.

A new phenomenon known as environmental amelioration aims to enhance the environment from multiple viewpoints, including that of business, which also prioritizes environmental sustainability. By implementing various necessary measures to provide environmental context and development opportunities, green entrepreneurship ensures the stability of the environment. This approach aids in achieving desired outcomes by offering solutions to various limitations. Consequently, it is essential to improve the environment to maintain a supportive atmosphere for entrepreneurship. One method to accomplish this is through corporate social responsibility, which seeks to advance social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Green entrepreneurship represents a significant phenomenon that strives to establish an environment conducive to entrepreneurship, thus serving as a cornerstone for both economic and environmental development. In this regard, motivated and passionate entrepreneurs who create, recognize, and capitalize on various opportunities are what contribute to a company's success. Therefore, with the assistance of green and clean technological innovations, green entrepreneurs can promote their products and services in an environmentally friendly manner. Green entrepreneurship aims to foster a climate of commitment and trust within the relevant companies. The frequent occurrence of natural disasters hampers the nation's ability to achieve the necessary rates of economic growth. In this context, researchers have sought to investigate the role of green entrepreneurship in promoting environmental sustainability in the Dharmapuri district.

IV. Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this research is to investigate the role of green entrepreneurship to environmental sustainability in the Dharmapuri district. Additionally, based on the study's findings, it seeks to offer suitable recommendations for the prospects of green entrepreneurship in the study area.

V. Hypothesis

The perspectives of green entrepreneurs regarding the role of green entrepreneurship on environmental sustainability were examined through the following hypothesis, which was formulated and tested using appropriate statistical methods. H_0: There is no significant relationship between the demographics of green

entrepreneurs and the role of green entrepreneurship on environmental sustainability.

VI. Sampling Design

The study examines the role of green entrepreneurship in promoting environmental sustainability in the Dharmapuri district. The investigation was carried out in the Dharmapuri district. As of December 2024, the Dharmapuri district comprises 10 blocks. For the purpose of the survey, the researchers employed a multistage sampling method. In the initial stage, five blocks, representing 50% of the total blocks, were randomly selected. In the subsequent stage, 30 green entrepreneurs were chosen based on purposive sampling from each block. Consequently, the total sample size amounted to 150 green entrepreneurs. The distribution of the sampling for this study is illustrated in the table below.

Table 1: Sampling Distribution

S. No.	Block	Samples
1	Eriyur	30
2	Morappur	30
3	Pennagaram	30
4	Karimangalam	30
5	Nallampalli	30
	Total	150

VII. Data Collection

This study is founded on empirical investigation and survey methodologies. It employs both primary and secondary data sources. The data utilized in this study was gathered through structured questionnaires. The focus of this research is on green entrepreneurs. Specifically, green entrepreneurs from the Dharmapuri district were chosen for this study, and data was collected via a questionnaire. Out of 150 questionnaires distributed, a total of 137 were returned. However, 13 of these questionnaires were deemed incomplete. Consequently, only 137 questionnaires were included in the analysis. A pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted with 10 green entrepreneurs. Modifications to the redesigned questionnaire were made based on recommendations from subject matter experts and feedback obtained from the pilot study. Secondary data was sourced from the internet, books, journals, theses, and research articles. The collected data was then edited, categorized, and entered into a master table. To derive significant results, the researchers employed statistical methods including the student t-test, analysis of variance, coefficient of variation, multiple regression analysis, as well as mean and percentage analysis.

VIII. Analysis and Interpretations

Table 2: Gender of Respondents and the Role of Green Entrepreneurship in Environmental Sustainability

Gender	No. of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	Co-efficient of Variation
Male	70	73.00	08.27	11.33
Female	67	75.31	12.17	16.16
Total	137	74.18	10.47	14.11

Analysis of the Acceptance of Green Entrepreneurship in Environmental Sustainability among Male and Female Respondents

Calculated Vale	Table Value at 5% Level	DF	Result
1.296	135	1.978	Not significant

At a significance level of 5%, the computed t-value for 135 degrees of freedom is 1.29), which is lower than the table value of 1.978. Consequently, there is no significant difference in the acceptance of the role of green entrepreneurship in environmental sustainability between male and female entrepreneurs. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted (H_0). When comparing the mean acceptance scores of male (73.00) and female (75.31) entrepreneurs, it is evident that female entrepreneurs exhibit a greater level of acceptance regarding the role of green entrepreneurship in environmental sustainability. The variation in acceptance is notably high (16.16%) among female entrepreneurs, while it is relatively low (11.33%) for male entrepreneurs. This indicates that male entrepreneurs' acceptance of the role of green entrepreneurship in environmental sustainability remains consistent.

Table 3: Age of Respondents and the Role of Green Entrepreneurship in Promoting Environmental Sustainability

Age (Years)	No. of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	o-efficient of Variation
Upto 30	26	72.04	09.63	13.37
31-40	63	74.60	09.69	12.99
41-50	25	75.52	12.01	15.90
Above 50	23	74.00	11.95	16.15
Total	137	74.18	10.47	14.11

Source: Primary Data.

Relationship between Age and the Role of Green Entrepreneurship on Environmental Sustainability

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Value	Result
Between groups	176.157	3	58.719	0.530	Not significant
Within groups	14742.281	133	110.844		
Total	14918.438	136			

At the 5% significance level, the computed F value (0.530) is lower than the critical value (2.673) for degrees of freedom 3 and 133. Consequently, there is no significant relationship between the age of entrepreneurs and their acceptance of green entrepreneurship's role in promoting environmental sustainability. Thus, the null hypothesis is upheld (H_0). Entrepreneurs aged 41 to 50 exhibit the highest mean acceptance score (75.52), followed by those aged 31 to 40. In contrast, entrepreneurs under 30 show a lower mean acceptance score (72.04). Therefore, the role of green entrepreneurship on environmental sustainability is notably significant for entrepreneurs aged 41-50. The acceptance variation is considerable (16.15%) among entrepreneurs over 50, while it is lower (12.99%) among those aged 31 to 40. Hence, there is a consistent level of acceptance regarding the role of green entrepreneurship in environmental sustainability among entrepreneurs aged 31-40.

Table 4: Education of Respondents and the Role of Green Entrepreneurship in Environmental Sustainability

Education	No. of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	o-efficient of Variation
Upto H.Sc	26	74.10	11.58	15.63
Degree	69	75.96	8.82	11.61
PG and above	42	73.21	9.53	13.02
Total	137	74.18	10.47	14.11

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Value	Result
Between groups	122.115	2	61.058	0.553	Not significant
Within groups	14796.323	134	110.420		
Total	14918.438	136			

At the 5% significance level, the computed F value (0.553) is lower than the tabulated value (3.064) for 2 and 134 degrees of freedom. Consequently, there is no significant relationship between the education of entrepreneurs and their acceptance of the role of green entrepreneurship in promoting environmental sustainability. As a result, the null hypothesis is accepted (H_0). Entrepreneurs holding a degree exhibited the highest mean acceptance score of (75.96), followed by those with education up to H.Sc. Conversely, entrepreneurs with a postgraduate qualification and above recorded a lower acceptance score of (73.21). Therefore, the role of green entrepreneurship on environmental sustainability is notably significant among graduate entrepreneurs. The variation in acceptance is considerable (15.63%) among entrepreneurs with education up to H.Sc, while it is lower (11.61%) among graduate entrepreneurs. Thus, the level of acceptance remains consistent among entrepreneurs with a degree regarding the role of green entrepreneurship in environmental sustainability.

Table 5: Residence of Respondents and the Role of Green Entrepreneurship in Environmental Sustainability

Place of Residence	No. of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	Co-efficient of Variation
Urban	94	76.12	10.57	13.89
Rural	43	73.30	10.36	14.13
Total	137	74.18	10.47	14.11

A Comparative Analysis of Urban and Rural Entrepreneurs' Perception of Green Entrepreneurship's Role to Environmental Sustainability

Calculated Vale	Table Value at 5% Level	DF	Result
1.468	1.978	135	Not Significant

At the 5% significance level, the computed t-value for 135 degrees of freedom is 1.468, which is lower than the critical value from the table (1.978). Consequently, there is no significant difference in the acceptance of green entrepreneurship's role in environmental sustainability between urban and rural entrepreneurs. Thus, the null hypothesis is upheld (H_0). When assessing the mean acceptance scores of urban (76.12) and rural (73.30) entrepreneurs, it is evident that green entrepreneurship has a significant role on urban entrepreneurs regarding environmental sustainability. The variation in acceptance is considerable (14.13%) among rural entrepreneurs, while it is relatively low (13.89%) for urban entrepreneurs. Therefore, urban entrepreneurs show a consistent acceptance of the role of green entrepreneurship in promoting environmental sustainability.

Table 6: Effect of Entrepreneurial Demographics on the Role of Green Entrepreneurship in Promoting Environmental Sustainability

Entrepreneur Demographics	B	Std. Error	t	Result
Constant	75.730	5.776	-	-
Gender	-1.731	1.866	-0.927	**Ns**
Age	0.782	0.921	0.849	**Ns**
Education	-1.395	0.989	-1.410	Ns
Place of residence	2.340	2.006	1.167	Ns

Demographics of Entrepreneurs and the Role of Green Entrepreneurship in Promoting Environmental Sustainability: Multiple Correlation Coefficients

R	R Square	F	Result
0.205	0.042	1.447	Not significant

The role of green entrepreneurship in promoting environmental sustainability shows a weak correlation with the demographics of the entrepreneurs in the sample, quantified at 0.205. The R-square value reveals that the demographics of entrepreneurs account for only 4.02% of the influence on the role of green entrepreneurship in environmental sustainability, whereas other factors not included in the regression model explain 95.80% of the variance in this role. Furthermore, the multiple correlation coefficients were found to be insignificant based on the F-value. Demographic factors such as gender, age, education, and place of residence do not impact the role of green entrepreneurship in fostering environmental sustainability.

Table 7: Respondents' Acceptance of the Importance of Green Entrepreneurship in Promoting Environmental Sustainability

Statements	Level of Acceptance					Total	Mean Score
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
Reduced possibility of natural disaster	33 (24.09)	70 (51.09)	31 (22.63)	1 (0.73)	2 (1.46)	137 (100.00)	3.96
Reduces the effects of pollution caused by air, noise, water, and other factors	9 (6.57)	36 (26.28)	30 (21.90)	46 (33.58)	16 (11.68)	137 (100.00)	2.82
Improves resource utilization	46 (33.58)	59 (43.07)	27 (19.71)	5 (3.65)	0 (0.00)	137 (100.00)	4.07
Green entrepreneurship has a positive impact on the environment	27 (19.71)	75 (54.74)	34 (24.82)	1 (0.73)	0 (0.00)	137 (100.00)	3.93
Helps in the Preservation of resources	26 (18.98)	36 (26.28	24 (17.52)	34 (24.82)	17 (12.41)	137 (100.00)	3.15
Reduces the use of paper, saving a Substantial amount of forestry	25 (18.25)	31 (22.63)	35 (25.55)	31 (22.63)	15 (10.95)	137 (100.00)	3.15
Increases a company's environmental commitment	25 (18.25)	55 (40.15)	46 (33.58)	8 (5.84)	3 (2.19)	137 (100.00)	3.66
Ensures adherence to social, environmental, and regulatory requirements	27 (19.71)	65 (47.44)	33 (24.09)	10 (7.30)	2 (1.46)	137 (100.00)	3.77
Controls energy use	12 (8.76)	41 (29.93)	29 (21.17)	40 (29.20)	15 (10.95)	137 (100.00)	2.96
Reduced resource wastage	28 (20.44)	67 (48.91)	30 (21.90)	10 (7.30)	2 (1.46)	137 (100.00)	3.80
Prevents environment degradation	39 (28.57)	28 (20.44)	22 (16.06)	39 (28.57)	9 (6.57)	137 (100.00)	3.36
Eliminates greenhouse gas	22 (16.06)	64 (46.72)	40 (29.20)	7 (5.11)	4 (2.92)	137 (100.00)	3.68
Saves gallons of gasoline	7 (5.11)	46 (33.58)	28 (20.44)	39 (28.47)	17 (12.41)	137 (100.00)	2.91
Protection and preservation of the environment	26 (18.98)	64 (46.72)	38 (27.74)	8 (5.84)	1 (0.73)	137 (100.00)	3.77

Creates a sanitary and clean environment	24 (17.52)	64 (46.72)	38 (27.74)	5 (3.65)	6 (4.38)	137 (100.00)	3.69
Utilizing natural and renewable resources for sustainable development	24 (17.52)	58 (42.34)	43 (31.39)	10 (7.30)	2 (1.46)	137 (100.00)	3.67
Protects human health	22 (16.06)	64 (46.72)	41 (29.92)	10 (7.30)	0 (0.00)	137 (100.00)	3.72
Corporate social responsibility	18 (13.14)	75 (54.74)	32 (23.36)	10 (7.30)	2 (1.46)	137 (100.00)	3.71
Recycles wastage	27 (19.71)	64 (46.72)	37 (27.01)	9 (6.57)	0 (0.00)	137 (100.00)	3.80
Ensures ecological balance	30 (21.90)	65 (47.45)	34 (24.82)	3 (2.19)	5 (3.65)	137 (100.00)	3.82
Total	25 (18.25)	56 (40.88)	34 (24.82)	16 (11.68)	6 (4.38)	137 (100.00)	3.59

Table 7 outlines the acceptance level of green entrepreneurship's role in promoting environmental sustainability. Among the 137 respondents surveyed, 40.88% expressed agreement, 24.82% remained neutral, and 18.25% indicated strong agreement regarding the role of green entrepreneurship in environmental sustainability. Conversely, 11.68% of respondents disagreed with this role, while 4.38% strongly disagreed. The analysis reveals that the primary function of green entrepreneurship in environmental sustainability is to 'enhance resource utilization', which holds the top position with an average score of 4.07. Following this, the factor reduced possibility of natural disasters' ranks second with an average score of 3.96, and 'green entrepreneurship positively influences the environment' comes in third with a score of 3.93.

IX. SUGGESTIONS

1. Establish a regulatory framework essential for fostering the growth of green entrepreneurship. Consequently, the future of green entrepreneurship relies on a suitable regulatory framework.

2. Certain initiatives may be undertaken to educate green entrepreneurs about the hazardous issues associated with green business practices.

3. It is imperative to formulate appropriate regulations to inform green entrepreneurs regarding the advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, and risks involved in investing in environmental sectors.

4. To ensure that consumers are aware of the environmentally friendly products being developed or planned by new green entrepreneurs, suitable regulations should be established.

5. When executing a green business strategy, it is important to take into account national or local sustainability objectives, as well as institutional, regulatory, and economic factors such as concessions, grid connection limitations, standards, taxes, and other relevant rules and regulations.

6. Due to the diverse range of challenges, green entrepreneurship requires policies that are both clear and transparent to encourage green entrepreneurs to participate in the creation of new ventures.

X. CONCLUSION

The significance of green entrepreneurship has notably risen in contemporary times. Promoting environmentally friendly products is of utmost importance due to the escalating levels of pollution. Consequently, entrepreneurs are utilizing their innovative ideas in their operations to foster a clean and green environment. Undoubtedly, numerous obstacles arise at the inception of every project. Green entrepreneurs face a range of challenges, and their success hinges on their ability to surmount these obstacles and progress within their respective industries. The research elucidates how green entrepreneurship helps in achieving environmental sustainability. The findings indicated that 'enhanced resource utilization' is the most vital role of green entrepreneurship to environmental sustainability, succeeded by ‘reduced possibility of natural disaster' and 'green entrepreneurship positively influences the

environment.' It is essential to cultivate an atmosphere where entrepreneurs recognize the potential advantages of adopting green business models, and where green investments are promoted while barriers to initiating and managing green enterprises are dismantled. Institutional backing is also necessary to offer financial and technical support to green entrepreneurs.

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