

Benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices: a special focus on SMEs in the UK beauty industry



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Dissertation

LCBB6000

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This submission is for the partial of the degree of the BA (Hons) Business Management

22/12/2025

Declaration

I, Aurelia Istrati, a student at University of Wales Trinity Saint David, hereby declare that the research titled " Benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices: a special focus on SMEs in the UK beauty industry " is an original work conducted by me. The study aims to investigate the advantages, barriers and overall impact of sustainability adoption on the performance and operational practices of SMEs within the UK beauty sector.

The research follows ethical guidelines, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation of all subjects. The methodology used includes a quantitative, positivist research design based on an online survey administered to SME owners, managers and employees, with statistical analysis conducted to examine relationships between key variables. Any funding received for this study has been disclosed, and there is no conflict of interest.

I affirm that this research adheres to the ethical standards set by University of Wales Trinity Saint David and has not been submitted elsewhere for publication or evaluation.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the benefits and challenges associated with the adoption of sustainable practices among Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the UK beauty industry. The study addresses a recognised gap in existing literature, which has predominantly focused on large corporations, by exploring how sustainability initiatives influence performance within resource-constrained SME environments. A quantitative, positivist research design was employed, using a structured online survey distributed to 100 SME owners, managers and employees. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation tests and regression analysis.

The findings indicate that sustainability adoption enhances brand reputation, strengthens customer loyalty, encourages product innovation and supports long-term operational efficiency. However, SMEs face notable barriers, including financial constraints, limited technical expertise, regulatory uncertainty and short-term cost pressures. Despite these challenges, the results demonstrate a positive relationship between sustainability practices and long-term business performance.

The study concludes that targeted financial assistance, improved access to specialist knowledge and clearer regulatory guidance would enable SMEs to integrate sustainability more effectively. Recommendations include greater investment in staff training, strategic planning for long-term returns, and enhanced collaboration across supply chains.

Keywords: sustainability, SMEs, UK beauty industry, circular economy, organisational performance, innovation, ethical sourcing.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1.Introduction to the topic

In recent years, sustainability has evolved from a voluntary corporate initiative into a central strategic priority across most industries. Globally, governments, investors, and consumers are demanding that companies reduce their environmental footprint and operate more ethically (Elkington, 2018). Within the United Kingdom, the beauty industry occupies a significant economic and cultural position, generating more than £30 billion annually and employing thousands of workers across manufacturing, retail, and professional services (Sharpe, G. 2023). However, the sector also faces increasing scrutiny due to the extensive use of plastic packaging, chemical ingredients, and energy-intensive production processes (Jones and Hillier, 2022).

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) dominate this industry, representing the majority of firms involved in cosmetics, skincare, and wellness services. Their agility allows them to respond rapidly to emerging sustainability trends, yet their limited financial and technical resources create barriers to comprehensive adoption (Revell and Blackburn, 2007; Omowole et al., 2024). Sustainability for SMEs encompasses initiatives such as sourcing natural or cruelty-free ingredients, reducing waste through circular-economy approaches, and improving energy efficiency (Dharmadhikari, 2012). These measures are increasingly seen not merely as ethical responsibilities but as essential business strategies that can enhance competitiveness and long-term resilience (Shields and Shelleman, 2015).

Despite the recognised importance of sustainability, research on how beauty-sector SMEs integrate such practices into their operations remains limited. Prior studies have largely focused on large multinational brands, leaving a gap in understanding the unique challenges and benefits experienced by smaller firms (Mallett *et al.*, 2019; Waduge and Chitakunye, 2024). Consequently, this dissertation investigates the benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices among UK beauty SMEs, providing an evidence-based analysis that connects environmental responsibility with business performance.

1.2.Research Problem

According to the research, the beauty industry in the UK is experiencing significant transformations, with increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices (Boskov, 2016). It has been found that the increasing consumer interest in environmentally friendly products

necessitates adaptation from Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to maintain market share. The purposes of the research also depend on understanding the cost implications, as sustainable practices may require initial investment and lead to increased operational costs for resource-constrained SMEs (Sainidis & Robson, 2016). The analysis defines the role of the evolving regulatory framework in placing additional pressure on SMEs to comply with sustainability standards (Mallett et al., 2019). It is useful to review the data from the analytical section regarding the competitive advantage that implementing sustainable practices can offer, which can result in enhanced customer loyalty and market distinctiveness (Siqueira et al. 2008). Understanding the elements of the UK beauty industry's sustainable practices for SMEs is essential to the topic's goals. It must be considered in order to support the analysis of the methods based on the management of the issues of sustainability adoption, which is aid in their resolution. Although there is a useful suggestion regarding the necessary approach for UK beauty SMEs to develop sustainable practices, there is a significant lack of empirical data that focuses on the difficulties faced by SMEs, the tactics they use, and how these practices affect their performance in the UK.

1.3.Purpose of the research

This research intends to provide a comprehensive analysis of the benefits and challenges faced by SMEs in the UK beauty industry when adopting sustainable practices. By identifying these essential factors, the research aims to address the current gap in the literature regarding the value of sustainability for small enterprises. Saunders (2019) states that developing practical solutions necessitates an understanding of the contextual importance of research subjects.

1.4.Proposed aim, objectives and research questions

The purpose of this study is to thoroughly assess the advantages and obstacles that Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) within the UK beauty sector face when integrating sustainable practices into their business strategies.

Research Objectives:

- To evaluate the benefits of sustainability adoption for SMEs in the UK beauty industry.
- To identify and analyse the main challenges faced by SMEs in implementing sustainable practices.
- To recommend effective strategies for overcoming sustainability challenges and enhancing long-term business integration.

Research Questions:

- What are the main benefits of adopting sustainable practices for SMEs in the UK beauty industry?
- What challenges do SMEs face when implementing sustainability initiatives?
- What practical strategies can be proposed to strengthen sustainable integration among SMEs?

1.5. Significance of the topic

This study examines the UK beauty industry, a sector with a significant environmental impact, specifically focusing on small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). The beauty industry was chosen because of its significant environmental footprint and the growing consumer interest in sustainable products. SMEs are often the backbone of this sector, and understanding their approach to sustainability is crucial. Although SMEs may face financial and resource limitations, their actions can have a significant impact (Revell & Blackburn, 2004).

This research recognises that SMEs in the beauty sector face both advantages and disadvantages when trying to become more sustainable. Benefits can include a better brand reputation and potential cost savings. Challenges often involve a lack of funding and a lack of specific knowledge about sustainable practices. The goal of this study is to understand these different aspects.

The results of this study are intended to provide practical advice to business managers, helping them to create and implement effective sustainability plans. These plans could make their businesses more competitive. The study also offers valuable insights for policymakers who are working to support a more sustainable beauty industry. Ultimately, this research seeks to connect the ideals of sustainability with the real-world actions of UK beauty SMEs.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research centers on small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the UK beauty sector, which encompasses independent salons, skincare companies, and wellness providers. The research investigates how such organisations adopt sustainable practices, assessing operational, financial and reputational impacts over a defined timeframe. Large multinational entities are deliberately excluded, since organisational scale, resource availability and supply-chain complexity differ substantially from SME conditions (Durrani et al., 2024).

The data collection is designed to capture UK-based SME owners/managers' perspectives through a quantitative survey instrument, enabling insight into sector-specific drivers and constraints (Lin, 2018). By narrowing the scope in this way, the study aims to deliver actionable findings relevant to the SME sector in the British beauty market.

1.7 Rationale of the Study

While sustainability has become a key agenda item for many large organisations, smaller firms in the UK beauty sector remain under-researched. There is a gap in knowledge on the particular advantages and difficulties of sustainable adoption in this setting because the research currently in publication frequently concentrates on corporate practice rather than SME realities (Martins et al., 2025). Consumers and authorities are putting increasing pressure on the beauty sector to lessen its environmental impact, and the UK government has pledged to achieve a net-zero economy by 2050 (British Beauty Council, 2023). For SMEs — often with limited financial or specialist sustainability expertise — this presents strategic, operational and competitive considerations. This research therefore aims to bridge both academic and practical gaps by offering evidence-based insights to SME managers, policy-makers and industry stakeholders on how sustainability can drive performance and resilience in the UK beauty sector.

1.8 Structure/Organisation of the Report

This dissertation is structured into five chapters to provide the debate a clear and cohesive flow. The context of the study and the research problem are described in Chapter One, which is followed by the goals, objectives, scope, justification, and general framework of the study. With particular reference to the beauty industry, Chapter Two provides a critical assessment of the body of research on sustainability in small and medium-sized businesses. It also develops a conceptual framework that looks at the connection between SME performance and the adoption of sustainable practices. The research philosophy and approach, questionnaire design, data collection techniques, and ethical considerations are all covered in Chapter Three's explanation of the research methodology used. Chapter four (to be completed after data collection) will present and analyse findings, linking empirical results to the literature. Finally, Chapter five (also to follow data analysis) will summarise conclusions, propose recommendations for SMEs and policy-makers, and identify areas for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at academic texts from the university as well as literature from Google Scholar. The paper critically evaluates previous research on the adoption of sustainable practices, emphasising the advantages and difficulties faced by small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the UK beauty sector..Some of the main topics discussed are definitions, industry traits, the relevance of sustainability, theoretical frameworks, advantages and disadvantages, obstacles, and how consumers affect the sector.

2.2 Defining Sustainability in the Beauty SMEs Context

Sustainability in business, as broadly defined by Adams (2014), encompasses practices that benefit the environment, the economy, and society as a whole. However, applying this concept within the UK beauty sector, particularly, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), requires a nuanced understanding. While the core principles remain consistent, the specific manifestations of sustainability may differ from those in other industries. For instance, the definition needs to be tailored to the context of SMEs, as these businesses often have different resource constraints and operational structures than larger corporations.

In the UK beauty sector, sustainability for SMEs often translates to a commitment to minimising waste throughout the production and distribution processes, sourcing ingredients from ethical and sustainable suppliers, and formulating products that are cruelty-free (Gagliano, B., 2024). This typically involves the adoption of environmentally friendly packaging solutions and a strategic focus on minimising the overall environmental footprint of business operations. Furthermore, it can involve the implementation of circular economy principles (Dharmadhikari, S., 2012), such as reusing materials or recycling and reducing waste. This specific focus acknowledges the unique challenges and opportunities presented to smaller businesses within this dynamic industry.

2.3 Characteristics of SMEs in the UK Beauty Industry

In the UK context, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are generally classified according to workforce size and annual revenue, with the commonly accepted criterion being organisations employing fewer than 250 staff and operating below a specified turnover threshold (Duignan, 2016). The UK beauty industry is characterised by a significant presence

of SMEs, which contribute substantially to the sector's dynamism and innovation. This prevalence of smaller businesses fosters rapid invention cycles and a capacity to adapt to evolving consumer preferences, a critical advantage in a market increasingly driven by trends and ethical considerations.

However, as Blaxter (2010) notes, a defining characteristic of SMEs is their inherent resource constraints, particularly when compared to larger corporations. While SMEs often possess the agility and flexibility to respond quickly to market changes, a lack of financial resources, limited access to specialized expertise, and potential supply chain limitations pose significant challenges to sustainability adoption. While SMEs may be well-positioned to innovate and embrace sustainable practices, their limited resources can hinder their ability to invest in the necessary infrastructure, technologies, and expertise required for effective implementation (Omowole et al., 2024). The interplay between agility, resource limitations, and the specific demands of the beauty sector creates a complex context for understanding the adoption of sustainable practices.

2.4 Theoretical Foundations and Research Approaches

The use of robust theoretical frameworks is fundamental in guiding the study of sustainability among SMEs in the UK beauty industry (Adams, 2014). This study is underpinned by the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Institutional Theory, which together provide a theoretical lens for examining the advantages and constraints associated with the adoption of sustainable practices.

Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) focuses on the role of internal resources and organisational capabilities in generating competitive advantage (Barney, 2000). Within this study, RBV is applied to explore how beauty-sector SMEs utilise distinctive assets—such as employee expertise, product innovation, and loyal customer relationships—to address resource constraints and support the adoption of sustainable practices. This approach explains differences in firms' success with sustainability based on how they mobilise and develop their strategic resources (Ofori-Baafi & Opoku, 2025).

Institutional Theory

According to CHIU, I.H. (2018), institutional theory emphasises how external factors, including laws and shifting customer expectations, affect organisational behaviour. With the use of this approach, it is possible to examine how UK beauty SMEs react to social pressures

and compliance requirements, as well as whether these expectations spur real sustainable initiatives or just symbolic change (Sawang et al., 2024). A balanced examination of how external institutional pressures and internal strategic considerations interact to shape the advantages and difficulties of implementing sustainable practices in this industry is made possible by the use of both RBV and Institutional Theory.

2.5 Importance and Benefits of Sustainable Practices

Sustainable practices have become a defining element of competitiveness in the UK beauty industry, enabling firms to mitigate environmental harm while appealing to ethically minded consumers. Empirical research demonstrates that the adoption of sustainability can simultaneously enhance brand reputation, strengthen customer loyalty, and ensure long-term compliance with evolving regulations (Bhatti et al., 2022; Saleem et al., 2024). For SMEs, these factors are critical to maintaining resilience and innovation capacity in a market increasingly shaped by ecological and social expectations (Revell and Blackburn, 2007).

Brand Enhancement and Reputation

SMEs that adopt sustainability communicate accountability and authenticity, qualities that substantially improve brand image. Studies reveal that green branding and transparent communication enhance perceived corporate credibility and stakeholder trust. In the UK beauty market, eco-certified or cruelty-free labels directly influence purchase intention and perceived value (Lin, 2018). Similarly, Dharmadhikari (2012) emphasises that ethical sourcing and eco-design practices generate reputational capital that differentiates SMEs from competitors reliant on conventional production methods. The cumulative evidence indicates that sustainability contributes to stronger brand equity and long-term customer engagement (Shields and Shelleman, 2015).

Market Appeal and Customer Loyalty

The growing segment of environmentally conscious consumers values brands that align with personal ethics. Research shows that UK consumers, particularly those aged 18–34, demonstrate a willingness to pay a premium for sustainable cosmetics (Carroll, 2021). Bhattacharya and Sen (2021) argue that corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives create psychological identification between consumers and responsible brands, thereby fostering loyalty. Furthermore, Safeer et al. (2023) demonstrated that consumers' perceptions of

environmental responsibility act as a mediating factor between product quality and repurchase intention. For SMEs, embedding sustainability into their offerings builds enduring customer relationships and generates word-of-mouth advocacy that larger firms often struggle to replicate (Waduge and Chitakunye, 2024).

Risk Management and Regulatory Compliance

Since Brexit, the UK cosmetics industry has faced tightened regulatory frameworks concerning ingredient safety, packaging waste, and carbon emissions. Small and medium-sized enterprises that implement sustainable operational practices are more likely to adapt effectively to post-Brexit regulatory changes and reduce exposure to legal risks or reputational damages (Campbell Gemmell and Scott, 2013; Mallett et al., 2019). Proactive investment in greener production processes also mitigates future risks associated with carbon taxation and environmental reporting requirements. Hence, sustainability functions not merely as a moral choice but as a pragmatic strategy for compliance and risk reduction.

Operational and Financial Constraints

Despite the advantages, literature identifies notable barriers. Limited financial capacity, lack of technical knowledge, and uncertainty about returns hinder SME sustainability adoption (Durrani et al., 2024; Sainidis and Robson, 2016). Additionally, smaller firms often rely on short-term survival strategies, which discourage long-term environmental investment (Omowole et al., 2024). These structural challenges explain why sustainability adoption remains inconsistent across UK beauty SMEs, even amid rising consumer demand.

2.6 Challenges and Barriers to Sustainability for Beauty SMEs

The UK beauty industry's small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) face a wide range of obstacles that prevent them from successfully implementing sustainable practices. These difficulties are complex, with aspects related to finance, technology, expertise, and regulations.

Budgetary restrictions

Their limited ability to invest in sustainability initiatives is a major barrier for SMEs in the beauty industry. Despite the existence of government programs and commercial loan options, their uptake is still low because of concerns about debt, profit margins, and the unpredictable return on investment (ROI). Many SMEs are hesitant to borrow money for green projects,

according to Sahota, A. ed. (2014) and this reluctance is made worse by rising operating expenses and market competitiveness. For instance, initial expenditures associated with converting to renewable supplies, adhering to new packaging regulations, or making investments.

Gaps in knowledge and capacity

Other significant obstacles that SMEs have cited include access to trustworthy information and technical knowledge. According to Durrani et al. (2024), many small businesses lack the resources and dedicated sustainability staff necessary to keep up with the quickly changing best practices in environmental management. Despite being accessible, sector-wide standards are frequently general and do not offer practical, industry-specific guidance, which leads to uncertainty and indecision as demonstrated in the study by Revell and Blackburn (2004). Beauty SMEs' capacity to compute carbon footprints, assess supply chain effects, or put environmental management systems in place all essential for real sustainability advancement, is hampered by a lack of internal expertise (Durrani et al., 2024).

Policy uncertainty and regulatory complexity

The regulatory environment in which the UK beauty industry operates is constantly evolving and becoming stricter. Environmental regulations, ingredient prohibitions, and reporting obligations are regularly updated for SMEs, as found by Waduge and Chitakunye (2024). Smaller players bear a disproportionate share of the cumulative expenses associated with compliance, which can sometimes exceed six-figure sums annually and include environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting, as well as ingredient tracking (Durugbo & Amankwah-Amoah, 2019). Additionally, SMEs are frequently confused, wasteful, and less inclined to prioritise sustainability measures above more pressing business concerns as a result of legal ambiguity and transitional arrangements (UK Finance, 2024).

Identified Research Gap

Although prior research confirms that sustainability enhances brand reputation, loyalty, and compliance, there is insufficient empirical evidence linking these outcomes to overall organisational performance within SMEs in the UK beauty industry. Most studies either focus on large corporations or examine SMEs in manufacturing or construction (Revell and Blackburn, 2007; Durrani et al., 2024). Consequently, limited quantitative data exist regarding how sustainability specifically influences SME competitiveness and profitability in this sector.

This dissertation addresses that gap by evaluating both the perceived benefits and the challenges affecting UK beauty SMEs that pursue sustainability initiatives.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework underpinning this study identifies two sets of independent variables, benefits (brand reputation, customer loyalty, regulatory compliance) and challenges (financial constraints, lack of expertise, resource limitations), that influence the dependent variable, organisational performance (innovation, competitiveness, growth). This framework synthesises insights from the Resource-Based View (Barney, J.B., 2000) and Institutional Theory (CHIU, I.H., 2018), suggesting that firms leveraging internal capabilities and responding effectively to external institutional pressures are more likely to achieve superior performance.

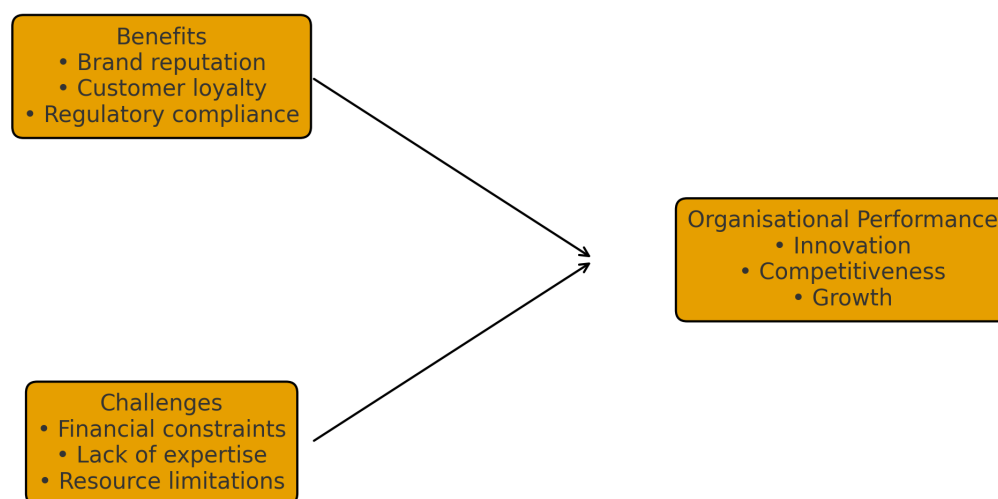


Figure 2.6: Conceptual framework

(Source: Created by Author)

Conceptual framework demonstrating the relationship between the independent variables (benefits and challenges) and the dependent variable (organisational performance).

While studies emphasise that financial and knowledge barriers are universal across SMEs globally, UK-focused reports highlight a unique intersection of policy volatility and market expectations in the beauty industry. SMEs in the beauty industry in the UK encounter a variety of financial, informational, and legal obstacles that limit their potential to be sustainable. To overcome these obstacles and enable SMEs to play an important role in the sector's long-term evolution, government, financial, and larger industry actors must work together to provide specialised advice, easily accessible funding, and stable regulations.

Chapter 3: Research Methods and Methodology

3.1. Research Philosophy

Research philosophy helps us figure out how we believe data should be collected. It also helps us understand what we're looking at when we gather data for the research. In this study, the researcher is using positivism. Positivism works well because it lets us look at the data and see what's really happening, based on reliable facts. This means the research should get good, unbiased data that's pretty neutral. Positivism helps us watch how things happen when we collect data, and then we can draw our conclusions (Park, et al. 2020)

3.2. Approach to Theory Development

The research strategy describes the structured strategies required to carry out and finish research in a methodical and effective way. It establishes the best techniques for gathering data and calculates the amount of time needed to finish the study. This methodology includes broad assumptions, comprehensive data analysis, data collecting, and data interpretation. The researcher uses a deductive research strategy in this study, which is especially useful for assessing scientific data and answering scientific hypotheses. This approach facilitates the examination of data grounded in evidence and logical reasoning, effectively minimising bias and inaccuracies (Pearse, 2019). The researcher conducts a thorough analysis of the data concerning the benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices, playing a crucial role in evaluating the evidence collected from respondents and uncovering the logical reasoning behind the significant focus on SMEs in the UK beauty industry.

3.3. Methodological Choice

Selecting an appropriate methodological approach is fundamental to achieving valid and reliable research outcomes. This research employs a quantitative research design, as it is well suited to achieving the study's objectives, which focus on examining the relationships between sustainable practices, organisational performance, and perceived challenges among UK beauty SMEs. A quantitative approach facilitates the collection of numerical data from a relatively large sample, enabling statistical analysis and enhancing the potential to generalise findings to the wider population (CRESWELL, J.W., 2009). The use of a structured questionnaire allows variables such as perceived benefits, customer loyalty, regulatory compliance, and financial constraints to be quantified and compared across respondents. This approach is particularly appropriate for identifying patterns, testing associations, and producing objective findings (Bryman, 2016). Furthermore, quantitative surveys enhance reliability and minimise researcher bias by using standardised questions and statistical interpretation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). In contrast, a qualitative approach, focusing on narrative depth, would not effectively capture the breadth of attitudes across multiple SMEs. Therefore, a quantitative method provides the most efficient and valid means to address the research questions and test relationships derived from the conceptual framework.

3.4. Research Strategies

For this research, focusing on the benefits and challenges of sustainable practices for UK beauty SMEs, the strategy used is survey. This approach is used to gather information about communication channels and other relevant aspects of sustainability within the context of these businesses. Surveys are commonly employed in business and management research to obtain quantifiable data from large samples, providing a broad understanding of trends and relationships (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). The research also draws on a range of secondary sources, including academic articles and books, to inform the findings. Secondary data allow researchers to contextualise new empirical results within established theoretical frameworks and enhance the validity of their interpretations (Johnston, 2017). Key references include Acar et al.'s (2019) work in the *Journal of Management* on creativity and innovation under constraints, along with other resources. These sources help to contextualise the survey data and support the overall analysis.

3.5. Time Horizon

The time horizon for this study is cross-sectional, focusing on the collection and analysis of data at a single point in time. This approach is appropriate given the project's aim to examine the current benefits and challenges encountered by SMEs in the UK beauty industry regarding the adoption of sustainable practices. A cross-sectional design is commonly used in business and management research to capture existing conditions and relationships without requiring longitudinal follow-up (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). By employing a cross-sectional design, the research can capture a snapshot of contemporary experiences and perceptions among business owners and employees, which supports descriptive and inferential statistical analysis (CRESWELL, J.W., 2009). This is especially relevant considering the rapidly evolving landscape of sustainability in the beauty sector, shaped by ongoing regulatory changes, market trends, and consumer expectations. The research schedule is mapped across ten weeks, allowing progression through topic selection, literature review, methodology development, data collection (through surveys), analysis, writing, and final assessment in a sequential manner. This time frame aligns with university guidelines and ensures that each phase is sufficiently resourced to maintain both depth and academic rigour (Bryman, 2016).

3.6. Data Collection and Data Analysis

The research utilises primary data sources. Primary data collection involves the use of surveys.

Primary Research: This research utilises primary research, gathering first-hand data directly from sources. This approach allows for a direct assessment of market conditions at a global level, aligning with economic classifications across various data sources. The data collected, reviewed within the research framework are designed to enhance the efficiency of the findings (Le Gal and Roux, 2019). Surveys, as a primary method, offer a cost-effective means of reaching a large population, providing flexibility in addressing specific variables (SmartSurvey, 2025).

The target population for this study comprises owners, managers, and employees of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) within the UK beauty sector, encompassing businesses such as salons, skincare brands, spas, and wellness providers. These participants were selected because they are directly involved in decision-making or daily operations related to sustainability and can therefore provide meaningful insight into both the benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices. The research focuses on individuals aged 18 and above who are capable of providing informed consent, with participation undertaken on a fully

voluntary basis (UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice, 2022). No vulnerable individuals or minors are included.

The target population represents registered SMEs within the beauty sector employing between 1 and 250 people. A sample size of **100 participants** has been set to achieve sufficient representation across different business types and operational scales while maintaining feasibility within the project timeframe. Participants are recruited via professional social media platforms, including LinkedIn and Facebook, through the distribution of an online questionnaire within verified business groups and professional networks relevant to the beauty industry. Data are collected anonymously using a Google Forms survey, ensuring participant confidentiality and adherence to the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.

This sampling approach facilitates access to participants with relevant operational insight while safeguarding their anonymity. The selected sample size ($n = 100$) offers a representative range of perspectives from UK beauty SMEs, enabling the examination of relationships between sustainable practices and organisational performance in accordance with the study's conceptual framework.

3.7. Time prospects of the research

Tasks	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10
Research Topic Selection										
Literature review										
Methodology										

Data collection										
Data analysis										
Writing										
Assess the research outcome										
Discussion and Conclusion										

(Created by author)

3.8. Ethical consideration of the research

Ethical considerations form a fundamental component of this study. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants. Participant anonymity was rigorously upheld, and access to the research data was restricted solely to the researcher to ensure confidentiality. All sources used for data collection are properly cited, with full acknowledgement of the authors. Furthermore, all survey responses were recorded with the explicit consent of each individual. When utilising secondary data, the researcher ensured the accuracy and completeness of the information, without adding or removing any content from the sources (Bouchrika, 2025).

Ethical Considerations: Ethical principles is strictly upheld throughout this research by UWTSD's Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice. The study is designed to protect participants' rights and ensure the responsible handling of all data collected.

Informed Consent: All prospective participants were provided with an information sheet detailing the purpose of the study, the research methods, and their rights, including the right to withdraw from the research at any stage without any adverse consequences. Participation is

entirely voluntary, and no data is collected until participants have given their explicit, informed consent via a consent form presented at the start of the online questionnaire.

Confidentiality: All survey data is kept on the researcher's password-protected PC and UWTSD's secure OneDrive, which is only accessed by the researcher, in order to maintain confidentiality. All outputs show data in aggregate form and do not include names, workplace addresses, or other identifying information. Access to raw data is strictly limited, and data is not be shared with any third party outside academic requirements.

Anonymity: Participants' identities is remain fully anonymous throughout the research process. The survey is not request personal identifiers, and all responses is recorded with systems that prevent the researcher from connecting responses to specific individuals. Any quotes used in the dissertation is non-attributable and is not allow for identification of those involved.

By adhering to these measures, this research ensures that participants' dignity, rights, and privacy are protected at all times in line with current ethical standards (UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice, 2022).

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

The chapter has helped in doing data analysis based on the survey responses collected from the sampled participants who are either managers, employees or supervisors associated with beauty sector companies of UK.

4.2 Reliability Test

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	99	99.0
	Excluded ^a	1	1.0
	Total	100	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.917	17

Table 4.2: Reliability Statistics

(Source: Created by Author)

Reliability Statistics is estimated through generating a Cronbach Alpha value, and it has to be more than 0.7 to be considered reliable for doing data analysis. In this case, the Cronbach Alpha value is 0.917 as identified from Table 4.2 and hence, is more than the standard value of 0.7, which makes it reliable for further analysis.

4.3 Validity Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.955
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1984.426
	df	136
	Sig.	.000

Table 4.3: Validity Test

(Source: Created by Author)

The KMO and Bartlett's Test are done to identify the validity aspect of the database, and it is identified to be 0.955 (Refer to Table 4.3). This value is close to 1.000, and hence, it can be considered that the data asset is valid.

4.4 Normality Test

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Type_Of_Business	.282	99	.000	.779	99	.000
Number_of_employees	.356	99	.000	.719	99	.000
Years_business_operating	.265	99	.000	.851	99	.000
Poistion_business	.311	99	.000	.758	99	.000
Business_adopted_sust_pract	.230	99	.000	.811	99	.000
Business_Circular_Economy	.285	99	.000	.833	99	.000
Prom_business_animal_cruelty_free	.301	99	.000	.820	99	.000
Impl_Sust_improved_Brand_Rep	.275	99	.000	.840	99	.000
Sust_reduce_ope_cost	.286	99	.000	.843	99	.000

Sust_ini_innova_product _dev	.274	99	.000	.809	99	.000
Adopt_sust_enhanced_co mpetitiveness	.274	99	.000	.841	99	.000
Limited_fin_res_busines s_invest_sustnblty	.269	99	.000	.824	99	.000
Business_lackssuff_tech nical_expt_imp_susta	.302	99	.000	.832	99	.000
Changing_Govt_regu_re main_compliant	.270	99	.000	.829	99	.000
Sust_initiatives_increase _short_term_cost_profit	.254	99	.000	.823	99	.000
Despite_challenges_sust _contr_positively_long_t erm	.290	99	.000	.828	99	.000
Following_strategies_su pport_business_sust_pra ct	.237	99	.000	.894	99	.000
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Table 4.4: Normality Test

(Source: Created by Author)

The data set is considered to be non-normalised, and there seems to be a relationship between the variables. This makes the data set considerable for further analysis and is assured from the p-value, which is 0.001 (Referred to Table 4.4) and hence, is lower than the standard value of 0.05. This makes it accurate to be considered for further analysis, such as regression, which helps in identifying relationships in between research variables.

4.5 Analysis of Demographics

Types of Business

Statistics		
Type Of Business		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		2.25
Std. Error of Mean		.076
Median		2.00
Mode		3
Std. Deviation		.757
Variance		.573
Skewness		-.454
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-1.119
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Type Of Business					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Hair and beauty salon	19	19.0	19.0	19.0
	Skincare or cosmetics brand	37	37.0	37.0	56.0
	Spa or wellness centre	44	44.0	44.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5.1: Type of Business-

(Source: Created by Author)

From the data retrieved, it can be stated that 44% of the respondents are in the spa or wellness centres, which is the highest, followed by 37% in the skincare and cosmetics business (Refer to Table 4.5.1). Only 19% of the individuals surveyed belonged to fair and beauty salon industry.

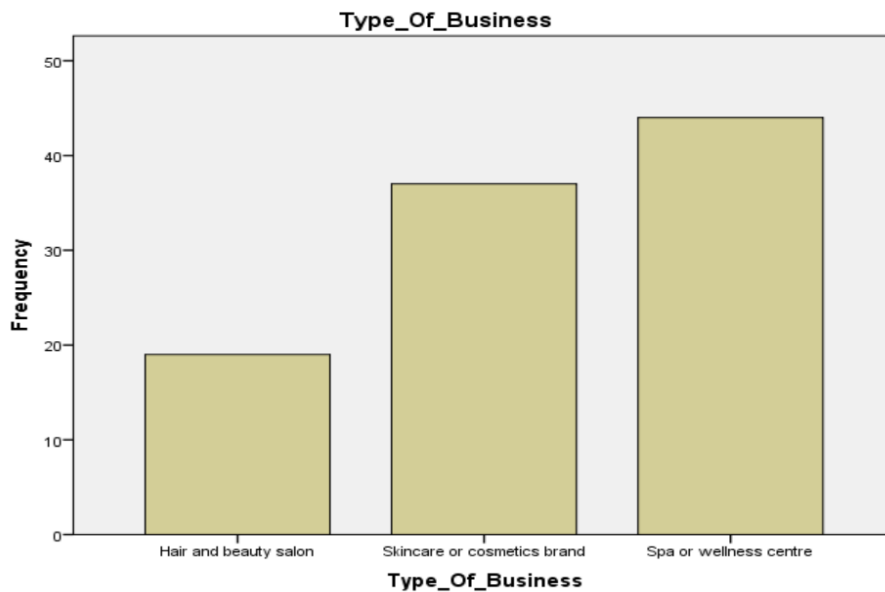


Figure 4.5.1: Type of Business-
(Source: Created by Author)

Number of Employees

Statistics		
Number of employees		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		2.01
Std. Error of Mean		.054
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		.541
Variance		.293
Skewness		.008
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		.534
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Number of employees					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-10	14	14.0	14.0	14.0
	11-50	71	71.0	71.0	85.0
	51-250	15	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5.2: Number of Employees (Source: Created by Author)

Of the 100 individuals surveyed, 71% work in a beauty sector business in the SME category, with employees ranging from 11 to 50 (Refer to Table 4.5.2). This is followed by 15% in beauty sector businesses having employees in between 51 and 250.

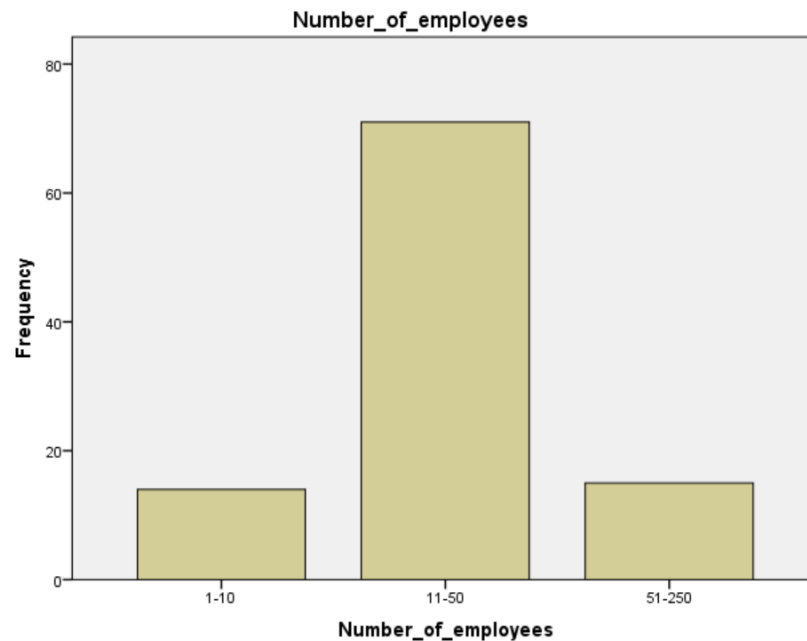


Figure 4.5.2: Name of employees-

(Source: Created by Author)

Years the business has been operating

Statistics		
Years business operating		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		2.79
Std. Error of Mean		.077
Median		3.00
Mode		3
Std. Deviation		.769
Variance		.592
Skewness		-.162
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.357
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Years_business_operating					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 year	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
	1–5 years	30	30.0	30.0	34.0
	6–10 years	49	49.0	49.0	83.0
	Over 10 years	17	17.0	17.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5.3: Years the business has been operating

(Source: Created by Author)

49% of the individuals surveyed stated that the business is operational for 6-10 years, whereas 30% of them stated that the company has been operating for 1-5 years in the beauty sector (Refer to Table 4.5.3). 17% of the individuals stated that the business is in operation for over 10 years, and 4% are in business which has been in the sector for less than 1 year.

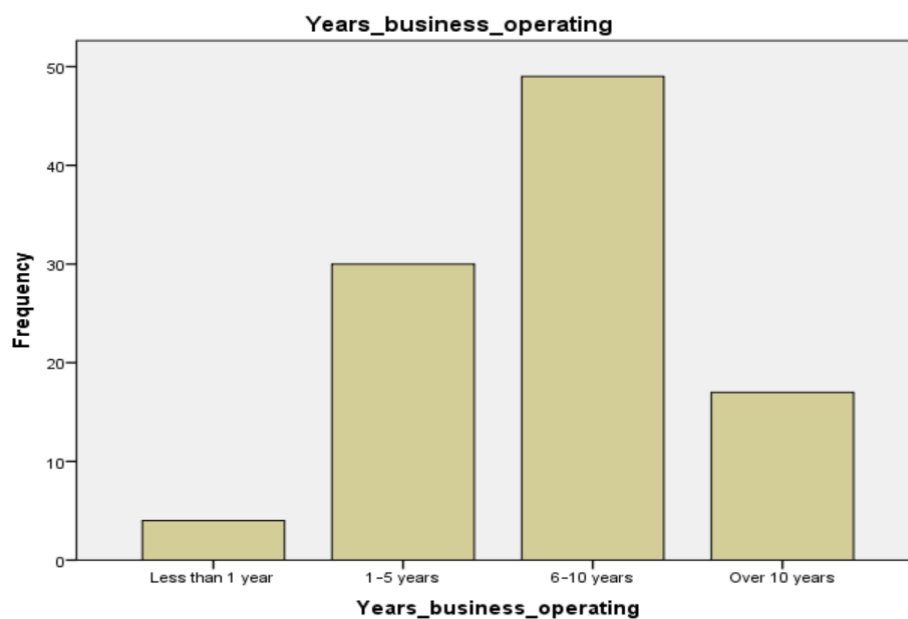


Figure 4.5.3: Years the business has been operating

(Source: Created by Author)

Your Position in the business

Statistics		
Poistion_business		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0

Mean	2.37
Std. Error of Mean	.071
Median	2.50
Mode	3
Std. Deviation	.706
Variance	.498
Skewness	-.669
Std. Error of Skewness	.241
Kurtosis	-.741
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.478

Poistion_business					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Owner/Manager	13	13.0	13.0	13.0
	Supervisor	37	37.0	37.0	50.0
	Employee	50	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5.4: Position in the business

(Source: Created by Author)

From the survey done, it has been identified that 50% of the individuals are employees and the remaining 37% of the individuals are supervisors (Refer to Table 4.5.4). 13% of the individuals are owners and managers. Therefore, the majority of the individuals surveyed are working as employees in the beauty sector companies.

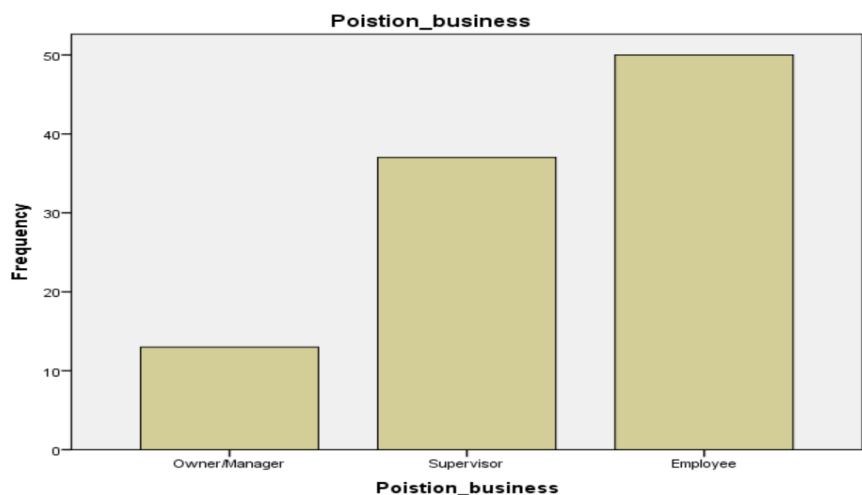


Figure 4.5.4: Years the business has been operating

(Source: Created by Author)

4.6 Main Analysis

4.6.1 Descriptive Statistics

I. Adoption of Sustainable Practices

Our business has adopted sustainable practices such as eco-friendly packaging, ethical sourcing, or waste reduction

Statistics		
Business adopted sust pract		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.94
Std. Error of Mean		.108
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		1.081
Variance		1.168
Skewness		-.663
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.843
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Business adopted sust pract					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	16	16.0	16.0	16.0
	Neutral	13	13.0	13.0	29.0
	Agree	32	32.0	32.0	61.0
	Strongly Agree	39	39.0	39.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.1: Adoption of Sustainable Practices- I

(Source: Created by Author)

According to the majority of the individuals, accounting to almost 39% of those surveyed, strongly agreed that the beauty sector businesses they are in have adopted sustainable practices. This is followed by 32% of them just agreeing to this (Refer to Table 4.6.1). For example, the beauty sector businesses from the SME category ensure that there is use of renewable sources

of energy for powering up the interiors of the spa or salon, along with using products/cosmetics which are animal cruelty-free (Confetto et al., 2023).

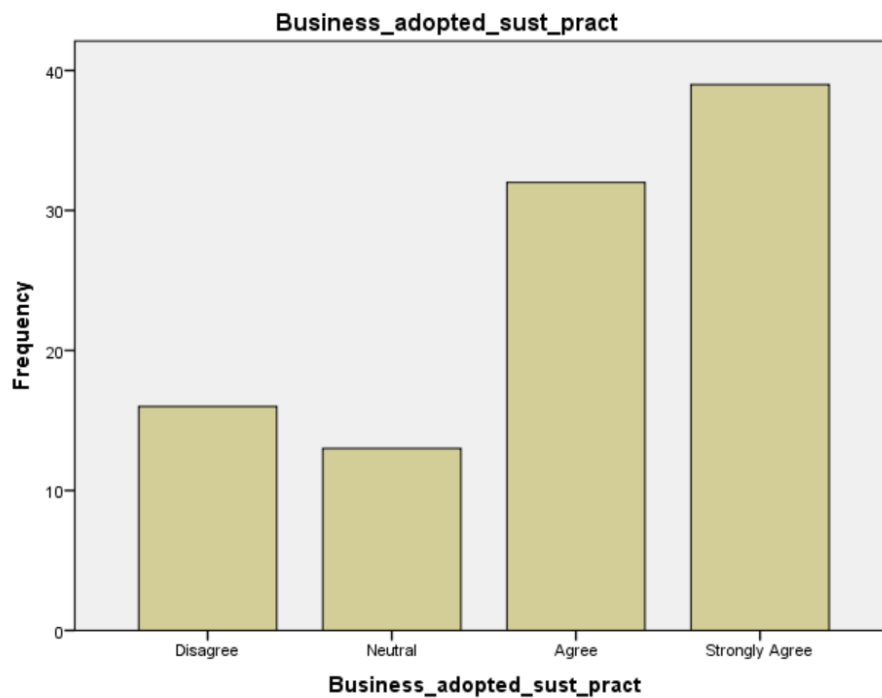


Figure 4.6.1: Adoption of Sustainable Practices- I

(Source: Created by Author)

Our business has focused on implementing Circular Economy (CE) approach to ensure reduction of wastages .

Statistics		
Business Circular Economy		
N	Valid	99
	Missing	1
Mean		3.73
Std. Error of Mean		.123
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		1.219
Variance		1.486
Skewness		-.907
Std. Error of Skewness		.243
Kurtosis		-.091
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.481

Business_Circular_Economy					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	8.0	8.1	8.1
	Disagree	10	10.0	10.1	18.2
	Neutral	12	12.0	12.1	30.3
	Agree	40	40.0	40.4	70.7
	Strongly Agree	29	29.0	29.3	100.0
	Total	99	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.0		
Total		100	100.0		

Table 4.6.2: Adoption of Sustainable Practices- II

(Source: Created by Author)

The businesses with which the respondents are associated engage in circular economy, as indicated by 40% of them agreeing and another 29% just agreed to this (Refer to Table 4.6.2). In this way, the beauty sector businesses are engaging in contributions towards wastage reduction and is abiding by environmental measures (Le, 2025).

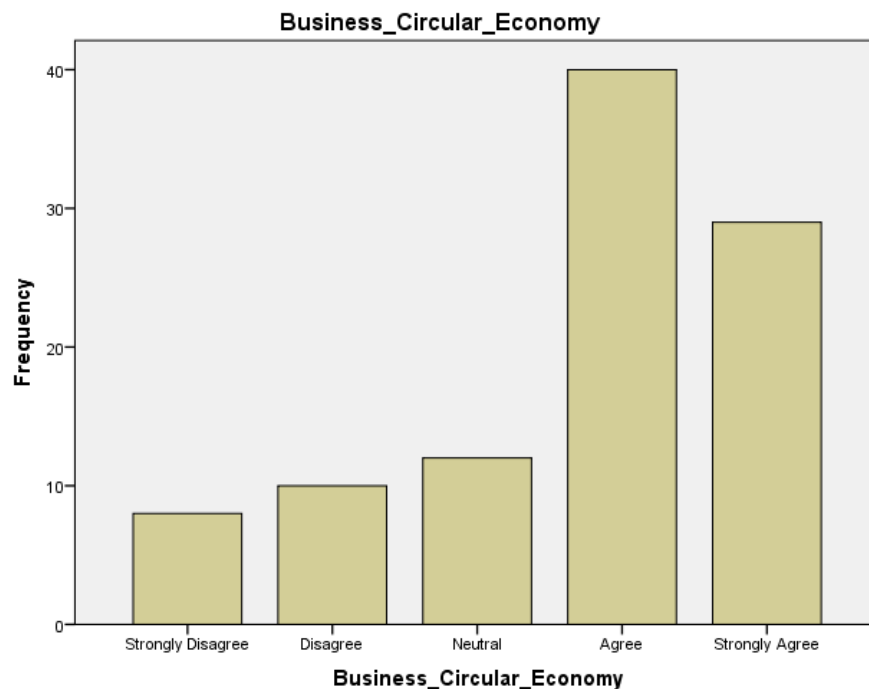


Figure 4.6.2: Adoption of Sustainable Practices- II

(Source: Created by Author)

There is promotion of doing business practices by following animal cruelty free principles

Statistics		
Prom_business_animal_cruelty_free		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.67
Std. Error of Mean		.126
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		1.264
Variance		1.597
Skewness		-.944
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.112
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Prom_business_animal_cruelty_free					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	11.0	11.0	11.0
	Disagree	8	8.0	8.0	19.0
	Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	30.0
	Agree	43	43.0	43.0	73.0
	Strongly Agree	27	27.0	27.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.3: Adoption of Sustainable Practices- III

(Source: Created by Author)

From the survey responses collected, it has been identified that 43% of the employees agreed to the fact that their beauty sector businesses promote animal cruelty-free products (Refer to Table 4.6.3). A business in the beauty sector needs to ensure that such product usage awareness is generated among customers coming in their salon or spa and wellness centres (Chen, 2024).

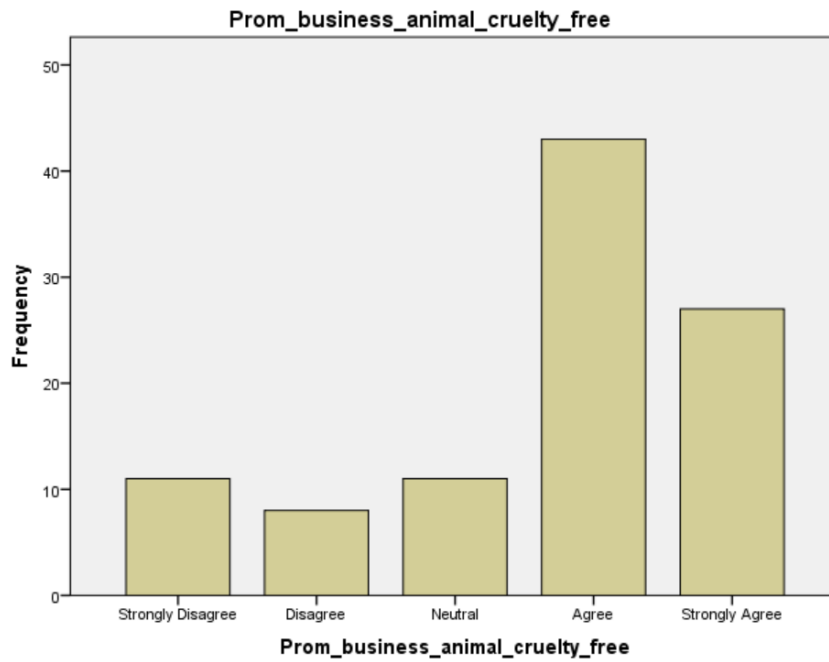


Figure 4.6.3: Adoption of Sustainable Practices- III

(Source: Created by Author)

II. Benefits of Sustainable Practices

Implementing sustainability has improved our brand reputation and customer loyalty.

Statistics		
Impl Sust improved Brand Rep		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.77
Std. Error of Mean		.118
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		1.179
Variance		1.391
Skewness		-.822
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.283
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Impl_Sust_improved_Brand_Rep					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	5.0

	Disagree	14	14.0	14.0	19.0
	Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	30.0
	Agree	39	39.0	39.0	69.0
	Strongly Agree	31	31.0	31.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.4: Benefits of Sustainable Practices - I

(Source: Created by Author)

39% of the respondents agreed, and another 31% of them strongly agreed to the fact that implementing sustainability has improved brand reputation and also enhanced the customer loyalty factor (Refer to Table 4.6.4). This is due to the fact that the businesses in the beauty sector from the SME category tend to gain the trust of customers by making business operations sustainable (Cristache, Pricopoaia and Murariu, 2024). For example, customers are taken care of by using good quality cosmetics and providing value for money, along with using renewable sources of energy, as well as making people aware of cosmetics which are animal cruelty-free (Fortunati, Martiniello and Morea, 2020). It helps in improving the trust of customers in the brand products and services provided by beauty brands in the UK (Ottman, 2017).

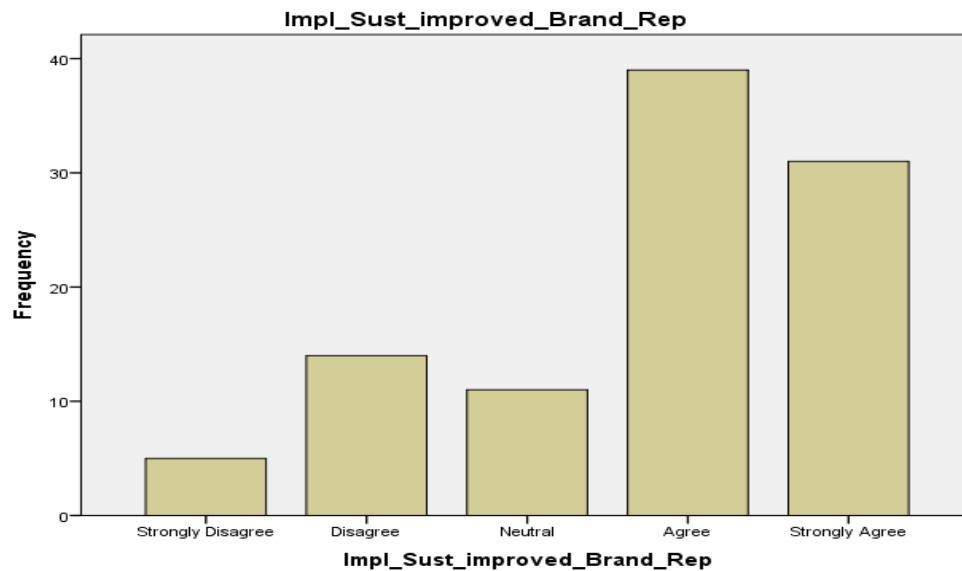


Figure 4.6.4: Benefits of Sustainable Practices - I

(Source: Created by Author)

Sustainable practices have helped reduce operational costs (e.g., energy, waste management).

Statistics		
Sust_reduce_ope_cost		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.75
Std. Error of Mean		.117
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		1.167
Variance		1.361
Skewness		-.820
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.245
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Sust_reduce_ope_cost					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Disagree	14	14.0	14.0	19.0
	Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	30.0
	Agree	41	41.0	41.0	71.0
	Strongly Agree	29	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.5: Benefits of Sustainable Practices - II

(Source: Created by Author)

Sustainable practices have led to a reduction of operational cost, as with the help of renewable sources of energy, there is a saving of electricity bills in the long term. This has been agreed by 41% of the respondents, and another 29% strongly agreed to this fact (Refer to Table 4.6.5). This is due to fact that there might be high upfront costs associated with the installation of renewable energy sources (Chin et al., 2018). Waste management ensures that there is a need to engage in having the technology to recycle plastic wastes, and it saves operational cost in the long-term; however, it requires high investment in the short-term for installation of the required infrastructure (Aulina and Yuliati, 2017).

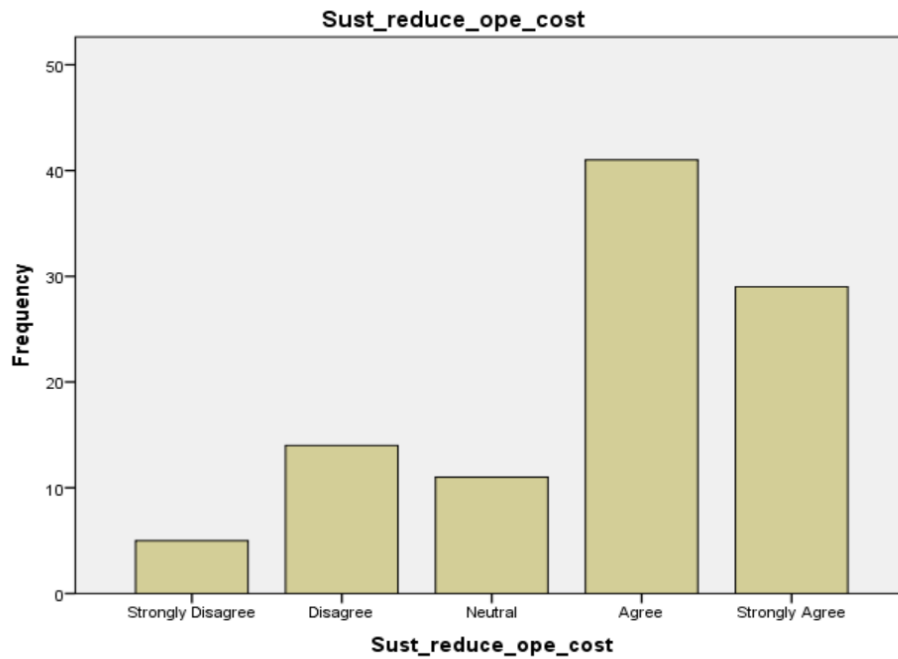


Figure 4.6.5: Benefits of Sustainable Practices - II

(Source: Created by Author)

Sustainability initiatives have encouraged innovation and product development in our business.

Statistics		
Sust ini innova product dev		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.83
Std. Error of Mean		.126
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		1.264
Variance		1.597
Skewness		-1.021
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		.027
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Sust ini innova product dev					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
	Disagree	8	8.0	8.0	17.0
	Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	28.0
	Agree	35	35.0	35.0	63.0

	Strongly Agree	37	37.0	37.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.6: Benefits of Sustainable Practices - III

(Source: Created by Author)

Sustainability initiatives have led to product innovation as well as facilitated the development of new brand products in business (Jaini et al., 2020). 35% of the respondents have agreed to this, and another 37% of them strongly agreed to this aspect that with sustainability policies in place, there is improvement in the product innovation factor (Refer to Table 4.6.6). Due to sustainability initiatives, there is identification of new product formulae by beauty brands which are made from organic products and also ensure animal-cruelty-free products are made use (Bom, Ribeiro and Marto, 2020).

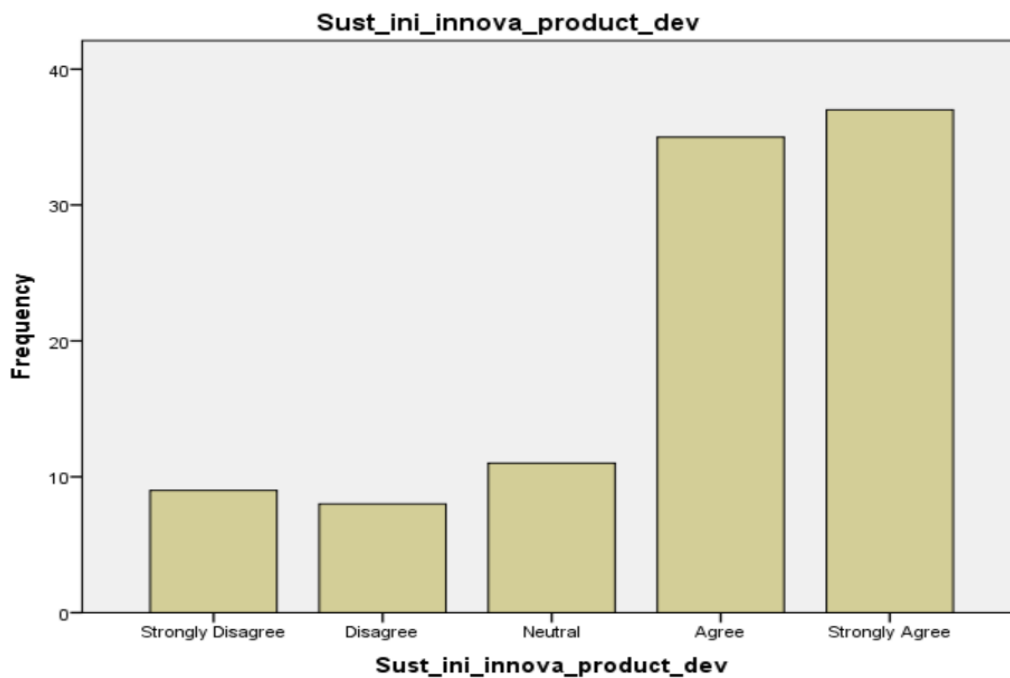


Figure 4.6.6: Benefits of Sustainable Practices - III

(Source: Created by Author)

Adopting sustainability has enhanced our competitiveness in the beauty market.

Statistics		
Adopt_sust_enhanced_competitiveness		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.81
Std. Error of Mean		.113
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		1.134
Variance		1.287
Skewness		-.845
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.135
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Adopt_sust_enhanced_competitiveness					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Disagree	13	13.0	13.0	17.0
	Neutral	12	12.0	12.0	29.0
	Agree	40	40.0	40.0	69.0
	Strongly Agree	31	31.0	31.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.7: Benefits of Sustainable Practices - IV

(Source: Created by Author)

The competitiveness factor of beauty brands increases through the adaptation of sustainability in the beauty market. This is due to the fact that with the adoption of sustainability principles, the emotional connection with customers increases as they assume that the business is taking care of the planet Earth as well as society (Chin et al., 2018). More sales happen if the beauty salon or spa centres use cosmetics, oils made from natural ingredients (Singh, Kapoor and Misra, 2019). There is also an increase in positive image as an employer if local people of the region are given jobs after training, and hence, it leads to the satisfaction level of community people (Aulina and Yuliati, 2017). 40% of them agreed to this, and another 31% strongly agreed to this aspect. 13% disagreed, whereas 12% stayed neutral. 4% of the individuals strongly disagreed (Refer to Table 4.6.7).

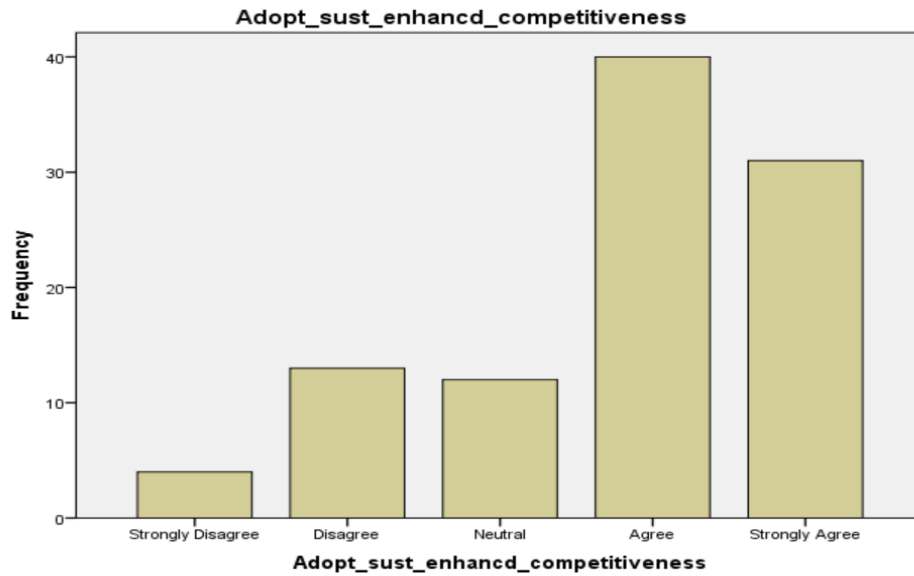


Figure 4.6.7: Benefits of Sustainable Practices - IV

(Source: Created by Author)

III. Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes

Limited financial resources make it difficult for our business to invest in sustainability.

Statistics		
Limited_fin_res_business_invest_sustnblty		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.82
Std. Error of Mean		.123
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		1.234
Variance		1.523
Skewness		-.932
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.140
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Limited_fin_res_business_invest_sustnblty					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Disagree	11	11.0	11.0	18.0
	Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	29.0
	Agree	35	35.0	35.0	64.0

	Strongly Agree	36	36.0	36.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.8: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-I

(Source: Created by Author)

One of the challenges faced by the beauty brands is the lack of financial resources in implementing sustainable policies, and this has been strongly agreed by 36% of the respondents (Refer to Table 4.6.8). 35% of the respondents have agreed to this aspect, and hence, it can be stated as one of the major challenges regarding abiding by the business ethics, such as sourcing from suppliers at a higher cost of the organic ingredients for making the cosmetic products.

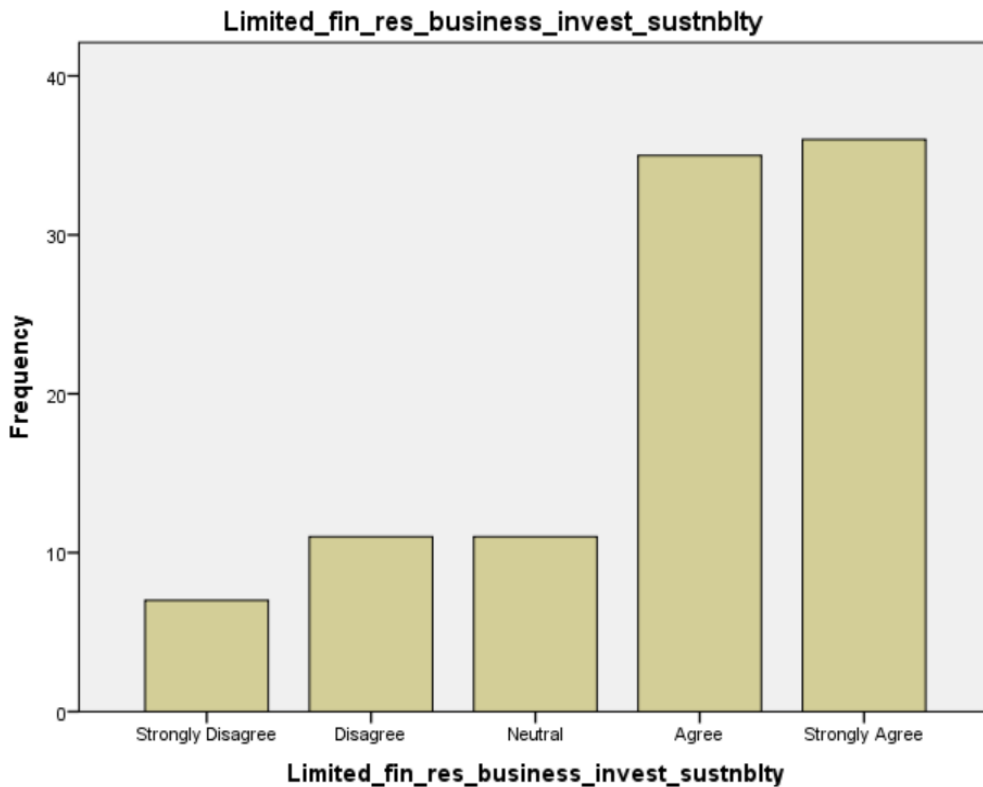


Figure 4.6.8: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-I

(Source: Created by Author)

Our business lacks sufficient knowledge or technical expertise to implement sustainable practices effectively.

Statistics		
Business_lackssuff technical_expt imp_susta		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.72
Std. Error of Mean		.117
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		1.173
Variance		1.375
Skewness		-.929
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		.041
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Business_lackssuff technical_expt imp_susta					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Disagree	11	11.0	11.0	18.0
	Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	29.0
	Agree	45	45.0	45.0	74.0
	Strongly Agree	26	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.9: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-II

(Source: Created by Author)

45% of the individuals agreed that the business in beauty sector in UK lacked having technical expertise and it has led to less innovation of new products made in an organic manner from ethically sourced ingredients (Refer to Table 4.6.9). A total of 26% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement, indicating that innovation within beauty brands remains underdeveloped. In contrast, 11% of participants disagreed, while a further 7% strongly disagreed.

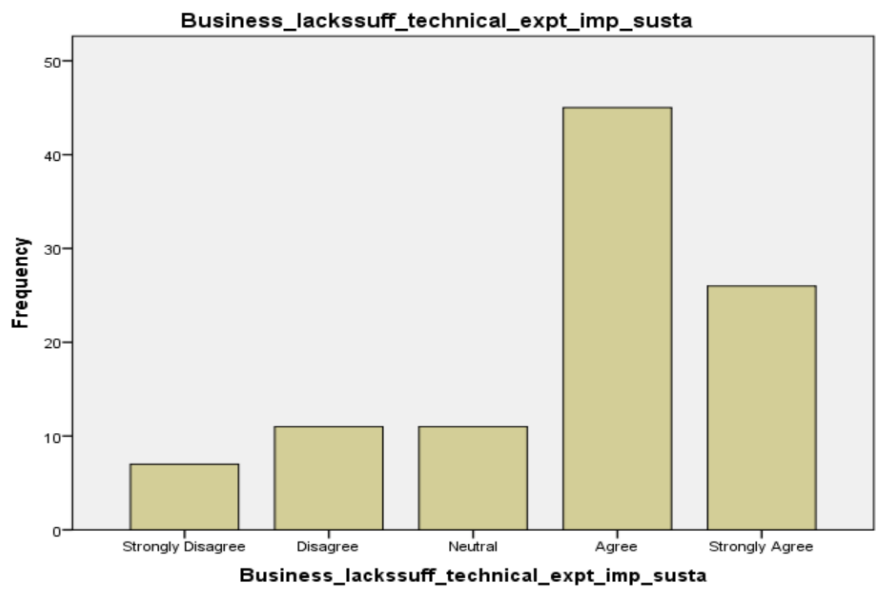


Figure 4.6.9: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-II

(Source: Created by Author)

Constantly changing government regulations make it challenging to remain compliant.

Statistics		
Changing_Govt_regu_remain_compliant		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.81
Std. Error of Mean		.120
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		1.203
Variance		1.448
Skewness		-.902
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.147
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Changing_Govt_regu_remain_compliant					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	6.0	6.0	6.0
	Disagree	12	12.0	12.0	18.0

	Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	29.0
	Agree	37	37.0	37.0	66.0
	Strongly Agree	34	34.0	34.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.10: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-III

(Source: Created by Author)

The Government regulations are changing on continuous basis and is making it uncertain to do business for beauty brands as at different instances of time, there is need of using different products (Ten Kate and Laird, 2019). 37% of the individuals agreed to this and another 34% strongly agreed to this (Refer to Table 4.6.10). 12% disagreed and another 6% strongly disagreed to this aspect.

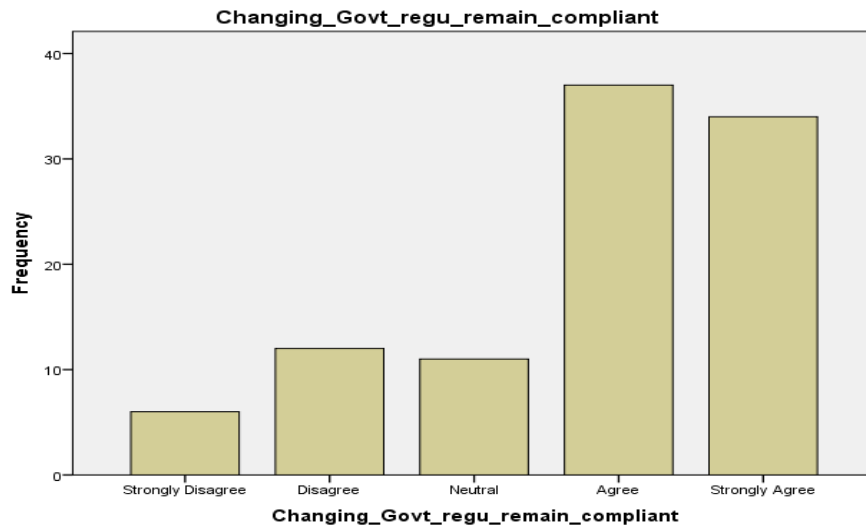


Figure 4.6.10: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-III

(Source: Created by Author)

Sustainability initiatives increase short-term costs and affect profit margins.

Statistics		
Sust_initiatives_increase_short_t erm_cost_profit		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.87
Std. Error of Mean		.121
Median		4.00
Mode		5

Std. Deviation	1.212
Variance	1.468
Skewness	-.893
Std. Error of Skewness	.241
Kurtosis	-.263
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.478

Sust initiatives increase short term cost profit				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
Disagree	13	13.0	13.0	18.0
Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	29.0
Agree	32	32.0	32.0	61.0
Strongly Agree	39	39.0	39.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.11: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-IV

(Source: Created by Author)

39% of the employees have strongly agreed to this and another 32% just agreed. 13% disagreed to this whereas 5% strongly disagreed (Refer to Table 4.6.11). This is the reason due to which many beauty sector businesses from SMEs do not abide by sustainability measures and continue business in the way they are doing (Agu *et al.*, 2024).

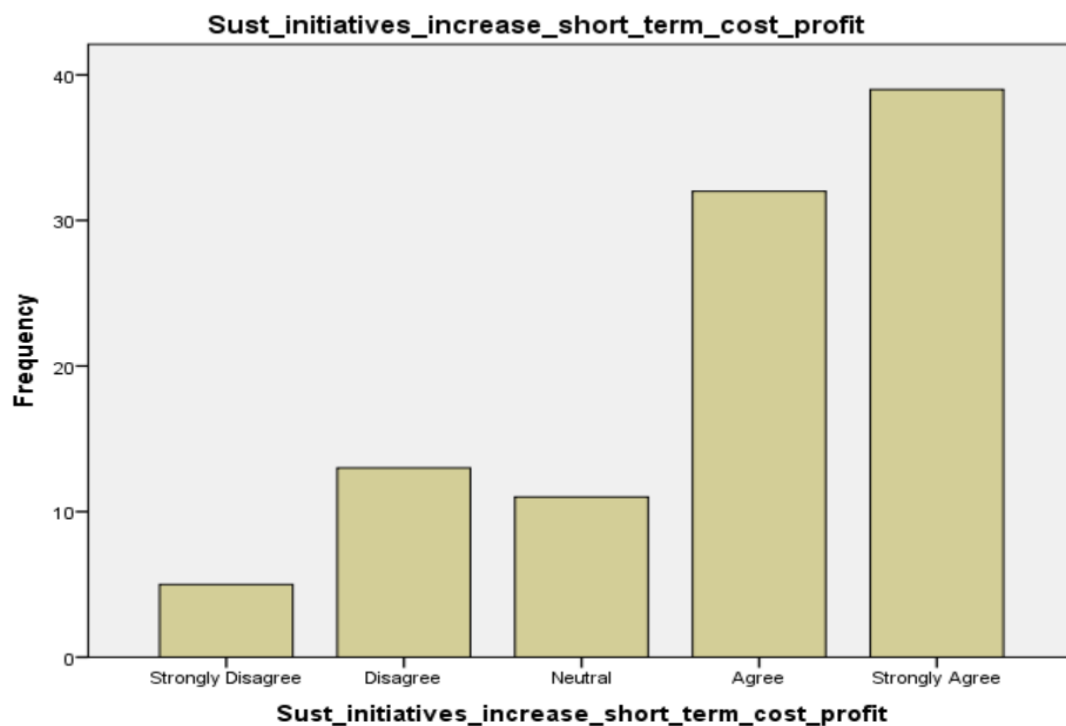


Figure 4.6.11: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-IV

(Source: Created by Author)

Despite challenges, sustainability contributes positively to our long-term business performance.

Statistics		
Despite_challenges_sust_contr_p ositively_long_term		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.72
Std. Error of Mean		.125
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		1.248
Variance		1.557
Skewness		-.914
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.155
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Despite_challenges_sust_contr_positively_long_term					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
	Disagree	10	10.0	10.0	19.0
	Neutral	11	11.0	11.0	30.0
	Agree	40	40.0	40.0	70.0
	Strongly Agree	30	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.12: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-V

(Source: Created by Author)

30% strongly agree with the fact that, despite challenges in implementing the sustainability initiatives, long-term business performance improves, and another 40% agree with this (Refer to Table 4.6.12). This showed that the majority of the individuals identify that despite the short-term cost or expenses, the long-term benefits is obtained. This involves an increase in brand

image due to abiding by ethical sourcing measures, as well as using animal cruelty-free brands, which leads to an increase in sales revenue as customers get interested in buying from a sustainably operating brand (Moslehpour et al., 2023)

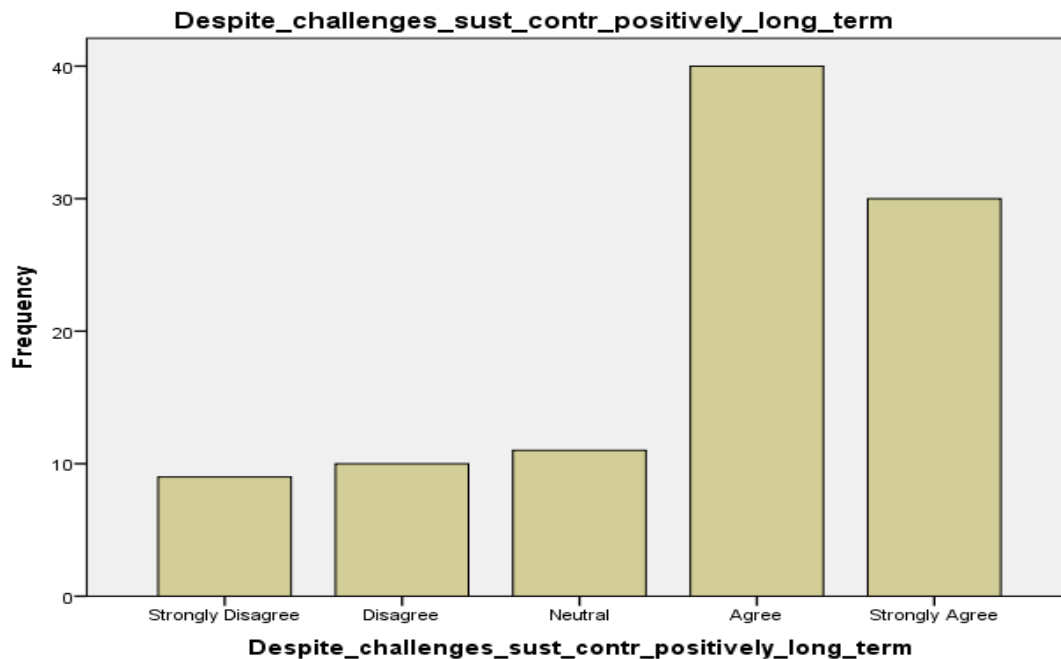


Figure 4.6.12: Challenges and Organisational Performance Outcomes-V

(Source: Created by Author)

IV. Which of the following strategies would support your business in adopting sustainable practices?

Statistics		
Following strategies support business sust pract		
N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		3.00
Std. Error of Mean		.115
Median		3.00
Mode		3
Std. Deviation		1.146
Variance		1.313
Skewness		-.247
Std. Error of Skewness		.241
Kurtosis		-.491
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.478

Following strategies support business sust pract					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Government incentives (e.g., tax reductions or grants)	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Training programmes or workshops on sustainability	11	11.0	11.0	26.0
	Financial support from banks or investors	42	42.0	42.0	68.0
	Collaboration with suppliers and customers	23	23.0	23.0	91.0
	Clear and consistent government regulations and standards for SMEs in the beauty sector	9	9.0	9.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6.13: Following strategies would support your business in adopting sustainable practices

(Source: Created by Author)

The survey findings indicate that several strategies can be adopted to mitigate the challenges encountered by UK beauty-sector SMEs when implementing sustainable practices. This involves, according to 42% of the individuals if financial support from banks or investors. Beauty care and cosmetics brands can invest in making products in an organic manner and source ingredients ethically (OXBORROW and BRINDLEY, 2013). It is only possible when there is availability of required funds and financial institutions provide help. 23% of the individuals agreed that there is a need to have a good relationship with suppliers and vendors so that the required materials can be supplied ethically (Refer to Table 4.6.13). Government regulations keep on changing regarding the usage of ingredients in making cosmetics, and they impose a challenge in identifying or keeping updated with the ingredients which can be used (Durrani Brown and Johnson, 2024).

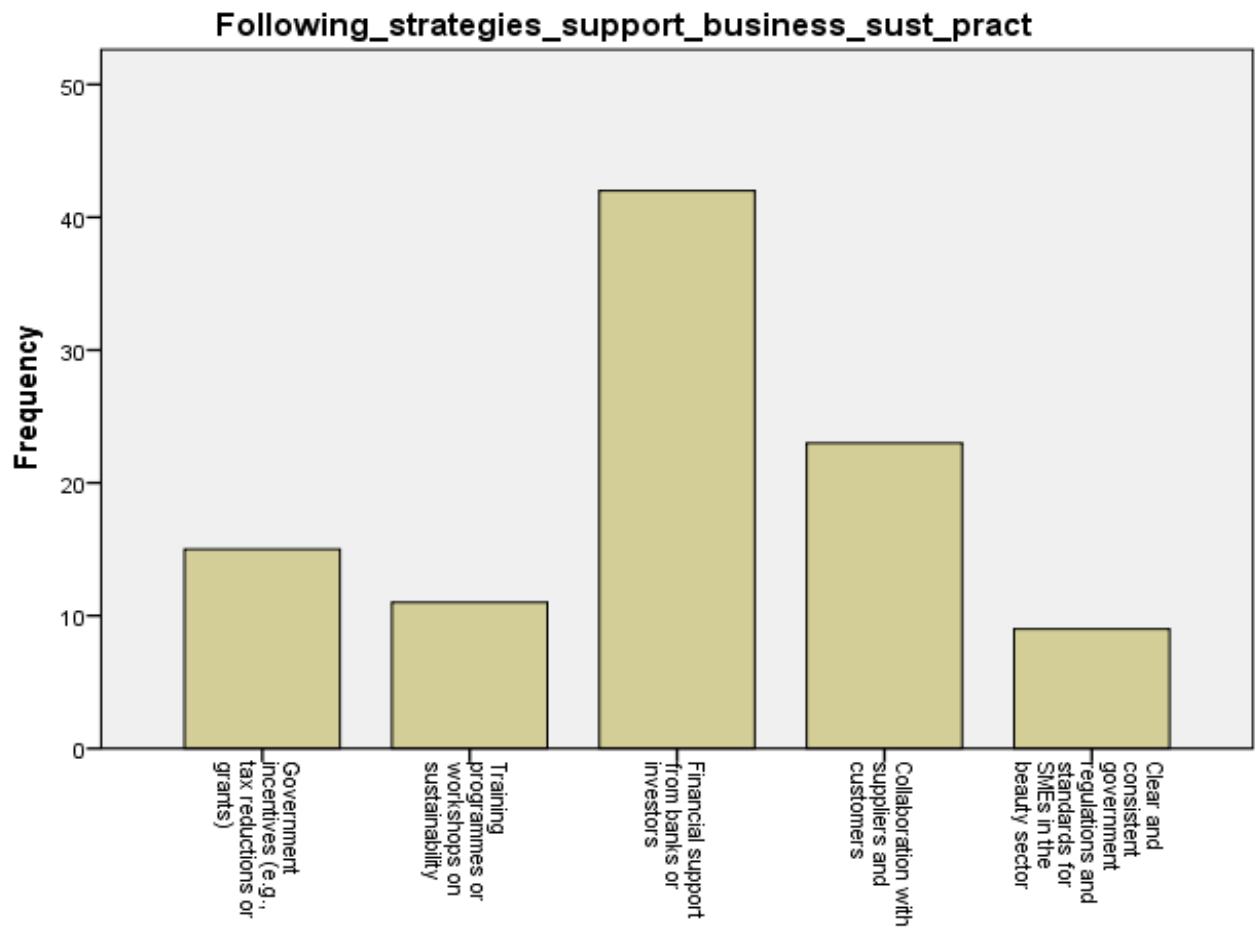


Figure 4.6.13: Following strategies would support your business in adopting sustainable practices

(Source: Created by Author)

4.6.2 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Correlations					
		Following_strategies_support_business_sust_pract	Adoption_Extent	Benefits_Sust_Pract	Challenges
Following_strategies_support_business_sust_pract	Pearson Correlation	1	.225*	.243*	.254*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.025	.015	.011

	N	100	99	100	100
Adoption_Extent	Pearson Correlation	.225*	1	.959**	.943**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.025		.000	.000
	N	99	99	99	99
Benefits_Sust_Pract	Pearson Correlation	.243*	.959**	1	.976**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.000		.000
	N	100	99	100	100
Challenges	Pearson Correlation	.254*	.943**	.976**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.000	.000	
	N	100	99	100	100
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Table 4.6.14: Pearson Correlation Analysis

(Source: Created by Author)

The Pearson correlation coefficient between strategies that support sustainable practices and their implementation within beauty brands, in relation to the benefits derived, is 0.959, which is very close to +1.000 (see Table 4.6.14). This indicates a strong positive relationship between the variables. Conversely, the application of sustainability principles also highlights key challenges, particularly where the adoption of circular economy (CE) approaches requires substantial infrastructure investment, thereby increasing costs and creating financial pressures (Lin, 2018). This relationship is supported by a Pearson correlation value of 0.943, also approaching +1.000. Furthermore, the implementation of sustainability strategies by beauty brands may be facilitated through financial support mechanisms, such as UK government incentives or bank financing (Durrani, Brown and Johnson, 2024). However, this association is comparatively weak, as reflected by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.243, suggesting

that adoption is largely dependent on the specific strategies employed and their long-term sustainability.

4.6.3 Regression Analysis

Regression Analysis 1

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.960 ^a	.921	.919	1.58453	.921	556.996	2	96	.000	2.068

a. Predictors: (Constant), Following_strategies_support_business_sust_pract, Adoption_Extent

b. Dependent Variable: Benefits_Sust_Pract

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2796.930	2	1398.465	556.996	.000 ^b
Residual	241.030	96	2.511		
Total	3037.960	98			

a. Dependent Variable: Benefits_Sust_Pract

b. Predictors: (Constant), Following_strategies_support_business_sust_pract, Adoption_Extent

Table 4.6.15: Regression Analysis- I

(Source: Created by Author)

The regression analysis indicates that the extent to which sustainability practices are adopted by beauty-sector SMEs has a significant influence on the benefits derived from these initiatives. This relationship is statistically supported by a p-value of 0.001, which is below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05. The model produced an R-value of 0.960 and an adjusted R-squared value of 0.919 (see Table 4.6.15), suggesting that approximately 91.9% of the variance in the benefits experienced by beauty SMEs can be explained by the implementation of sustainability practices.

Regression Analysis 2

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.944 ^a	.891	.889	1.89438	.891	392.689	2	96	.000	1.838

a. Predictors: (Constant), Following_strategies_support_business_sust_pract, Adoption_Extent

b. Dependent Variable: Challenges

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2818.476	2	1409.238	392.689	.000 ^b
	Residual	344.514	96	3.589		
	Total	3162.990	98			
a. Dependent Variable: Challenges						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Following_strategies_support_business_sust_pract, Adoption_Extent						

Table 4.6.16: Regression Analysis- II

(Source: Created by Author)

There are certain challenges that are faced by businesses from beauty sector brands in implementing the sustainability practices. This is validated by the R-value of 0.944 and Adjusted R-Square value is evaluated to be 0.899 (Refer to Table 4.6.16). The Adjusted R-Square value is 89.9% (co-efficient value) and hence, it can be stated that there is a direct relationship in between implementation process of the sustainability aspects impacting the extent of challenges faced. With support from the Government bodies and suppliers abiding by ethical sourcing strategy, the challenges of implementing the sustainability policies decreases (Durrani, Brown and Johnson, 2024). Moreover, also based on the policies of giving job to local people, employment is generated by the business related to beauty sector in UK.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

4.7.1 Main benefits of adopting sustainable practices for SMEs in UK beauty industry

The research is done to identify the benefits that the beauty brands obtain from adopting the sustainability measures. This objective has been addressed by asking questions regarding the different benefits that the beauty brands from the SME sector in the UK obtained. It has been identified, according to the majority of the respondents, that there has been an increase in operational effectiveness, as with the circular economy (CE) approach, plastic wastage is reduced. The beauty brands also engage in making innovative products from ethically sourced ingredients and do not engage in animal-cruelty-linked cosmetics (Agu et al., 2024). There is also engagement in ethical sourcing, which leads to positive brand image development as well as an increase in sales revenue. There is also a saving of operational cost as renewable sources of energy are used and hence, the long-term power utility cost decreases. It has been identified from the previous research studies that one needs to engage in eco-friendly packaging so that there can be less use of plastics and a contribution in reducing carbon footprint happens (Moslehpour et al., 2023).

UK beauty sector companies engage in having CE approach so that the plastic wastes can be recycled and make a contribution towards reducing the landfill issue. From previous research studies, it has been identified that there are certain positive impacts of beauty brands abiding by sustainability policies, and this is in alignment with the present findings (Singh, Kapoor and Misra, 2019). For example, promoting the beauty brand with an animal cruelty-free label helps in increasing the positive brand image and brings in more sales. This has been due to the fact that there is an increase in awareness towards using eco-friendly and ethically sourced ingredients as beauty products (Jaini et al., 2020). Beauty brands engaging in reverse logistics are able to identify the eco-friendly ways of developing organic beauty products in a cost-effective manner and also make use of such a process at a large scale to ensure that the market demand is met (Bom, Ribeiro and Marto, 2020).

4.7.2 Challenges faced by beauty sector companies in SME category in UK to implement sustainability initiatives despite certain positive implications

Within SMEs in which the beauty sector brands in UK operates, there is scope of making sure that innovative products are developed as employees are given freedom to do so. However, at times as identified from previous research studies, there happens to be limited financial resources and also less access to technical expertise makes it difficult to have the required

innovation (Ten Kate and Laird, 2019). There is also the objective of identifying the challenges faced by SMEs in beauty sector in implementation of the sustainable practices. This has been addressed by identifying various types of challenges faced such as majority of the surveyed respondents agreed that there is lack of fund in having the implementation of sustainable policies. A lack of technical expertise is also there and it imposes challenges in making innovative cosmetics from organic products (Aulina and Yuliati, 2017).

It has been identified that one of the benefits of having sustainable measures is that of positive brand image and market reputation increases of the brands (Singh, Kapoor and Misra, 2019). This leads to increase in emotional connection with the customers and they make decision to purchase the beauty products from the beauty brands engaged in such sustainability measures (Kapoor and Misra, 2019). This is done as there has been increase in positive impact on the environment and also employment gets generated of the local people. It has been identified that individuals wanted to contribute in lowering the carbon footprint and also spread awareness regarding usage of cosmetics or beauty brands made ethically. This leads to increase in purchase intentions of the beauty products and also use the salon services of those companies which engages in making use of renewable sources of energy (Chin *et al.*, 2018). However, limitation of working capital for small and medium-scale brands imposes challenges of having the required financial resources to implement the sustainability initiatives.

4.7.3 Ways of overcoming the challenges of integration of sustainable initiatives within the beauty sector companies belonging to SMEs in UK

There is need of having support systems and resources so that the transition towards sustainability can be facilitates for the beauty brands operating in UK. This is associated with the recommendations that can be given for overcoming the challenges faced in ensuring implementation of sustainability policies (Jaini *et al.*, 2020). For example, it has been identified that there is need of support from UK Government in form of giving incentives to the beauty brands so that they can have the solar energy infrastructure installed and generate renewable energy (Jaini *et al.*, 2020). Post Brexit, there has been tightening of the frameworks and has led brands to engage in doing sustainable operations. There is need of having greener investment as identified from previous literature work as it helps in improving brand image (Aulina and Yuliati, 2017). In addition to this, there is need of making sure that bank loans are available easily and on easy interest rates so that there can be gain to sustainability measures easily. In addition to this, it is also important to make sure that employees are trained properly

so that they can help in developing innovative products from ethical ingredients and make sure that sustainability standards are maintained.

4.8 Implications of Findings

The research findings implied that beauty brands in the UK belonging to the SME sector need to invest in taking sustainability measures and ensure that brand image increases. There is a need to make sure that ethical sourcing is done by brands in the beauty sector and that cosmetic products are developed from ethically sourced ingredients. It has been identified that beauty brands are engaging in green investments and making sure that there is an increase in the brand image of the company (Chin et al., 2018). This involves developing a brand appeal and influencing the customer perception of buying brand items or using the services of salons, spas or wellness centres, implementing sustainable policies (Ottman, 2017). However, it is also implied from the research study that sustainability initiatives increase the short-term investment required as for doing circular economy (CE), there is a need for high initial investment.

This makes it challenging to implement the sustainable measures a large scale as SMEs undergo constraints in having operational costs. However, in the long-term, it reduces cost as with the CE approach, there is less dependence on buying virgin plastics and also renewable energy used leads to lower cost of power bills for domestic purposes (Cristache, Pricopoaia and Murariu, 2024). The findings imply that there is a need for investment aids from external finances, such as banks or Government incentives, so that the beauty brands can get help in implementing the sustainability measures. There is a need for collaboration with suppliers and a dedicated supplier base so that ethical sourcing is done. However, for SMEs with less bargaining power, it is difficult to have a dedicated supplier chain network unless Government regulations make it mandatory to have ethical sourcing or else, hefty fines will be imposed.

4.9 Limitations

Research limitations lie in fact that only survey is done of 100 employees working across different departments of the beauty brands operating in UK. There could have been interview done of the operational managers to better understand challenges faced in implementing the sustainability initiatives and the decisions that can be taken to overcome them. In future, this can be done by considering operational managers of certain beauty brands and listen to their ideas of how to develop sustainable business plans. There can be interview done of the operational managers to know how they are getting benefitted by having sustainability

measures while doing regular business activities for beauty brands and also issues which need to be resolved so that challenges faced in implementing the sustainability initiatives are nullified.

4.10 Summary

From the chapter done, it can be summarised that there has been a relationship in between the extent to which sustainability initiatives are adopted with that of the brand image improvement obtained by beauty brands in UK belonging to SMEs. There has been increase in positive brand image of the company as customer buying intention are positively influenced by brands promoting cosmetics which are prepared in animal-cruelty free manner. SMEs operating in beauty sector in UK faces financial constraints and is the reason due to which at times, the sustainability initiatives cannot be executed in full potential. It requires aids from Government bodies as well as financial institutions providing help to the companies in beauty sector.

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Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The chapter has helped in concluding the overall research findings along with giving recommendations based on the research findings so that beauty brands in UK from SME category can implement sustainability initiatives. There is also mentioning of the research limitations and future scope of doing research.

5.2 Conclusions on each research issue/objective

The research objective of evaluating benefits of sustainability adoption for SMEs in beauty industry in UK is met by asking employees from the same industry about the advantages obtained. Majority of the respondents agreed that their companies have adopted sustainability initiatives such as eco-friendly packaging and make use of ethically made cosmetics. It has been agreed by majority of the individuals that the beauty brands they work for has engaged in implementing circular economy (CE) initiatives and this has helped in

reduction of wastage. In the long-run, it has helped in reducing cost of operation as the recycled materials are exchanged and less expenses are incurred in buying ingredients made from recyclable wastes such as plastic packages or cosmetics. Ethically sourced ingredients made in animal cruelty-free nature leads to improvement in brand image of the beauty brands and helps in having more sales of the brand products as people feels emotionally connected with the company.

Majority of the respondents (41%) agreed that there is reduction of operational cost in long-term with adaption of sustainability initiatives and it helps in improving accumulated profit level. 37% strongly agreed that sustainability initiatives require product innovation as cosmetic products need to be made from new ingredients that are eco-friendly in nature. This leads to development of new innovative products by beauty brands. However, in doing so there are certain challenges faced such as limited financial resources. The main challenges faced by SMEs from beauty sector from UK in implementing sustainability practices are met through asking about them from employees working in the sector. 45% agreed that beauty brands lack behind in having individuals with right expertise to develop innovative products made from ethically sourced ingredients.

At times, due to belongingness from SME sector, there is not much fund available in hiring skilled employees and also lack in giving infrastructural support for having R&D work done. 39% agreed that short-term costs associated with implementing the infrastructure required for CE leads to resistance from investors and faces issues in having low capital support. However, 40% agreed that despite these challenges there are positive implications of the sustainability initiatives. There are also recommendations or suggestion identified that can be followed so that challenges faced while implementing the sustainability initiatives gets nullified. It has been identified that majority of the respondents agreed (42%) that there is need of having financial support from banks or investors. 23% stated that there is need of having collaboration with suppliers so that they provide ethically sourced ingredients.

5.3 Conclusion on the Research Problem

The research has helped in addressing the problems identified which are faced by beauty brands belonging to SME sectors in UK in implementing sustainability initiatives. There is increase in pressure on having the sustainability initiatives, however, majority of the employees surveyed agreed that there is lack of expertise as well as infrastructure due to higher implementation cost causing barrier in having CE approach for beauty brands. Beauty brands

are not able to appoint highly skilled employees or retain them who will apply design thinking principles and help in having innovative products. The solutions are identified as majority of the employees stated that there is need of having financial support and financial institutions need to give loan so that there can be development of infrastructure for doing CE. It will help in recovering the initial loan amount taken and also give profit as operational cost will get reduced. Employees need to be taken through training programs and workshops so that they can gain skills of innovating new products and also Government bodies need to give tax relaxation so that there is some aid obtained in having less expenses.

5.4 Summary of research findings and outcomes

The research objectives to identify the benefits of sustainable practices for SMEs in beauty industry of UK is addressed through doing primary data collection from individuals associated with working in different departments of the beauty sector businesses. First hand responses are obtained and has helped in better understanding of the benefits that their businesses are getting from implementing different sustainable initiatives. There are different sustainability initiatives that are engaged in such as reducing plastic wastages by adapting circular economy (CE) initiatives, making use of renewable energy sources for powering the equipment as well as giving employment to local people, making use of animal cruelty-free cosmetics (British Beauty Council, 2024). There are synchronisation in between previous research studies done and the data collected from employees in present time, helping in addressing the research objective of identifying benefits of adapting such initiatives. For example, it has been opined by majority of the individuals that adopting CE has led to reduction of wastage and improved brand image of the beauty sector brands. Promotion of business and positioning it as an ethical brand by using organic cosmetics as well as selling those brand items led to increase in brand image.

From previous research studies, it has been identified that brand reputation increases due to beauty brands selling products made from animal cruelty-free ingredients as it connects emotionally with customers aware of the cruelty done with animals during testing phase as well as in making beauty products or cosmetics (Chin *et al.*, 2018). Employees surveyed also agreed that there is benefit obtained of decreased operational cost as renewable energy is used and in long-run it reduces power/energy bills. Employees are also encouraged to think of innovative ingredients to make beauty brand items in a sustainable manner. It helps in positioning the brands as a sustainable one to the customers and leads to increase in positive brand image (Agu

et al., 2024). From previous research studies, it has been identified that positive WOM spreads if a beauty brand makes use of eco-friendly products, however, there is need of having high upfront costs for implementing CE approaches for a beauty sector company from SME category (Aulina and Yuliati, 2017). Sustainability initiatives cause profit in the long-term, however, high investment upfront leads to challenge in doing adoption of renewable sources and investors also hesitate to invest in such initiatives (CHIU, 2018). SMEs lack technical expertise and skilled employees to brainstorm ways of making eco-friendly cosmetics from organic ingredients. Despite these challenges, majority of the employees agreed that sustainability initiatives will add to positives by reducing negative environmental impact, improving brand image, reducing operational cost in the long-run.

5.5 Original Contribution of the research

Contribution of the research work lies in having an understanding of the challenges faced by beauty brands from SME sector in UK regarding adaption of the sustainability initiatives. The research findings has helped in showing ways in which beauty brands are benefitted in having low cost of operations in longer term by adapting sustainability measures such as having CE approach. It helps in making sure that there is more innovative product developed through brainstorming new ideas of how ethically sourced ingredients can be used to make cosmetics. Employees need to be made to engage in workshops and develop skill sets of executing innovative product development ideas. UK Government need to come forward and also financial institutions need to support beauty brands from SME category so that funds are received in making the infrastructure through which CE approach can be realised.

5.6 Limitations of the Research

Limitation of the research is that there might be lagging of in-depth knowing of the plans that are made by beauty brands from SMEs in UK to implement sustainability initiatives. This is due to fact that there is no interview done and has contributed in not been able to know of the upcoming plans made or ways in which the challenges are thought of to be mitigated while implementing the sustainability initiatives. There is also limitation as no specific cosmetic brands or beauty product selling brands are considered for identifying how they have transformed into a sustainable one. This could have been done to identify the ways in which sustainability measures are adapted and how it has helped in adding to the overall operational as well as financial benefits of the companies.

5.7 Recommendations/Areas for further/future research

In future, there could have been research done to identify from the operational managers of beauty brands in UK and compare in between different brands of the ways in which they have adapted sustainability strategies. This could have been done through doing interview and it would have helped in having more in-depth knowledge of the sustainability strategies adapted by the beauty brands. Further research can be done to suggest how the beauty brands can make cost-effective cosmetics from ethically sourced ingredients.

5.8 Summary

From the chapter done, it can be summarised that there is need of having sustainability measures by beauty brands in UK so that less negative impact is made on the environment. Beauty brands using products made in an animal cruelty free manner are able to generate positive brand image and ensure that more sales revenue is obtained. There are challenges faced in having the upfront cost required to engage in taking sustainability initiatives and can be mitigated through financial support from the banks.

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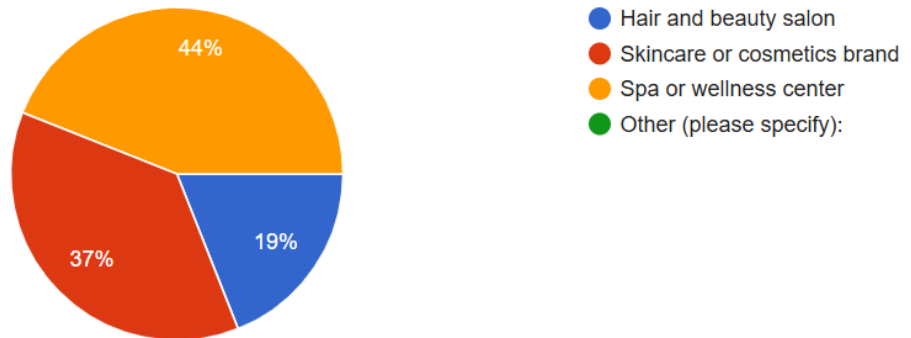
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey Question Responses

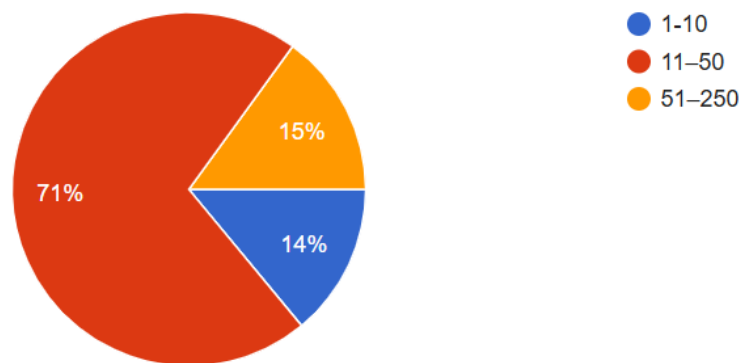
Type of business

100 responses



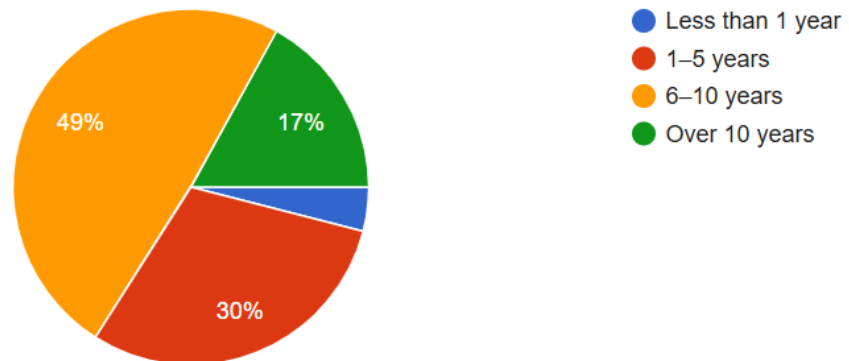
Number of employees

100 responses



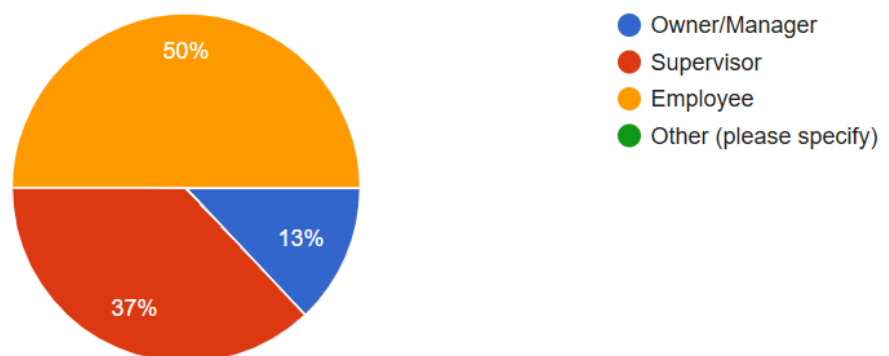
Years the business has been operating

100 responses



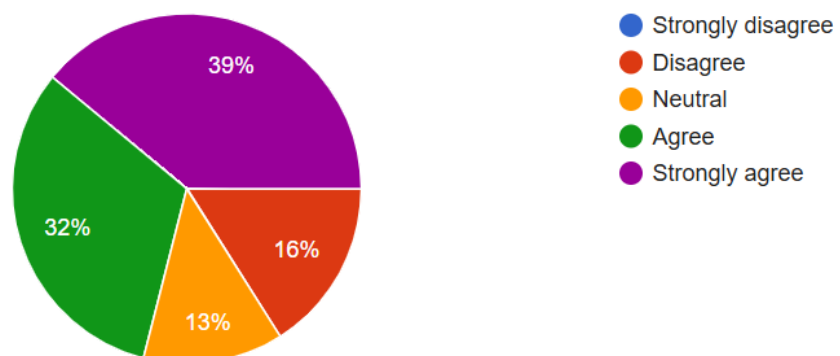
Your position in the business

100 responses



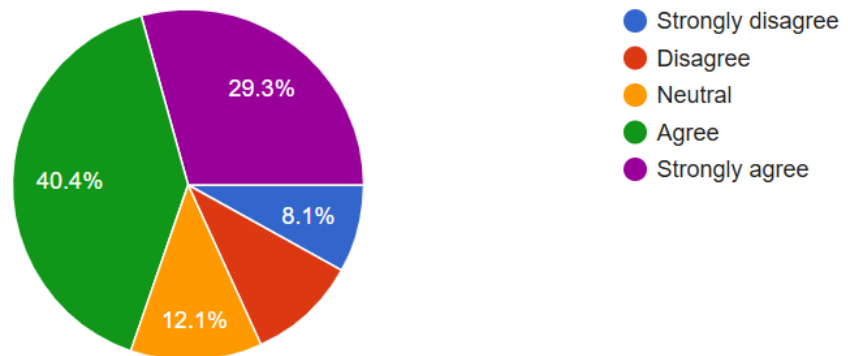
Our business has adopted sustainable practices such as eco-friendly packaging, ethical sourcing, or waste reduction

100 responses



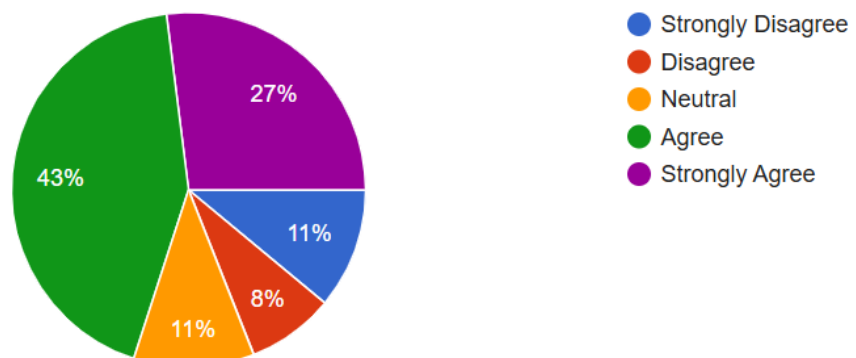
Our business has focused on implementing Circular Economy (CE) approach to ensure reduction of wastages

99 responses



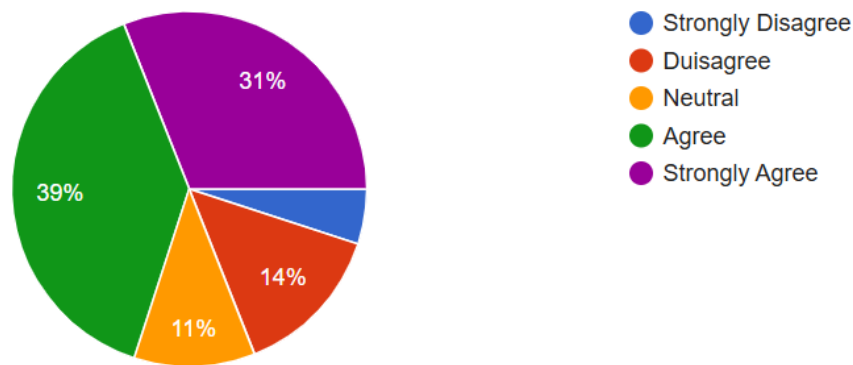
There is promotion of doing business practices by following animal cruelty free principles

100 responses



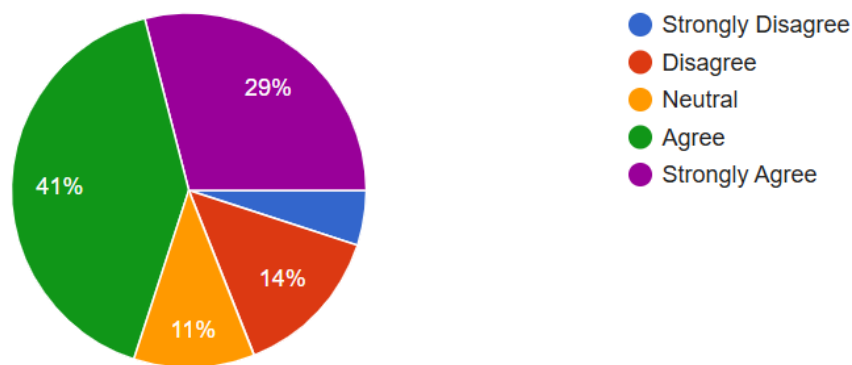
Implementing sustainability has improved our brand reputation and customer loyalty

100 responses



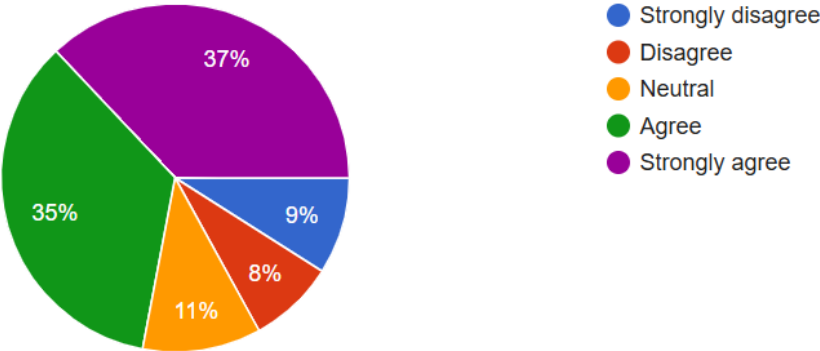
Sustainable practices have helped reduce operational costs (e.g., energy, waste management).

100 responses



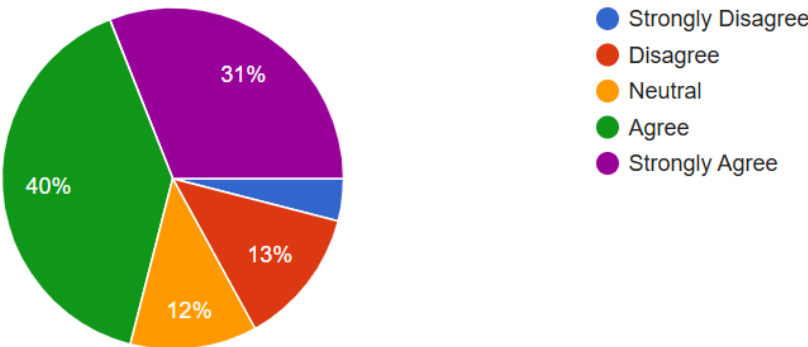
Sustainability initiatives have encouraged innovation and product development in our business

100 responses



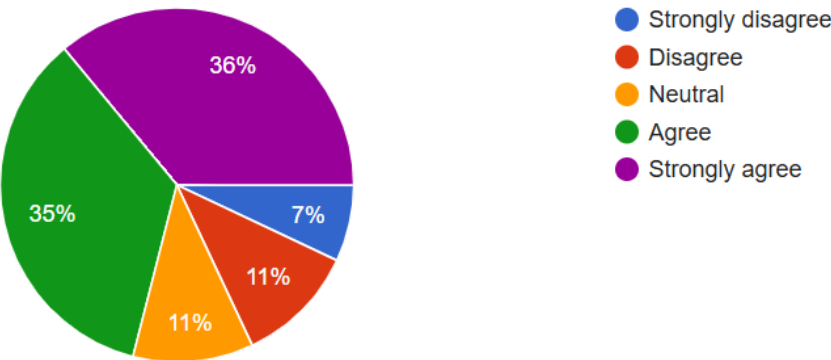
Adopting sustainability has enhanced our competitiveness in the beauty market.

100 responses



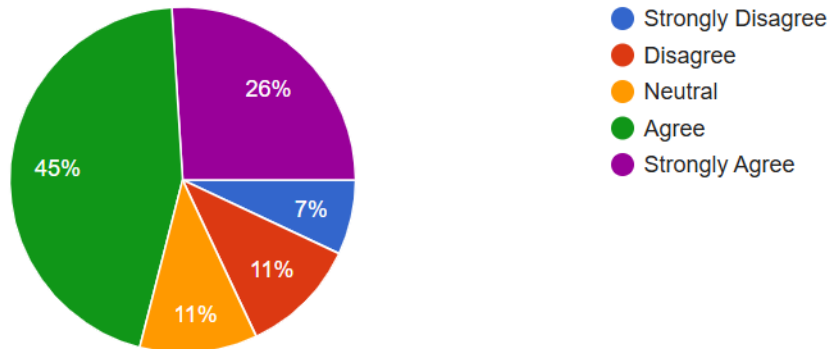
Limited financial resources make it difficult for our business to invest in sustainability

100 responses



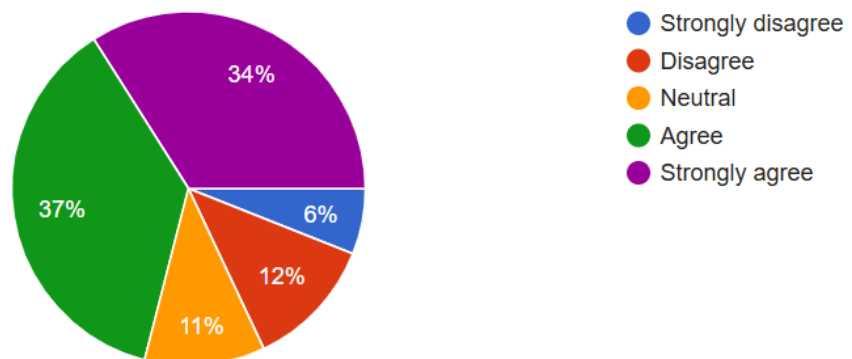
Our business lacks sufficient knowledge or technical expertise to implement sustainable practices effectively

100 responses



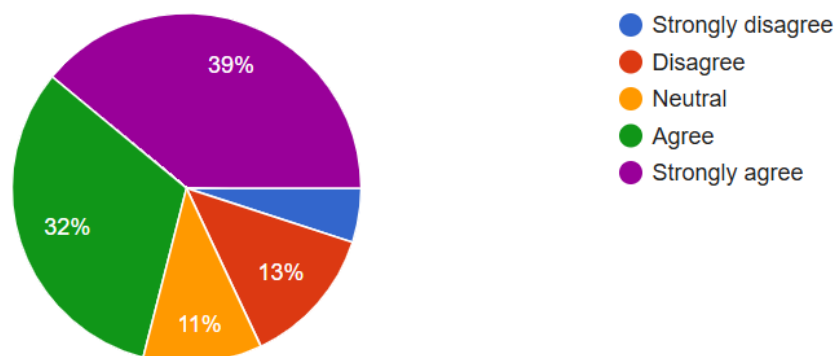
Constantly changing government regulations make it challenging to remain compliant

100 responses



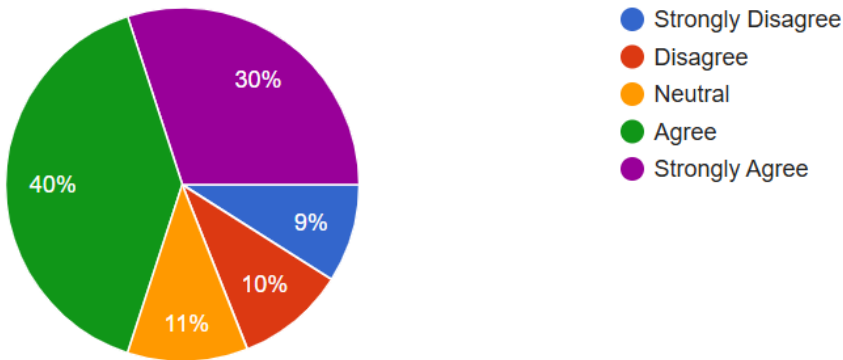
Sustainability initiatives increase short-term costs and affect profit margins

100 responses



Despite challenges, sustainability contributes positively to our long-term business performance

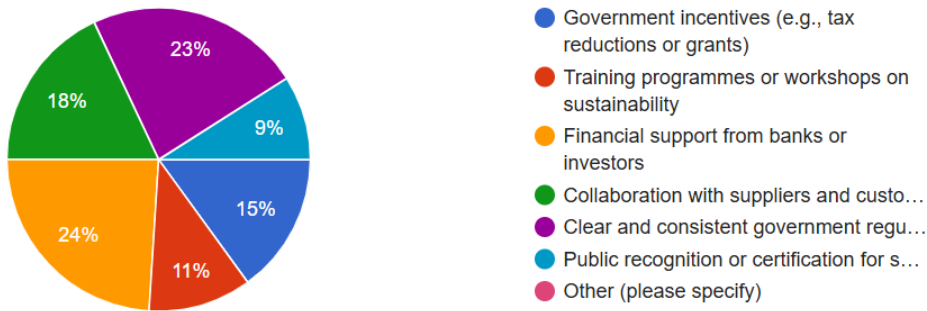
100 responses



Which of the following strategies would support your business in adopting sustainable practices?

 Copy chart

100 responses



Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet



University of Wales Trinity Saint David (London Campus)
Winchester House
11 Cranmer Road
London – SW9 6EJ
Tel: +442075667600
Email: info.london@tsd.ac.uk
londonstudentservice@tsd.ac.uk

Rhif Adnabod Cyfranogwr:
Participant Identification Number:

1917712

FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD

**SAMPLE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION
SHEET**

Teitl Y Prosiect: / Project Title: Benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices: a special focus on SMEs in the UK beauty industry.

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Aurelia Istrati and I am an undergraduate student at University of Wales Trinity Saint David (London Campus), Faculty of Business and Management in University of Wales Trinity Saint David, United Kingdom. At present, I am conducting a research on Benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices: a special focus on SMEs in the UK beauty industry. The purpose of this research is to investigate the advantages, barriers and overall impact of sustainability adoption on the performance and operational practices of SMEs within the UK beauty sector.

I would like to invite you to participate in my research project by answering the attached short questions developed by the researchers. Those questions will assess your opinions, experiences, knowledge, suggestions and views. Through your participation in the interviews, I hope to ascertain my research purpose to get the best opinion from you. I believe your opinion will be extremely helpful to me to carry out this research.

All questions will be kept strictly confidential to the researchers involved and at NO time will individual questions will be released to the general public. This gives you a chance to express your views on your programme a confidential and anonymous forum and still be able to make a difference. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary so you can withdraw from the questionnaire at any stage.

Please note, questionnaire should take no more than 30 minutes to complete but however, there is no time constraint. There are also no right or wrong answers. Attached to this letter along with the

questionnaire there is a consent form where you will better understand researchers intention As this is a new project, your feedback is also important to me and I would be much obliged if you could also complete the feedback sheet along with the questionnaire. I understand that your time is at a premium, but your opinions are very valuable to me.

After careful and precise analysis of the data obtained from this questionnaires/interviews, I will be happy to provide you with a copy of the findings at your request. The results of this questionnaire will hopefully enhance my understanding of current level of knowledge and future findings. The results of the research will be feedback to Director of Studies, Supervisor, University and British Library.

I thank you in advance for your time and participation. If any questions do arise, feel free to contact me at your convenience.

NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER

Aurelia Istrati

3 School House Gardens, IG10 3PD

University of Wales Trinity Saint David (London Campus)

Winchester House

11 Cranmer Road

London – SW9 6EJ

Tel: +442075667600

Email: info.london@tsd.ac.uk

londonstudentservice@tsd.ac.uk

Appendix 3: Participation Consent Form



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

University of Wales Trinity Saint David (London Campus)
Winchester House
11 Cranmer Road
London – SW9 6EJ
Tel: +442075667600
Email: info.london@uwtsd.ac.uk
londonstudentservice@uwtsd.ac.uk

Rhif Adnabod Cyfranogwr:

1917712

Participant Identification Number:

FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD

PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM

Teitl Y Prosiect: / Project Title:

Benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices: a special focus on SMEs in the UK
beauty industry

Enw'r Ymchwilydd / Name of Researcher: Aurelia Istrati

1	I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 11/10/2025 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	Yes
2	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.	Yes
3	I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the research team.	Yes
4	I understand that my name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations.	Yes
5	I agree to take part in the above study.	Yes
Name of Participant		Signature
Researcher	Aurelia Istrati	Signature Aurelia Istrati

You may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. If you decide to remain anonymous, maintaining your anonymity will be a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity. If you prefer anonymity, there will not

be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of this or any interview. No one will hear any audiotapes or see any transcripts without your prior consent. All materials generated from this or any interview will remain confidential.

When completed please return in the envelope provided. One copy will be given to you and the original to be kept on the file of the research team at:

NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER

Aurelia Istrati

3 School House Gardens, IG10 3PD

University of Wales Trinity Saint David (London Campus)

Winchester House

11 Cranmer Road

London – SW9 6EJ

Tel: +442075667600

Email: info.london@uwtsd.ac.uk

—: londonstudentservice@uwtsd.ac.uk

Appendix 4: Application for Ethical Approval

RESEARCH STUDENTS

This form is to be completed by the student within **SIX** months for full-time students and **TWELVE** months for part time students, after the commencement of the research degree or following progression to Part Two of your course.

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

This document is also available in Welsh.

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity. Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Aurelia Istrati			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☒	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student
3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	University of Wales Trinity Saint David			
4	Campus:	London			
5	E-mail address:	1917712@student.uwtsd.ac.uk			
6	Contact Telephone Number:	07402493168			
For students:					
7	Student Number:	1917712			
8	Programme of Study:	Business Management			
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Piyumika K. Gamage			

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☐	NO	☒
				Date	
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
		Institute Research Committee	☐		
		Other (write in)	☐		

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.		
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice	☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	☒
3	<i>[List any other relevant documents here]</i>	☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

If there are external collaborators then you should gain consent from the contact persons to share their personal data with the university. If there are no external collaborators then leave this section blank and continue to section E.

1	Institution					
2	Contact person name					
3	Contact person e-mail address					
4	Is your research externally funded?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
5	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
6	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
7		Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
8	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)?	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	YES	☐	NO	☐
9	Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

10	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
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	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate).
--	---

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Benefits and challenges of adopting sustainable practices: a special focus on SMEs in the UK beauty industry		
2	Proposed start date:	18.10.2025	Proposed end date:	21.12.2025
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> <i>Proposed Research Question</i> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how Existing Research has informed the proposed activity and explain <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>			
3	Purpose of Research Activity The aim of this study is to present a thorough examination of the advantages and difficulties associated with SMEs in the UK beauty sector implementing sustainable practices. By determining these crucial elements, the study seeks to close the existing information gap in the literature about the usefulness of sustainability for small businesses. According to (Saunders, 2019), creating workable answers requires an awareness of the contextual significance of research topics. (this box should expand as you type)			
4	Research Question What are the perceived benefits of adopting sustainable practices for SMEs in the UK beauty industry? What challenges do these SMEs face when implementing sustainable practices? How do sustainable practices influence consumer behaviour within the UK beauty market? What support systems or resources are available to facilitate the transition towards sustainability for SMEs in this sector? (this box should expand as you type)			
5	Aims of Research Activity The aim of this study is to critically examine the benefits and challenges faced by Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the London beauty sector when integrating sustainable practices into their business strategies. (this box should expand as you type)			
6	Objectives of Research Activity			

	Research Objectives: To evaluate the advantages of sustainability adoption for SMEs in the beauty industry. To investigate the key obstacles these businesses, encounter in implementing sustainable practices. To recommend effective strategies for overcoming these challenges and enhancing sustainable integration.
	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	This study adopts a positivist philosophy and a deductive approach, using a quantitative research design centred on surveys to evaluate the benefits and challenges of sustainable practices within UK beauty SMEs. A cross-sectional time horizon is applied, capturing a snapshot of current issues within a structured ten-week schedule that progresses from topic selection to final assessment. Both primary data (survey responses) and secondary sources (academic literature) are used to ensure accuracy, depth, and objectivity in analysis. Ethical principles are central throughout, with informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity strictly maintained in line with the UWTSD Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice. (this box should expand as you type)
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
8	UK (this box should expand as you type)
	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this.
9	N/A (this box should expand as you type)

10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐

11	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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	Does your research relate to one or more of the seven aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	YES	NO
12	A prosperous Wales	☐	☒
13	A resilient Wales	☐	☒
14	A healthier Wales	☐	☒
15	A more equal Wales	☐	☒
16	A Wales of cohesive communities	☐	☒
17	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☐	☒
18	A globally responsible Wales	☐	☒
19	If YES to any of the above, please give details:		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☐	☒
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☒
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒

13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☐	☒
	Details of any other primary data collection method: (this box should expand as you type)		

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	☒
	Details of any other participant groups: (this box should expand as you type)		

	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?	70

		<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
11	Who will the participants be?	The owners and employees of the small and medium businesses in UK Beauty industry <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
12	How will you identify the participants?	The participants will be contacted through social media networks such as LinkedIn and Facebook, in which the questionnaire will be circulated through the identified individuals and groups as working in beauty industry. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☐	☐	☒
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐

28	If YES to any question, please provide full details
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.	
	If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.	
1	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes ☐ No ☒
2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information	
	Risk to participants: There is no risks to the participants since the forms are filled anonymous, and no personal/sensitive data will be collected from the participants. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: Anonymous Google form will be used to collect data <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities	
	N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	Risk to the investigator: There is no risks to the investigator since the data will be collected through anonymous Google form. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: Anonymous Google form will be used to collect data <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	

	Risk to the University: No risk since the research will be conducted by fully following UWTSD ethical code of conduct. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: The data collection will be done by following the UWTSD ethical code of conduct. Moreover the collected data will not be published or shared with 3rd party. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: None <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Disclosure and Barring Service			
	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
7	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐
8	If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "Pending"; in this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number.			

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	Questionnaire will need voluntary participation, and the participants will give clear instructions at the beginning of the survey, which includes all the information about the study, researcher and the their right to be withdrawn at any time. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.

	The questionnaire will be distributed using Google forms and will be fully anonymous. There will no personal/sensitive data collected. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?	YES	NO
1	“Personal data” means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	☐	☒
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	 <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	☒
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	 <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☒	☐
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☐	☒

10	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☐
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	The researcher will use the personal computer and the UWTSD one drive to save the data collected from the participants. The data will be stored securely and will be password protected. Moreover, the data set will not be shared with any third party apart from the exam board upon a formal request. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Data Protection		
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☐	☒
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
20	Data archiving?	☐	☒
21	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and any international equivalents, where appropriate):		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Only the researcher <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
23	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Only the researcher <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
24	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		

	The researcher will use the personal computer and the UWTSD one drive to save the data collected from the participants. The data will be stored securely and will be password protected. Moreover, the data set will not be shared with any third party apart from the exam board upon a formal request <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	No <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
27	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES	☒

SECTION K: Declaration

	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:	Aurelia Istrati	Date: 27.08.2025

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Dr Piyumika K. Gamage	Date: 20/08/2025
3	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
5	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☐	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.

RESEARCH STUDENTS ONLY

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.