International Scientific Journal of Engineering and Management (ISJEM) ISSN: 2583-6129
Volume: 05 Issue: 04 | April – 2026 DOI:10.55041/ISJEM06838
An International Scholarly || Multidisciplinary || Open Access || Indexing in all major Database & Metadata

Institutional Pressures Versus Organisational Capabilities: A Moderated Mediation Analysis of Sustainable Operations in the Emerging Event Industry

Author: **Shukla Jaykumar Rashminbhai**

(Research Scholar of School of Commerce and Management, Sabarmati University, Ahmedabad)

Research Guide: **Prof (Dr.) Lalit Pipliwal**

(School of Commerce and Management, Sabarmati University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India)

Abstract

The event industry is a resource-intensive and fragmented sector that significantly contributes to environmental degradation through waste generation, carbon emissions, and excessive energy consumption. Despite the existence of global sustainability standards like ISO 20121, adoption remains inconsistent in emerging economies such as India. This study investigates the factors influencing the adoption of Green Event Management (GEM) practices in Ahmedabad, India, through an integrated theoretical lens of Institutional Theory and the Theory of Planned Behaviour. Using a quantitative approach with data from 360 event professionals, the research employs Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to test a moderated mediation model. Findings reveal that environmental sensitization serves as a critical partial mediator between external pressures (policy/market influence) and internal stimuli (awareness/attitude) and the operational adoption of green practices. Furthermore, organisational size significantly moderates the relationship between sensitization and practice adoption, indicating that larger firms possess superior capabilities to translate environmental concern into action. The study provides a comprehensive framework for bridging the "knowledge-practice gap" through targeted sensitization and capability building.

Keywords

Green Event Management, Institutional Pressures, Environmental Sensitization, Organizational Size, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), PLS-SEM, Ahmedabad.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Global Imperative for Green Events

Green event management is defined as the deliberate process of incorporating environmental, social, and legacy goals into event planning to decrease adverse effects and generate long-term gains for host communities and ecosystems. Traditionally, the event industry has been viewed as the antithesis of sustainability due to its ephemeral nature, characterized by temporary infrastructure, massive waste generation, and high energy spikes occurring within very tight timeframes. Globally, the industry is transitioning toward quantifiable standards and circular economy models that balance social development with ecological limits. This shift is not merely technical but requires strategic alignment of organizational resources and stakeholder engagement.

1.2 The Event Industry in Ahmedabad: A Complex Urban Setting

Ahmedabad, a major metropolitan hub in Gujarat, hosts a diverse range of cultural, religious, and corporate events. However, the city faces severe urban environmental stressors, including an overstrained waste management system, air quality issues, and extreme heat vulnerability. Traditional event practices—marked by unsegregated waste and high fossil-fuel energy consumption—exacerbate these local crises. While the Indian event industry is increasingly conscious of sustainability requirements, systematic implementation at the city level remains scant, highlighting a significant research gap.

1.3 Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Sustainable event management serves as a localized tool for operationalizing global objectives, particularly SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). By reducing waste and optimizing logistics,

the event industry can significantly lower its carbon footprint. In cities like Ahmedabad, these efforts also support SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), as green events alleviate the strain on urban infrastructure and public spaces. The sensitization of event industry stakeholders is thus a critical pathway to aligning local operations with global climate goals.

1.4 Problem Statement: The Knowledge-Practice Gap

Despite the availability of green guidelines, a persistent "knowledge-practice gap" exists among event professionals. Constraints such as perceived high costs, lack of technical expertise, and weak regulatory enforcement hinder the transition from awareness to action. This research seeks to understand the psychological and institutional mechanisms that bridge this gap. Specifically, it examines how environmental sensitization transforms awareness, attitudes, and policy/market influences into concrete operational actions, while accounting for the moderating roles of organizational size and event type.

2. Literature Review

This research is grounded in the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach, balancing ecological integrity, economic viability, and social equity. To understand organizational responses, the study utilizes Institutional Theory, specifically the three mechanisms of isomorphism: coercive (regulatory), normative (professional standards), and mimetic (competitive imitation). Additionally, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is applied to explain how individual attitudes and perceived control shape behaviour.

1. **Ahmad et al. (2013):** Conceptualized GEM as a holistic decision-making process.
2. **Acquah et al. (2021):** Explored institutional pressures on green practice adoption.
3. **Ajzen (1991):** Defined the foundational link between attitudes and behaviour.
4. **Baah et al. (2021):** Examined the impact of stakeholder pressure on sustainability.
5. **Bahl et al. (2021):** Documented zero-waste pilots in India.
6. **Calzavara (2015):** Utilized ISO 14067 for event carbon foot-printing.
7. **Chang et al. (2025):** Linked coercive pressure to green training.
8. **Charnley et al. (2016):** Analysed resource management and eco-efficiency in exhibitions.
9. **Delmas & Toffel (2004):** Created an institutional framework for stakeholder pressure.
10. **DiMaggio & Powell (1983):** Identified the primary mechanisms of institutional isomorphism.
11. **Holmes et al. (2015):** Highlighted the "sustainability paradox" in events.
12. **Jones (2010):** Provided a comprehensive guide to sustainable event management.
13. **Knowlton et al. (2014):** Documented Ahmedabad's specific heat vulnerability.
14. **Mago et al. (2024):** Postulated environmental sensitivity as a key psychological mediator.
15. **Park et al. (2017):** Developed a Delphi-based sustainability model for conventions.
16. **Takeuchi et al. (2020):** Outlined GHG calculation methods for events.
17. **Toscani et al. (2024):** Conducted a systematic review of event environmental impacts.
18. **Wickham et al. (2021):** Identified strategic resources and capabilities for GEM.
19. **Zeng et al. (2023):** Linked environmental knowledge to risk perceptions and behaviour.
20. **Souza (2020):** Documented "Zero Waste" certifications in emerging markets.
21. **Filho et al. (2024):** Studied intrinsic vs. extrinsic factors in sustainable behaviour.
22. **Mercan et al. (2020):** Defined sensitivity using the Environmental Sensitivity Scale (ESS).
23. **Singh et al. (2014):** Developed TBL indicators specifically for Indian events.
24. **Latif et al. (2020):** Identified coercive pressure as the driver for environmental accounting.
25. **Ambariyanto et al. (2025):** Studied institutional pressures on SME green innovation.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Philosophy

This study utilizes a quantitative, explanatory, and cross-sectional research design. It is grounded in a positivist philosophy, employing numerical data and statistical modelling to identify and explain causal relationships among

variables. The cross-sectional approach was chosen for its efficiency in examining the strength and direction of relationships at a specific point in time.

3.2 Target Population and Sampling Frame

The target population comprises event management professionals (planners, managers, owners, and freelancers) operating in Ahmedabad. Due to the absence of a centralized registry, the study utilized a combination of industry association lists (EEMA, ICPB), online directories, and venue partnerships to identify potential respondents.

3.3 Sampling Strategy

The study employed a non-probability combination of purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive criteria ensured that participants were currently active in Ahmedabad, had at least six months of experience, and held decision-making influence over operations. Snowball sampling allowed the reach to expand through peer referrals.

3.4 Sample Size Determination

The sample size was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula. For a finite population of approximately 3,500 professionals, the required sample was 346. To ensure robustness and account for non-response, the final sample was set at 360 respondents.

3.5 Data Collection and Questionnaire

Primary data were collected via a self-administered online survey (Google Forms). The instrument used 5-point Likert scales (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to measure six main constructs:

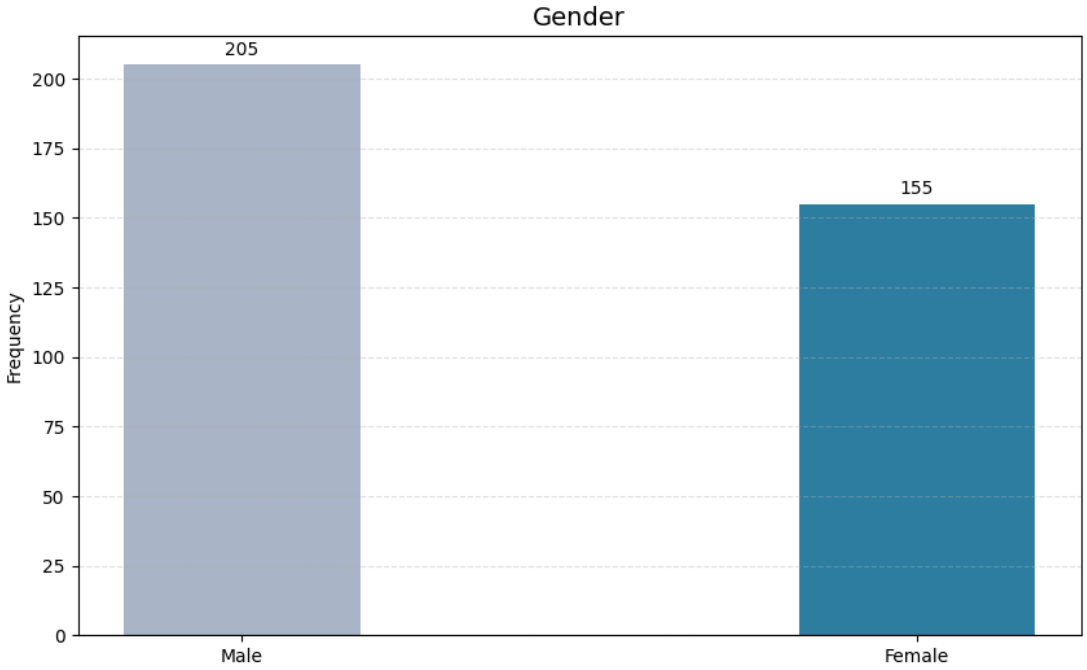
1. **Environmental Awareness (ENVAWR):** 6 items (e.g., fossil fuels, Ahmedabad challenges).
2. **Environmental Attitude (ENVATT):** 6 items adapted from the NEP scale.
3. **Policy & Market Influence (POLMAR):** 5 items (regulatory and client demand).
4. **Sensitization Level (SENLEV):** 6 items (concern, responsibility, motivation).
5. **Green Event Practices (GEP):** 6 items (recycling, plastic reduction, logistics).
6. **Demographics:** Gender, age, role, event type, and organization size.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

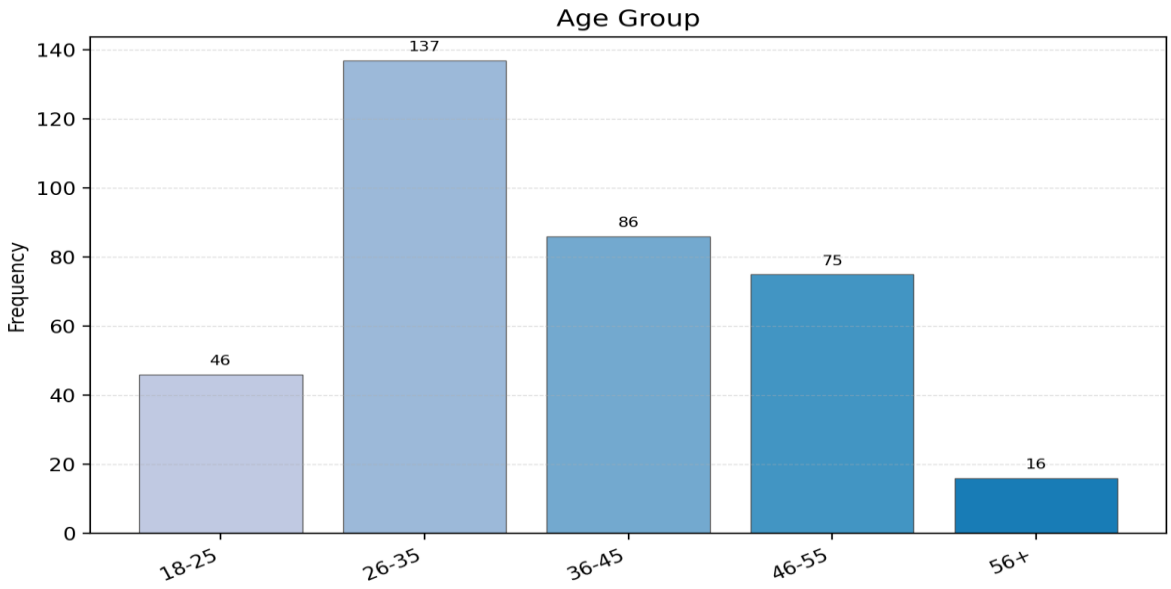
Data were analysed using SPSS 23 for descriptive statistics, data cleaning, and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). SmartPLS 4 was then used for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). This approach is ideal for complex models and focuses on maximizing explained variance (R2).

GENDER (Gender Distribution of Respondents)					
		Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
	Female	155	43.1	43.1	43.1
	Male	205	56.9	56.9	100.0
	Total	360	100.0	100.0	

International Scientific Journal of Engineering and Management (ISJEM)
Volume: 05 Issue: 04 | April – 2026
ISSN: 2583-6129
DOI:10.55041/ISJEM06838
An International Scholarly || Multidisciplinary || Open Access || Indexing in all major Database & Metadata



AGE GROUP				
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
18-25 years	46	12.8	12.8	12.8
26-35 years	137	38.1	38.1	50.8
36-45 years	86	23.9	23.9	74.7
46-55 years	75	20.8	20.8	95.6
56+ years	16	4.4	4.4	100.0
Total	360	100.0	100.0	



Age Distribution of Respondents

4. Findings

The analysis confirms that environmental awareness is the most potent cognitive driver of sensitization, followed by policy influence and evaluative attitudes. Environmental Sensitization serves as a vital psychological pivot; awareness and attitudes do not directly result in behaviour unless they are internalized into a felt sense of responsibility and emotional involvement. The structural model demonstrates that sensitization has an exceptionally strong direct impact on the adoption of green practices. Crucially, the transition from sensitization to action is moderated by organizational size. While sensitization levels may be similar across the industry, larger organizations—with more financial resources and managerial capacity—are significantly more successful in implementing complex sustainable operations compared to small-scale firms and freelancers. Event Type did not significantly moderate the adoption of practices, suggesting sensitization drives behaviour uniformly across social, corporate, and cultural events.

5. Suggestions

5.1 Comprehensive Awareness and Sensitization Campaigns

The findings indicate that information dissemination alone is insufficient to bridge the "value-action gap". Stakeholders should develop awareness campaigns that move beyond generic data to highlight Ahmedabad's specific stressors, such as its waste crisis and heat vulnerability. These campaigns should utilize experiential learning—such as workshops, site visits to zero-waste events, and storytelling—to transform abstract knowledge into a personal sense of urgency and sensitization.

5.2 Strengthening Institutional and Policy Frameworks

Policy and market forces are essential for establishing a baseline for sustainable conduct. Policymakers should implement a "carrot and stick" approach. This includes mandatory waste segregation guidelines and energy codes for large venues (coercive pressure), alongside market incentives such as tax subsidies for eco-friendly technologies or preferential treatment in government procurement for green-certified vendors. Clear, enforceable rules accompanied by effective monitoring can force the internalization of standards into professional norms.

5.3 Building SME Capability and Resource Sharing

The significant moderating role of organizational size reveals a capability gap. Small event firms and freelancers require targeted support to overcome resource constraints. Industry associations should facilitate collaborative networks and shared resource platforms, such as databases of sustainable vendors, subsidized green-training modules, and simplified certification frameworks tailored for smaller operations.

5.4 Cultivating a Culture of Emotional Engagement

Since sensitization is a deep psychological state involving emotional interest, interventions should target the affective domain. Recognition programs that reward "Sustainability Champions" and the creation of peer-learning networks can help professionals develop a pro-environmental professional identity. Demonstrating the business case for GEM—including cost savings through waste reduction and enhanced brand reputation—can align economic motivations with environmental sensitization.

5.5 Strategic Institutionalization in Operations

For long-term sustainability, green practices must be entrenched in the core business strategy. This requires leadership commitment to allocate specific budgets for sustainability and to integrate environmental metrics into standard operating procedures. By normalizing sustainability as a core professional value, the industry can ensure that sensitization leads to consistent, substantive action rather than mere symbolic compliance.

6. Limitations and Scope of the Study

- **Geographic Focus:** The study is limited to Ahmedabad City, meaning findings may not be generalizable to regions with different institutional or environmental contexts.
- **Methodological Delimitation:** As a cross-sectional study, it captures a snapshot of the industry; longitudinal research is needed to analyse how sensitization evolves into sustained behaviour over time.
- **Self-Reporting Bias:** Data rely on self-reported perceptions, which can lead to social **desirability bias**, where respondents overstate their environmental commitment.
- **Thematic Scope:** The research focuses primarily on the environmental dimension of sustainability, excluding a detailed analysis of social and economic pillars.
- **Variable Selection:** While the model includes key factors, it simplifies the complex reality of environmental decision-making, potentially excluding factors like client financial constraints or specific vendor relationships.

7. Conclusion

This research concludes that environmental sensitization is the indispensable psychological channel required to transform environmental knowledge, positive attitudes, and external institutional pressures into substantive sustainable operations. While awareness and policy provide the initial impetus, behaviour change is only achieved when these stimuli are internalized into a felt sense of responsibility. However, the transition to green practices is not solely dependent on individual will; it is significantly constrained by organizational capabilities. The moderating role of organization size underscores a systemic imbalance where larger firms are better equipped to navigate the complexities of green adoption. Consequently, achieving widespread sustainability in emerging event industries like Ahmedabad requires a dual strategy: fostering individual sensitization while simultaneously building the operational capacity of smaller industry players through supportive policies, market incentives, and resource-sharing networks.

8. References

1. Ahmad, N., et al. (2013). Sustainable event management: A conceptual framework. Journal of Sustainable Tourism.
2. Acquah, I., et al. (2021). The impact of institutional pressures on green practices adoption. Journal of Cleaner Production.
3. Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behaviour. Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes.
4. Baah, C., et al. (2021). Stakeholder pressure and sustainability adoption. Business Strategy and the Environment.
5. Bahl, S., et al. (2021). Zero-waste initiatives in Indian events. Journal of Environmental Management.
6. Calzavara, M. (2015). Carbon footprint assessment of events using ISO 14067. Environmental Impact Assessment Review.
7. Chang, Y., et al. (2025). Institutional pressures and green training. Sustainability.
8. Charnley, F., et al. (2016). Resource management in the exhibition industry. Resources, Conservation and Recycling.
9. DiMaggio, P., & Powell, W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism. American Sociological Review.
10. Holmes, K., et al. (2015). Events and sustainability paradox. Event Management.
11. Jones, M. (2010). Sustainable event management: A practical guide. Earthscan.
12. Knowlton, K., et al. (2014). Ahmedabad Heat Action Plan. IJERPH.
13. Mago, P., et al. (2024). Environmental sensitivity and behaviour mediation. Sustainability.
14. Park, E., et al. (2017). Sustainable event framework using Delphi method. Sustainability.
15. Toscani, G., et al. (2024). Environmental sustainability in events: A systematic review. Journal of Cleaner Production.
16. Wickham, M., et al. (2021). Strategic capabilities in sustainable events. Tourism Management.