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Factors Affecting Green Accounting Practices Toward Sustainable Development: A Case Study Of Small And Medium-Sized Enterprises In Vietnam

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Abstract: *In the context of increasing globalization and climate change, sustainable development has become an essential focus for Vietnam's economy. Green accounting is an effective management tool that helps enterprises record, measure, and disclose financial information related to environmental factors, thereby supporting a balance between economic goals and social responsibility. This study aims to identify and assess the factors influencing the green accounting practice in SMEs through a survey of 282 samples and quantitative analysis using SPSS 26 software. The findings indicate that manager awareness, perceived benefits, financial resources, accountant capacity, and stakeholder pressure have a positive impact on the application of green accounting in SMEs. Based on these results, the study proposes several solutions to help enterprises enhance management efficiency, boost competitiveness, and collaborate towards achieving sustainable development goals.*

Keywords: *Green accounting, small and medium-sized enterprises, sustainable development, Vietnam.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, sustainable development has become a key theme in the socio-economic strategies of most countries worldwide. Population growth, rapid urbanization, and overexploitation of natural resources have significantly strained the global ecological environment. The 2023 UN report states that climate change, environmental pollution, and biodiversity loss are the three biggest challenges humanity faces in the 21st century. In this context, the concept of "sustainable development" is affirmed as an essential path toward balancing economic growth, social progress, and environmental protection. Vietnam, an economy growing rapidly, faces increasing environmental pressures and the need for sustainable development. It is among the countries most impacted by climate change, especially in its coastal delta region. The Vietnamese government has committed strongly to the Paris Agreement and aims to reach net zero emissions by 2050. as announced at COP26. Achieving this goal requires not only effective macro policies but also cooperation from the business community, which plays a key role in the economy.

During development, the Vietnamese business community, especially small and medium-sized enterprises which make up over 97% of all enterprises in the country, acts as a driving force for growth, a direct beneficiary, and also bears responsibility for implementing sustainable development goals. However, integrating environmental factors into production and business activities still faces many challenges. Most enterprises continue to prioritize short-term profits, pay little attention to environmental costs or natural resource preservation, and thus have not achieved a balance between economic efficiency and social responsibility. In this context, the concept of green accounting has emerged as an effective management tool, helping enterprises not only record, measure, and report traditional financial information but also reflect costs and benefits related to the environment. Through green accounting, enterprises can better control resource use, assess environmental impacts, increase transparency with stakeholders, thereby enhancing prestige, competitiveness, and making practical contributions to national sustainable development goals. Although green accounting is seen as an inevitable trend in modern corporate governance, the reality is that its implementation in Vietnam is still in the early stages, especially among small and medium enterprises. Most SMEs today focus only on meeting legal financial reporting requirements and have not yet integrated environmental factors into their accounting systems, mainly due to limited financial resources. The expertise of accounting personnel and the legal framework not only slow down the process of implementing green accounting in the SMEs sector, but also hinder the achievement of national goals for sustainable development and international economic integration. Based

on this practice, it is crucial to research and propose solutions that promote SMEs in Vietnam to adopt green accounting, assisting enterprises with policy planning, enhancing management efficiency to meet integration demands, and aligning with sustainable development goals.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Green accounting

Green accounting is a new development in accounting science, emerging from the need to connect economic growth with environmental protection. The term was first introduced by Beams and Fertig (1971) and then gained popularity in the 1980s through the work of Professor Peter Wood. Since then, green accounting has garnered increasing attention from scholars and international organizations, as it reflects the inevitable trend of the global economy in the era of sustainable development. Green accounting is an integrated approach where environmental costs and benefits are included in a company's accounting and financial reports. Unlike traditional accounting, which mainly measures economic outcomes, green accounting broadens recognition to include environmental costs, resource depletion, and other non-financial factors that affect long-term growth. According to Sjak Smulders (2008), green accounting seeks to quantify environmental costs in business activities to give managers more complete and transparent information.

Rout (2010) believes that the main goal of green accounting is to help enterprises balance two often conflicting types of capital goals: traditional economic objectives (profits, financial efficiency) and environmental objectives (emission reduction, resource conservation). As a result, enterprises can make strategic decisions that support both short-term efficiency and long-term sustainable growth. According to Lako (2018), green accounting not only measures profits but also focuses on people and society. Green accounting is viewed as a comprehensive system built on an integrated environmental and economic accounting framework. Through environmental accounts, green accounting records natural resource depreciation costs, pollution treatment costs, and the value of benefits from environmental protection activities.

The studies by Tran (2024) and Nguyen (2022) both show that green accounting practices are not only limited to the business level but can also be applied at the national level to accurately reflect expenditures, revenues, and investment capital for green economic development. Green accounting is a long-term process that requires investment in resources, human capital, and policies. It is not only a change in accounting techniques but also an innovation in management thinking, placing environmental and social interests alongside financial interests (Duong, 2016). Therefore, green accounting is a modern branch of accounting science that aims to record, measure, and publish information related to environmental costs and revenues, helping enterprises manage their finances effectively while controlling their environmental impacts.

2.2. Analytical framework

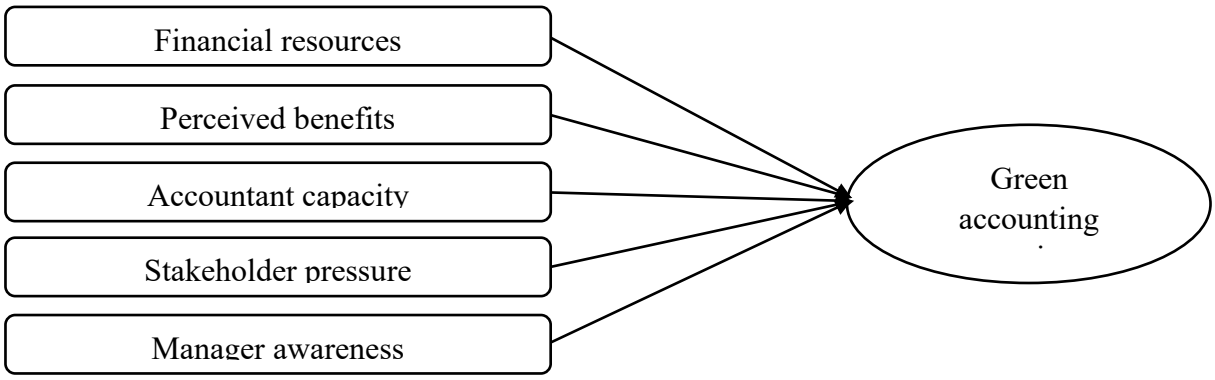
Green accounting practices vary across different enterprises because there is no universal pattern or model, and the environmental impacts of each business type are unique. It aligns with the contingency theory, a doctrine developed in the 1960s in the fields of organizational governance and management accounting. Contingency theory is a key approach in studying organizational behavior and corporate governance. Unlike traditional management views that often look for an "optimal model" for every organization, stochastic theory stresses that there is no single organizational structure or management system that fits all enterprises in every situation. Additionally, an organization's effectiveness relies on the alignment between its context factors and internal characteristics. According to Woodward (1958), the founder of this theory, there is no single optimal organizational model for all enterprises, and an effective structure depends on the type of production technology. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) contend that the compatibility between an organization's structure and its external environment determines operational efficiency. According to Otley (1980), there is no single accounting system suitable for all enterprises; instead, the choice of accounting system must be based on each company's specific environment characteristics, size, and strategy. Applying contingency theory helps explain why different enterprises choose different accounting information systems, as factors such as environment, size, technology, and organizational strategy all significantly influence this decision (Hoang, 2023). According to Phan and Le

(2019), there is no "global" management solution that can fully resolve all business problems, and the effectiveness of the solution depends on the unique characteristics of each business and the surrounding environmental conditions. Regarding green accounting practices, contingency theory provides a logical framework to explain differences among enterprises. If a business operates within a strict legal environment, has high demands from customers and investors for transparency, and possesses the right financial resources and personnel, its ability to implement green accounting will be greater. While enterprises encounter many barriers such as limited resources, lack of awareness, or insufficient external pressure, green accounting practices also face several limitations. Green accounting methods used by companies cannot be confined to a single model; instead, they need to be customized to fit the specific context, organizational traits, and business environment.

The study by Shah and Bhatt (2022) shows that enterprises' green accounting practices depend on environmental knowledge, perceived benefits, and environmental concerns. Additionally, Phan and Le (2019) indicate that enterprise characteristics, costs for organizing EMA, accountants' capacity, managers' awareness, and institutional pressure are factors that directly influence green accounting practices in manufacturing firms. Furthermore, Dinh et al. (2022) have shown that green accounting practices in manufacturing enterprises are influenced by factors such as firm size, stakeholder pressure, perception of the benefits of implementing EA, legal regulations, financial resources, and staff qualifications. Recently, Pham et al. (2022) demonstrated that four main factors significantly influence the application of environmental management accounting in manufacturing enterprises, listed in descending order: awareness of the usefulness of applying environmental management accounting, awareness of the difficulties in applying it, normative pressure, and coercive pressure. Lately, Nguyen (2025) shows that coercive pressure, cost-benefit considerations, accountant capacity, manager awareness, simulation pressure, and regulatory pressure are factors that positively impact the application of green accounting in manufacturing enterprises in Hanoi city.

Based on the fundamental theory and a thorough review of relevant studies, the author presents the following analysis framework:

Figure 1: Analytical framework



Source: Author's Recommendations

2.3. Hypothesis development

Financial resources are a crucial factor in an organization's ability to innovate and implement modern management techniques. According to chance theory, the alignment between an organization's internal conditions and the demands of the business environment will influence the effectiveness of its management system (Otley, 1980). In particular, financial capacity is regarded as a key contextual factor that provides a foundation for enterprises to adopt new management tools such as green accounting. Dinh et al. (2022) noted that financial capacity significantly influences the use of environmental accounting in manufacturing companies in Vietnam. Additionally, Pham et al. (2022) confirmed that enterprises with substantial capital are often able to easily invest in environmental management accounting systems and activities related to sustainable development. Furthermore, Shah and Bhatt (2022) highlighted that financial preparedness helps companies overcome cost barriers when implementing green accounting. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H1: Financial resources have a positive impact on green accounting practices.

Perceived benefits reflect the extent to which enterprises see practical value in applying green accounting to long-term governance and development activities. When enterprises are well aware of the benefits that green accounting offers, such as cost savings, enhanced reputation, and expanded access to capital and markets, they are more likely to adopt it strongly. Shah and Bhatt (2022) argue that the perception of benefits is an important mediating factor that promotes the relationship between environmental concern and the intention to implement green accounting in enterprises. Pham et al. (2022) also show that awareness of benefits positively impacts the adoption of green accounting in Vietnamese enterprises. Nguyen (2025) affirms that considering when costs are lower than benefits serves as the driving force behind the decision to apply green accounting in manufacturing firms. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H2: Perceived benefits have a positive impact on green accounting practices.

The capacity of accountants is a crucial factor in determining the success of implementing and maintaining a green accounting system in enterprises. According to the theory of chance, aligning human resource capacity with management requirements and organizational context will produce the highest management efficiency (Otley, 1980). Green accounting requires accounting teams not only to master traditional accounting skills but also to possess knowledge of environmental issues and skills in collecting, processing, and analyzing data related to environmental costs. The studies by Phan and Le (2019), Dinh et al. (2022) all show that the professional ability and qualifications of accountants influence the application and implementation of green accounting systems in enterprises. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H3: Accountant capacity has a positive impact on green accounting practices.

Stakeholder pressure reflects the influence of customers, investors, regulators, communities, and social organizations on business operations. According to contingency theory, governance effectiveness depends on the alignment between the management system and the external environment's demands (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Otley, 1980). As stakeholders increase their demands for transparency, social responsibility, and environmental protection, enterprises will have a greater incentive to adopt green accounting to meet expectations and maintain credibility. Pham et al. (2022) shows that coercive, mimetic, and normative pressures from stakeholders positively influence the adoption of green accounting in enterprises. The study by Nguyen (2025) confirms that external pressures, such as requirements from the state, customers, and industries, significantly impact enterprises' decisions to implement green accounting. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H4: Stakeholder pressure has a positive impact on green accounting practices.

Manager awareness plays a crucial role in strategic direction and the selection of suitable management tools for enterprises. When business leaders fully recognize the importance and long-term advantages of green accounting, they tend to prioritize integrating green accounting into their development plans, resource allocation, and implementation commitments. Nguyen (2025) also affirms that managers play a guiding role in implementing green accounting at enterprises. Additionally, Phan and Le (2019) demonstrate that manager awareness is a key factor in adopting green accounting, especially when managers understand its benefits and assess the challenges involved in its implementation, which directly influences their intention to use this type of accounting. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H5: Manager awareness has a positive impact on green accounting practices.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The preliminary research scale is developed based on a framework from domestic and international studies on green accounting, as presented by Shah and Bhatt (2022), Phan and Le (2019), Dinh et al. (2022), Pham et al. (2022), and Nguyen (2025). Before conducting the formal survey, the author held a group discussion with managers and accountants from small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as consultations with five experts in finance and accounting, to evaluate the relationships among scales and adjust variables to better fit the actual situation. The results showed that the participants agreed with the scales and variables observed in the proposed research model. However, some observation variables

require recalibration of their wording to make the content easier to understand, preventing misunderstandings among respondents regarding the questions. The formal scale includes 27 observed variables. The study employed a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

According to the sample sizing formula by Hair et al. (2010), when performing exploratory factor analysis (EFA), the minimum ratio required is 5:1. and preferably 10:1. The study used the optimal ratio to avoid discarding an excessive number of invalid responses during data cleaning, which could have adversely affected the results. Therefore, the author issued 300 questionnaires. This study used a convenient non-probability survey method by distributing tickets directly and sending emails to managers, chief accountants, and accountants at small and medium-sized enterprises in two major economic regions, Hanoi City and Ho Chi Minh City. The survey was conducted from February 2025 to May 2025. during which a total of 282 valid responses were obtained.

Among the 282 valid responses, 162 males accounted for 57.4%, while 120 females made up 42.6%. In terms of age, most of the respondents were between 30 and 40 years old, with 126 people accounting for 44.7%. This was followed by the 20 to 30 age group, with 84 people or 29.8%, and the 41 to 50 age group, with 54 people or 19.1%. The group over 50 years old included 18 people, representing 6.4%. In terms of job positions, out of all survey participants, 90 are accountants, making up 31.9%; 78 are chief accountants, accounting for 27.7%; 72 are middle managers, representing 25.5%; and 42 hold the position of director or deputy director of enterprises, accounting for 14.9%. Regarding fields of operation, the surveyed enterprises span multiple industries. The trade and service industry has 117 enterprises, which comprise 41.5%; the manufacturing industry has 96 enterprises, or 34.0%; and the construction industry has 69 enterprises, making up 24.5%. Regarding the size of enterprises based on the criteria for classifying SMEs in Vietnam, 144 surveyed enterprises fall into the small enterprise category, accounting for 51.1%; 93 enterprises are in the medium category, representing 33.0%, and 45 enterprises belong to the micro group, making up 15.9%.

The data were carefully cleaned and analyzed using SPSS version 26 software, applying tests at a 5% significance level. The analytical methods included reliability analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), correlation analysis, and multivariate linear regression, with the regression equations formatted as follows:

$GAP = \beta_0 + \beta_1*FR + \beta_2*PB + \beta_3*AC + \beta_4*SP + \beta_5*MA + \varepsilon$

In which:

GAP (dependent variable): Green accounting practices

Independent variables (X_i): Financial resources (FR), Perceived benefits (PB), Accountant capacity (AC), Stakeholder pressure (SP), Manager awareness (MA).

β_k: Regression coefficient (k = 0. 1. 2... 5)

ε: Random Error

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of the reliability test for the research scale, using the first Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, show that the scales for perceived benefits, accountant capacity, stakeholder pressure, manager awareness, and green accounting practices have a total Cronbach's Alpha coefficient greater than 0.7 and a Corrected Item-Total Correlation greater than 0.3. indicating that the scales are sufficiently reliable. Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted is less than the total Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, satisfying the conditions outlined by Hair et al. (2010). However, the scale for "financial resources" in the initial test of the observed variable FR6 had a Corrected Item-Total Correlation of 0.142. which is below the recommended 0.3 by Hair et al. (2010). Therefore, the author removed this observed variable from the scale and re-analyzed the corporate financial resources scale. The results after removing the problematic variable show that the "financial resources" scale achieves reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.836. a Corrected Item-Total Correlation above 0.3. and Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted less than the overall Cronbach's Alpha. Hence, these scales demonstrate good reliability and are suitable for exploratory factor analysis.

Table 1. Reliability testing

Scale	Scale Mean if Item deleted	Scale Variance if Item deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item deleted
Financial resources	***Cronbach's Alpha = 0.836***			
FR1	10.19	4.577	0.534	0.823
FR2	9.84	4.126	0.517	0.808
FR3	9.55	3.688	0.542	0.779
FR4	11.35	2.459	0.581	0.762
FR5	10.41	2.103	0.569	0.740
Perceived benefits	***Cronbach's Alpha = 0.811***			
PB1	8.25	5.583	0.681	0.803
PB2	9.71	3.127	0.595	0.791
PB3	8.93	4.106	0.649	0.774
PB4	10.46	4.835	0.672	0.756
Accountant capacity	***Cronbach's Alpha = 0.792***			
AC1	9.25	3.102	0.573	0.784
AC2	10.41	4.267	0.511	0.761
AC3	10.27	3.798	0.564	0.750
AC4	9.39	3.542	0.520	0.724
AC5	9.87	4.261	0.575	0.713
Stakeholder pressure	***Cronbach's Alpha = 0.829***			
SP1	10.61	5.178	0.615	0.825
SP2	9.68	7.592	0.604	0.806
SP3	11.73	7.016	0.638	0.797
SP4	9.80	6.415	0.612	0.780
Manager awareness	***Cronbach's Alpha = 0.816***			
MA1	9.72	4.526	0.510	0.802
MA2	10.39	3.012	0.544	0.786
MA3	11.15	5.328	0.527	0.774
MA4	9.74	3.475	0.539	0.753
Green accounting practices	***Cronbach's Alpha = 0.830***			
GAP1	8.96	4.252	0.671	0.818
GAP2	9.56	3.876	0.659	0.798
GAP3	10.87	4.109	0.642	0.773
GAP4	8.12	4.317	0.630	0.765

Source: Author's analysis results

The results of the EFA on the independent scales showed that the KMO coefficient exceeded 0.5, and the Sig value of Bartlett's test was less than 0.05, indicating that the data included in the analysis were suitable for further study. However, the observed variables AC4 and FR1 loaded onto two factor groups, and the observed variable AC3 had a factor loading below 0.5, so it did not appear in the analysis. Therefore, the author decided to eliminate these three observed variables and conduct a second analysis. Using the PCA extraction method and applying Varimax rotation, with extraction stopping at an Eigenvalue greater than 1, the results after removing the three problematic variables showed that the KMO coefficient increased to 0.816 (quality greater than 0.5 and less than 1), and Bartlett's test had a sig of 0.000. Five factors were extracted with Eigenvalues greater than 1, accounting for a total of 77.103% of the variance, which exceeds the 50% threshold. The loadings of the observed variables were all greater than 0.5. Therefore, the scale demonstrates adequate convergent and discriminant validity, meeting the criteria outlined by Hair et al. (2010).

Table 2. EFA of independent scales

KMO = 0.816

Bartlett's Test	Approx. Chi-Squared	9152.311
	df	388
	Sig.	0.000

Items	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
AC5	0.808				
AC1	0.795				
AC2	0.760				
MA3		0.798			
MA2		0.781			
MA1		0.763			
MA4		0.748			
FR4			0.797		
FR3			0.766		
FR2			0.752		
FR5			0.814		
SP1				0.784	
SP4				0.770	
SP3				0.767	
SP2				0.758	
PB1					0.806
PB2					0.792
PB4					0.771
PB3					0.765
% of Variance	41.875	56.417	61.812	69.538	77.103
Eigenvalue	4.122	3.684	2.174	1.826	1.242

Source: Author's analysis results

The results of EFA for the dependent scale show that the KMO coefficient reaches 0.799, indicating that the data are suitable for conducting factor analysis. At the same time, Bartlett's test has a Chi-squared value of 323.756 with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, confirming a strong linear correlation among the observed variables included in the factor analysis. The rotation matrix table results, analyzed using the PCA extraction method and Varimax rotation, show that all four observed variables load onto a single factor with coefficients greater than 0.7, well above the minimum threshold of 0.5 as recommended by Hair et al. (2010). This demonstrates that these variables are well represented. The total variance explained by this factor is 78.629%, exceeding the 50% threshold, indicating that it accounts for most of the variation in data related to the application of green accounting in small and medium-sized enterprises. Therefore, the dependent scale exhibits good convergent and discriminant validity.

Table 3. EFA of the dependent scale

KMO = 0.799		
Bartlett's Test	Approx. Chi-Squared	323.756
	df	4
	Sig.	0.000
Scale	**No.**	**Loadings**
Green accounting practices	GAP3	0.806
	GAP1	0.794
	GAP2	0.782
	GAP4	0.769
% of Variance	78.629	
Eigenvalue	1.872	

Source: Author's analysis results

The results of the correlation analysis showed that the correlation between independent and dependent factors was strong, as indicated by a correlation coefficient greater than 0.4 and a Sig value less than 0.05. Additionally, there was no evidence of multicollinearity among the independent factors, so the data was suitable for inclusion in the regression analysis (Hair et al., 2010) (see Table 4).

Table 4. Correlation analysis

	GAP	FR	PB	AC	SP	MA
GAP	1					
FR	0.719**	1				
PB	0.642**	0.220**	1			
AC	0.631*	0.217*	0.225**	1		
SP	0.785**	0.196**	0.272**	0.215**	1	
MA	0.609**	0.249**	0.183*	0.242*	0.183**	1
*significant at p < 0.05. **significant at p < 0.01						

Source: Author's analysis results

The model has R = 0.814, which indicates a relatively strong relationship between the elements in the model. The R^2 = 0.794 shows that the model explains 79.4% of the variance. Meanwhile, the adjusted R^2 value more accurately reflects the model's fit, reaching 0.789, meaning that 78.9% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the five independent factors in the model. The remaining variance is attributed to factors outside the model and random error. The Durbin-Watson value of 1.797 meets the condition for not having significant autocorrelation among the residuals.

Table 5. Model Summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin- Watson
1	0.814	0.794	0.789	0.362	1.797

Source: Author's analysis results

The results of the ANOVA analysis show that the Sig value of the F test is less than 0.05, so the regression model is consistent overall.

Table 6. ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squared	df	Mean Squared	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.977	5	6.413	103.492	0.000
	Residual	17.835	276	0.081		
	Total	69.812	281			

Source: Author's analysis results

Table 7. Multivariate regression analysis

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Standard deviation	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	Constant	1.235	0.028		4.154	0.000		
	FR	0.286	0.024	0.305	5.287	0.002	0.635	1.788
	PB	0.319	0.019	0.337	5.404	0.000	0.749	1.835
	AC	0.261	0.022	0.284	6.162	0.003	0.667	1.741
	SP	0.243	0.016	0.251	4.836	0.000	0.684	1.734
	MA	0.347	0.011	0.368	5.319	0.001	0.752	1.809

Source: Author's analysis results

Table 7 shows that VIF coefficients are less than 2 and greater than 1, indicating no multicollinearity. Additionally, regression diagnostic tests such as scatterplots, histograms, and standard probability plots (P-P plots) all indicate that the multivariate linear regression model meets the basic assumptions well. The scatterplot shows the residuals are randomly distributed around the mean (zero), with no specific pattern or trend, confirming a reasonable linear relationship and homoscedasticity of the error variance. The histogram indicates that the residuals have an approximate standard distribution, with a mean near zero and a standard deviation close to 1, supporting the assumption of normally distributed errors. Meanwhile,

the P–P plot points are close to the diagonal line, demonstrating that the residuals follow a normal distribution reasonably well. Therefore, the hypotheses are accepted, and the regression equation based on the standardized Beta coefficients is specified as follows:

$$GAP = 0.368*MA + 0.337*PB + 0.305*FR + 0.284*AC + 0.251*SP + \varepsilon$$

The adoption of green accounting practices in small and medium-sized enterprises is positively influenced by five factors, listed in order of decreasing importance: manager awareness, perceived benefits, financial resources, accountant capacity, and stakeholder pressure. Manager awareness is the most critical, highlighting the leader's decisive role in guiding strategy, fostering commitment, and creating conditions for the successful implementation of green accounting. Next, perceived benefits indicate that when enterprises recognize the long-term advantages of green accounting, such as enhancing reputation, expanding markets, and securing green capital, they are more motivated to adopt it. Financial resources emphasize the importance of economic capacity in providing the necessary funds for innovations in accounting and environmental management. The accountant's capacity plays a supporting role, as the understanding and professional skills of the accounting team are essential for successful application. Lastly, stakeholder pressure, although positively affecting the process, is the least influential in this context, indicating that in Vietnam's current environment, external pressures from customers, investors, and regulators are not yet strong enough to promote widespread green accounting practices significantly.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

This study identified five factors influencing green accounting practices in small and medium-sized enterprises in Vietnam: manager awareness, perceived benefits, financial resources, accountant capacity, and stakeholder pressure. While the study achieved certain results, its limitation is the small sample size and the fact that it was conducted only in two major Vietnamese cities, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh, which means the findings are not broadly representative. Therefore, future research should expand both the scope and the size of the study sample.

5.2. Implications

First, small and medium-sized enterprises need to raise managers' awareness of green accounting. Managers play a central role in shaping the strategic direction of the business, so increasing awareness is essential for implementing green accounting. Enterprises should proactively send leaders to participate in training courses and in-depth seminars on green accounting and sustainable development; develop internal programs to stay updated on knowledge and emerging trends in environmental management; and integrate green accounting objectives into the company's long-term development strategy. Additionally, leaders should demonstrate their commitment by issuing internal policies, clearly assigning responsibilities, and linking environmental goals with operational efficiency to promote a culture of sustainable development throughout the organization.

Second, enterprises need to enhance their understanding of the benefits associated with green accounting. To achieve this, they should regularly evaluate the socio-economic and environmental efficiencies of green activities, such as saving energy costs, reducing emissions, or boosting competitiveness in the market. Enterprises ought to create specific reports that demonstrate these benefits, helping to clarify the positive effects on reputation, brand image, and access to green investment capital. Additionally, this information should be shared with all employees to foster a sense of responsibility and motivate team participation. When employees clearly understand the practical advantages, enterprises are more likely to associate green accounting with sustainable development goals in a consistent and sustainable manner.

Third, enterprises need to prepare and strengthen their financial resources for green accounting. Implementing green accounting requires an initial investment in staff training, software upgrades, and creating an integrated reporting system. Enterprises can establish their own funds for environmental activities, include green accounting in their annual financial plans, and seek funding support from green credit programs, development banks, or international financial institutions. Additionally, it is important to focus on building public-private partnerships in environmental projects, leveraging tax incentives and concessional loans from the government to ensure sustainable financial resources.

Fourth, enterprises need to enhance the capacity of their accounting teams. Since accountants are the ones who directly implement green accounting, they must be fully equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills. Companies should organize regular training sessions, encourage staff to participate in intensive programs on environmental accounting, green finance, and sustainability reporting. Additionally, it is advised to create opportunities to learn from pioneering enterprises and to invest in software and supporting tools that improve the accuracy, transparency, and analysis of environmental data. A highly qualified accounting team will be a vital foundation for sustaining the long-term application of green accounting.

Finally, enterprises need to leverage and turn pressure from stakeholders into motivation for sustainable development. Stakeholders such as customers, investors, regulators, and the social community are increasingly concerned about the environmental responsibility of enterprises. Companies should proactively publish financial statements that include environmental information, establish feedback channels from customers and investors to improve transparency, and actively participate in industry associations and green business forums to learn, standardize, and share experiences. Meeting and exceeding stakeholder expectations not only helps enterprises boost their reputation but also affirms their commitment to sustainable growth, creating competitive advantages in the context of global integration.

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