Implementation of Sustainable Practices and the Impact of the Institutional Environment

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Abstract

In recent years, the concept of sustainability has become one of the key concepts in the academic world and also in business practice. Concerns regarding environmental issues and social responsibility have increased the importance of research related to the field of sustainability. Moreover, many researchers in the field of management have always been concerned with ways to achieve competitive advantage for organizations. The implementation of sustainability practices has been seen by many researchers and business practitioners as a way to achieve competitive advantage. So far, most of the research has been conducted in developed countries, while in developing countries there is a significant lack of research related to the field of implementation of sustainable practices. The purpose of this study is to present an overview regarding the level of implementation of these practices in Kosovo. This study also aims to reveal the causal relationship between the institutional environment and the implementation of sustainable management practices along the supply chain. The study uses the survey method for data collection. The selection of cases was done through a random sample using the business register from the Kosovo Business Registration Agency. The questionnaires were sent through the Google Forms platform. Regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses of this study. With little awareness of sustainability and disregard for environmental effects, firms in Kosovo are still in the early phases of implementing sustainable supply chain management practices. Meanwhile, regression analysis reveals coercive and mimetic forces are positively related to the implementation of sustainable management practices.

Keywords: *sustainability, institutions, supply chain management, environment*

1. Introduction

Supply chains are becoming more important in business competition than individual companies. Research on sustainable development has grown in tandem with its growing significance. In order to achieve harmony with nature and boost economic performance, businesses must change their supply chain models to incorporate environmental protection, transparency, employee benefits, and safety concerns. They should also concentrate on creating and expanding environmentally friendly supply chains. The idea of the supply chain has become more significant in recent years as people have become more conscious of how supply chain operations affect resource depletion, waste levels, and environmental pollution (Giunipero et al, 2008). In many countries, including Kosovo, environmental issues like pollution, climate change, and the depletion of natural resources have sparked grave concerns about their detrimental effects on the environment, society, and economy. Human activity has caused an 80% increase in greenhouse gas emissions since 1970 (Hutt, 2016). Thus, many scholars have highlighted sustainability and environmental friendliness as the future of supply chain management (Walker & Jones, 2012; Seuring, 2011; Vermeulen & Kok, 2012; Gilinsky et al, 2015; Kumar et

al, 2019; Ciliberti et al, 2008; Diabat & Al-Salem, 2015; Distelhorst et al, 2015; Dubey et al, 2017; Giannakis & Papadopoulos, 2016). There is a lack of research on organizational factors and the effects of sustainable supply chain management. Existing models are generally developing slowly and lack theoretical support. The intricacy of cause-and-effect relationships, the interplay between factors and effects, and the requirement for empirical validation are among the identified drawbacks. Nowadays, gaining a competitive edge requires supply chain management to integrate social and environmental responsibility. The complexity of supply chains is increasing due to a number of factors, including the globalization of economies, digitalization, shorter product life cycles, shifting consumer expectations, and the sensitivity of environmental and social issues. Studies on sustainable supply chain management have grown in number as sustainability has gained importance (Seuring et al, 2022). Recently, organizations have come to understand the significance of adopting sustainable practices (Cantele & Zardini, 2018). Growing socio-environmental problems like air pollution and climate change have made the concept of sustainability more popular in recent years (Khan et al, 2020). Most researchers agree that implementing sustainability requires the triple bottom line (TBL). The goal of the environmental component is to incorporate eco-efficiency, emissions, consumption, and renewable resources—the green value drivers—into business plans (Trianni et al, 2019). The social dimension requires the capacity to distribute human rights, social initiatives, and working conditions equitably (Hristov & Chirico, 2019). Companies that use sustainable supply chain management techniques help to achieve sustainable competitive advantage through improved financial performance, social responsibility, and superior and efficient resource utilization (Govindan et al, 2020; Vaio & Varriale, 2019). If businesses go above and beyond the call of duty, the reputation that comes from their involvement in sustainability practices can boost their competitive edge and open doors to business with other businesses, including suppliers, rivals, or clients who share their values (Darnall et al, 2008).

Businesses can lower production costs by reducing waste or waste by, for instance, using recyclable materials or imposing reduced packaging on suppliers by large manufacturing organizations (Ageron et al, 2011). Scholars and practitioners have recently focused more on the pressures from different stakeholders, including consumers, non-governmental organizations, and government regulatory bodies, who expect businesses to make greater commitments to sustainability. In the supply chain, managers are increasingly implementing sustainable practices due to concerns about declining well-being and resource depletion. Growth that satisfies the needs and desires of the current generation without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations to satisfy their own needs is known as sustainable development (WCED, 1987). The majority of research in the field of sustainable supply chain management has focused on how developed nations are implementing sustainable practices (Hong, 2022). There is little research on sustainability initiatives in the context of particular developing countries, and supply chain sustainability practices in these nations are still in their infancy (Silvestre, 2015; Esfhabodi et al, 2016). Additional research from various nations is required to identify trends and alternative routes to sustainability because sustainability practices vary depending on the context (Jia et al, 2018; Khan et al, 2019).Consumer preferences have changed recently to take into account not only the price and quality of products but also the effects that their use has on society and the environment. Demands for corporate social and environmental responsibility have grown in tandem with the problems associated with organizational sustainable development (Khan, 2019). Recently, supply chain management has placed a greater emphasis on sustainability than on cost and efficiency (Beske, 2012; Khan & Yu, 2019). The purpose of this study is to investigate how institutional factors—specifically, normative, coercive, and mimetic forces—affect the adoption of sustainable practices and the degree to which they are being used in Kosovo.

To enhance their environmental, social, and financial performance, businesses in Kosovo must comprehend the elements that affect the adoption of sustainable practices. Pressure and incentives from both internal and external groups or stakeholders are the primary drivers behind the adoption of sustainable management practices generally and the enhancement of environmental performance. Due to the growing pressure from stakeholders to give environmental and social issues top priority, many businesses are adhering to sustainable standards (Seuring & Muller, 2008). However, a low adoption rate of Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM) is the result of senior management's reluctance to integrate sustainable practices into the company's core operations and the tremendous pressure that consumers and government regulators put on businesses (Zhang & Awasthi, 2014; Khan et al, 2020; Xie, 2019). Businesses that adopt sustainable practices that consider social and environmental aspects gain a competitive edge and long-term financial gains (Carter & Rogers, 2008; Markley & Davis, 2007).

Environmentally friendly practices in Kosovo are increasingly being shaped by international cooperation, civil society initiatives, and government policies. The OGP pledge made by Kosovo encourages openness, responsibility, and public participation in decision-making procedures. The Pristina Action Plan (2024-2025). These include independent project oversight and participatory budgeting, which can lead to more sustainable resource management and urban

development.

The urgency of shifting to sustainable resource use and waste management is becoming more widely recognized, even though laws pertaining to the circular economy may still be in their infancy. Such a regulatory framework aligns with broader EU standards that encourage recycling and environmentally responsible production practices. Activity Related to the Social Contract Engagement of the public: Enhancing public involvement in local governance is the main goal of USAID's Social Contract Activity, which incorporates sustainable practices. This initiative aims to provide organizations with the chance to evaluate these participation barriers and then develop action plans that take into account the priorities and needs of the community as determined by the feedback they received. In order to create an environment that is conducive to sustainable development, trust between citizens and their local governments is crucial. Sector-Specific Sustainable Practices Agriculture in Kosovo, sustainable agricultural genetics are critical to both environmental preservation and food security.

These could be water conservation, organic farming, or ecologically friendly land management

techniques. All manufacturing and industrial sectors should adopt cleaner manufacturing techniques and technologies that reduce emissions and waste production. This cover investing in energy-efficient technologies and following environmental regulations. Initiatives for sustainable urban planning, which prioritize green spaces, public transportation, and sustainable housing development, are becoming more and more popular, especially in urban areas like Pristina. This study will investigate the following hypothesis:

H1= Coercive forces are positively related to sustainable supply chain management practices.

H2= Normative forces are positively related to sustainable supply chain management practices.

H3= Mimetic forces are positively related to sustainable supply chain management practices.

The survey approach is the foundation of the study, which gathers data and offers empirical proof of how businesses can help the planet meet its needs while also improving organizational and industry performance. A review of the literature is presented in the first section of the study, followed by the methodology in the second, data analysis and discussion in the third, and study conclusions in the final section.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sustainable supply chain management

The Latin sustinere (sus-, from below, and tenere, to hold) is the root of the word "sustainability," which implies long-term support or sustainability. Sustainability cannot be defined and operationalized as a continuous variable (e.g., increased sustainability) until supply chain operations are environmentally regenerative. In other words, even though a less damaging supply chain activity may be preferable to one that is environmentally hazardous, it is not sustainable (Pagell & Shevchenko, 2014). Additionally, charity and corporate social responsibility are unquestionably important, but they might not be enough to make a business operation sustainable, claim Markman and Krause (2016). Charitable contributions to the impoverished, for instance, are admirable and responsible, but they frequently do not address the underlying causes of poverty or create long-term prosperity. The Brundtland Commission first proposed the idea of sustainable development in 1987, defining it as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). Organizations that wish to become sustainable must resist the urge to balance these three factors and instead learn to prioritize ecology, society, and commerce (Montabon et al, 2016). Sustainability was a key concept in 48.17% of papers published between 2010 and 2018, according to Carter et al (2020). The study claims that the development of conceptual theories, qualitative data analysis, and econometric modeling have all gained popularity in SSCM research. "Meeting the needs of a firm's direct and indirect stakeholders (such as shareholders, employees, customers, pressure groups, communities, etc.), without compromising its ability to meet the needs of future stakeholders as well" is the definition of corporate sustainability in the context of organizations [Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002, p.131]. According to a 2014 study by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), population growth, financial market volatility, water scarcity, climate change, and declining food supplies are the top environmental concerns, followed by the depletion of natural resources. Environmental sustainability practices have grown in popularity in recent decades due to growing environmental concerns (Brundtland Commission, 1987). Addressing supply chains, which account for over 90% of a consumer company's environmental impact and 80% of its greenhouse gas emissions, offers the greatest opportunity to improve sustainability practices (Bove & Swartz 2016).

2.2 Sustainable supply chain management practices

The combination of supply chain management and sustainability theory is known as sustainable supply chain management. By incorporating social and environmental concerns into the supply chain's design and optimization, SSCM broadens the application of traditional concepts. This makes it possible to analyze how sustainable the economy, environment, and society are (Dubey et al, 2016, Bai & Sarkis, 2010). Ahi and Searcy (2013) distinguish between green and SSCM by defining SSCM using 12 definitions and green SCM using 22 definitions. They conclude that by integrating the environmental dimension into economic and social aspects, SSCM is a continuation of green SCM. SSCM as a management philosophy and SSCM as a collection of management procedures are the two primary categories into which Dubey et al (2016a) conduct a thorough analysis of SSCM definitions based on a review of the literature. Environmental initiatives include things like mid-range product design, support for green products, conservative compliance and audits, ISO 14001 certification of suppliers, and top management's dedication to eco-friendly supply chain management (Sarkis et al, 2011; Zhu & Sarkis, 2004; Zhu et al, 2005; Zhu et al, 2007). Working and economic conditions, employee equity and education, employee and social health and safety, and benefits to the local community are just a few of the issues that businesses specifically affect (Blanchard & Das, 2017). A company's internal and external actions to enhance the supply chain's sustainability in all three dimensions are known as supply chain sustainability management (SSCM) practices (Paulraj et al, 2015). Beske et al (2014) divided SCM practices into five categories: supply chain continuity, collaboration, risk management, strategic direction, and sustainability proactivity.

Most significantly, Zhu et al (2008) proposed the most widely cited classification of GSCM practices into five groups: eco-design (ED), investment recovery (IR), customer collaboration (CC), internal environmental management (IEM), and general planning (GP). In contrast, Kim and Lee (2012) divided environmental logistics practices (ELPs) into three groups: environmental process design (EPD), environmental sourcing and packaging (ESP), and IEM. Strategic orientation, supply chain continuity, collaboration, risk management, and sustainability proactivity are the five categories into which Beske et al (2014) divide SSCM techniques. According to Paulraj et al (2015) there are four essential components of sustainable supply chain management techniques: collaborative sustainability initiatives with suppliers and customers, sustainable product design, and sustainable process design. In a similar vein, Esfahbodi et al (2016) concentrate on four aspects of sustainable supply chain management practices: investment recovery, sustainable production, sustainable design, and sustainable distribution. When adopting sustainable practices, businesses encounter a number of challenges. These obstacles include senior management's lack of commitment, the inability to align short-term and long-term plans, the difficulty of altering company policies and practices, the high investment requirements, the absence of environmental standards and regulations, the difficulty of raising customer awareness, the lack of resources from suppliers, and other managerial, economic, and other issues (Moktadir et al, 2018; Murillo-Luna et al, 2011; Trianni et al, 2017).

2.3 Institutional theory and sustainable supply chain management

The desire to conform to acceptable behaviors in the external environment influences organizational decisions and behaviors in addition to the objective of enhancing organizational processes and efficiency. These could include government rules, professional associations' behavioral standards, market norms and expectations, and rivals' actions. Because it is grounded in and considers the external organizational environment to explain behavior in organizations, institutional theory serves as the primary theory employed in this study. Government regulations, consumer expectations, and competitive pressure are the primary drivers of sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) practices among Chinese manufacturers and traders (Dai et al, 2021). One of the primary forces behind the adoption of sustainable practices is the pressure from the government, which is applied through social and environmental regulations. Businesses are encouraged to adopt sustainable supply chain practices by competitive success in doing so, which boosts profits. Businesses are reportedly under pressure to adopt socially conscious management techniques and environmentally friendly products due to consumer demands. Technical expertise and top management leadership are examples of sustainability competencies that support the adoption of SSCM practices (Dai et al, 2021). Organizations can adopt green practices for two reasons, according to institutional theory: (1) by enforcing laws, taxes, and penalties, which are the responsibility of regulatory bodies under industry bodies' governance; and (2) by offering incentives for the adoption of socially and environmentally responsible best practices (Zailani et al, 2012).

Since the publications of Rowan and Meyer (1977) and P. Selznick (1948), institutional theory has emerged as a primary theoretical framework for examining organizational behavior. Over the years, institutional theory has evolved into

a legitimate theory for understanding organizational behavior, despite alterations and critiques. According to Meyer and Rowan (1977), institutional norms that have been rationalized seem to be reflected in organizational structures and procedures. They also stress that norms take the shape of myths that organizations adopt in order to acquire credibility, assets, stability, and a better chance of surviving. According to Suddaby (2010), the debate over the main question of institutional theory in organizational research has historically concentrated on why organizations adopt behaviors that are consistent with behavioral norms but contradict the accomplishment of rational objectives, as well as why organizations engage in legitimate activities in the symbolic rather than the material realm. The application of institutional theory to sustainable supply chain management has gained popularity in recent years (Beske & Seuring, 2014). Many scholars believe that institutional theory offers a useful framework for comprehending how businesses react to social demands and sustainability expectations. These external stakeholders, which include governments, non-governmental organizations, and other actors, can exert pressure on organizations to adopt and implement sustainable practices in their supply chain operations and support social and environmental goals. Additionally, isomorphism—the process by which organizations adopt comparable practices and structures in order to conform to societal norms and expectations—is emphasized by institutional theory. This indicates that in addition to economic considerations, organizations are driven by the need to establish and preserve their social legitimacy. Organizations can better understand the demands and expectations they face from the outside world and create plans to align their operations with sustainability standards and principles by integrating institutional theory into sustainable supply chain management.

This institutionalization logic holds that companies adopt sustainability practices more because of external isomorphic pressures than because of financial considerations. However, in a brief essay, Suddaby (2010) highlights that neo-institutional theory has departed from the initial tenets and objectives. Suddaby goes on to stress that institutional theory ought to focus on the ideological aspects of institutions, particularly their interpretative and symbolic components. 40 distinct drivers of SSCM were identified in a literature review by Saeed and Kersten (2019), with market and regulatory pressures being the most prevalent. The drivers were separated into primary and secondary categories, as well as internal and external, to aid in prioritizing sustainability projects. There is more external pressure on organizations to embrace sustainability than there is internal pressure. Customer demands and regulatory pressures are two significant external forces.

Glover et al (2014) emphasize that energy efficiency, waste reduction, pollution reduction, emission reduction, and decreased use of hazardous materials are all important components of environmental sustainability. The Indian auto component industry's sustainable supply chain management is the subject of another study by Shibin et al (2017), which emphasizes the importance of institutional pressures and top management commitment. It examines the connections between coercive, mimetic and normative pressures, top management trust and participation, supply chain connectivity, and bottom-line triple bottom-line performance using a theoretical model based on institutional theory and resource-based perspective. According to the study, institutional forces have an impact on environmental, social, and economic performance through strategic resources and capabilities. Coercive pressures have a positive effect on top management participation, while mimetic and normative pressures have no discernible effect. The study also reveals that different aspects of institutional pressures have varying effects on top management participation. More sustainable industries and nations with stronger legal and cultural frameworks are more likely to secure sustainability reports. Mimetic pressure has less of an impact on insurance adoption than normative and coercive pressures (Martínez-Ferrero & García-Sánchez, 2017). According to the study, companies are under more pressure to implement sustainability insurance from country-specific factors—like cultural development and legal enforcement—than from industry-level factors. Mimetic pressure has no effect on the adoption of green initiatives in PLCs, but normative and coercive pressures have a major impact (Abdul Aziz et al, 2017). Additionally, this study shows that professionals, trade associations, and regulatory bodies have a moderately broad influence on Malaysian PLCs' adoption of green initiatives. The phase of implementation is progressive rather than proactive. Mimetic and coercive pressures are significant factors in organizational adoption of green IS & IT, according to Chen et al (2011). These factors account for 35.6%, 29.7%, and 27.6% of the differences in practices pertaining to pollution prevention, product care, and sustainable development, respectively. The findings of Huang et al.'s study from 2022 indicate a nonlinear inverted U-shaped relationship between manufacturing firms' green innovation and their current and new technological knowledge fusion. The relationship is positively moderated by environmental identity and mimetic pressure. According to Esfahbodi et al (2016), SSCM practices improve environmental performance but not always economic performance, and governance pressures are a prerequisite for their successful adoption. Mimetic and coercive pressures are significant factors in organizational adoption of green IS & IT, according to Chen et al (2011). These factors account for 35.6%, 29.7%, and 27.6% of the differences in practices pertaining to pollution prevention, product care, and sustainable development, respectively.

3. Methodology

The study will use surveys to collect data from manufacturing enterprises, related to other supply chain management practices. The measurement instruments will be adapted from the literature review. The survey will include two parts: institutional impact and sustainable supply chain practices. The instrument for measuring institutional coercive forces will include four questions and will be adapted from Zhu et al., (2005). The normative forces instruments are adapted from Ates et al (2012) and Ehrgott et al (2011). The mimetic forces instruments are adapted from Chatterje and Ravichandran (2013) and Carter and Jennings (2004). Respondents will be asked to indicate their agreement with the questions according to their perceptions about the forces that force their enterprises to implement sustainability practices starting from 1 to 5 measurement scales. Also, regarding sustainability practices, questions will be adapted from measurement instruments identified in the literature.

3.1 Model specifikacion

To examine the influence of institutional pressures on the adoption of sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) practices, a multiple linear regression model was developed. The dependent variable is the extent of SSCM adoption (SSCM_ADOPT), and the independent variables include coercive pressure (Coercive), normative pressure (Normative), and mimetic pressure (Mimetic).

The regression model is specified as:

$$SSCM\_ADOPTi=\beta0+\beta1Coercivei+\beta2Normativei+\beta3Mimetici+\beta4Agei+\beta5Sizei+\varepsilon i \quad (1)$$

Where:

- SSCM_ADOPT this is the result of the adoption of SSCM for the firm i
- Coercivei, Normativei and Mimetici, represent institutional pressure dimensions
- Agei and Sizei as control variables
- εi is the error term

Control variables included firm size and industry type to account for firm-specific and contextual variations.

First assumption if the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is **linear was checked through residual plots. All independent variables are linearly related to our dependent variable.** To check for multicollinearity if the independent variables are **not too highly correlated** with each other, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) test is used. The value of VIF<5 indicates of no multicollinearity issue in the study. Using (i) composite reliabilities and item loadings, (ii) convergent validity (AVE), and (iii) discriminant validity, the measuring model's suitability for all constructs was assessed. The fact that all outer loadings were above the 0.70 indicates strong validity of all constructs.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the sample

Age	=<5	12	13.04 %
	5-10	28	30.43 %
	11-20	36	39.13 %
	=>20	16	17.39 %
	Total	92	
Type of enterprise	Manufacturing	69	75.00 %
	Wholesale	13	14.13 %
	Retail	10	10.87 %
	Total	92	
Export/Import	Export	58	63.04 %
	Import	29	31.52 %
	Neither	5	5.43 %
	Total	92	
Position of repondents	Senior executive	21	22.83 %
	Senior manager	34	36.96 %
	Managers	29	31.52 %
	First-line managers	8	8.7 %
	Total	92	

The composite reliability as determined by Dillon-Rho Goldstein, and the values of Cronbach's α exceeded the 0.60 threshold demonstrated the reliability of the items (Sarstedt et al, 2017). Furthermore, the convergent validity values of every construct exceeded the 0.50 threshold. A variable's normal distribution can be estimated using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Samples under 50 can be tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test, which can also be applied to samples of up to 2000. A variable with a normal distribution has a test limit of 0.05; if this value is exceeded, the variable is not normal (Knief & Forstmeier, 2021). All variables in this study have a normal distribution, according to the Shapiro-Wilk test.

4. Results

The regression analysis provides important insights into how different dimensions of institutional pressure—**coercive, normative**, and **mimetic**—affect the **adoption of sustainable supply chain management (SSCM)** practices across firms. Hierarchical regression analysis is used to include the effect of control variables in the model. After running analyses the results show the positive relationship of age and negative relationship of size.

The data from the survey revealed that control variables in the model age had a significant impact on how respondents felt, with a coefficient of .332 in the first model and .383 in the second model. Additionally, the size of the group being surveyed also played a role, with coefficients of -.312 and -.291 in the two models. The presence of coercion (coerc12) and social norms (norm12) had the most significant impact on how affected individuals felt, with coefficients of -.610 and .724 respectively. But, the effect of coercive forces is not positive as hypothesised. Despite these findings, the coefficient for imitation (mim12) was not significant, indicating that this factor did not have a strong influence on perceived impact.

Table 2. Model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.328[a]	.107	.087	.52660
2	.499[b]	.249	.205	.49140
a. Predictors: (Constant), Size, Age				
b. Predictors: (Constant), Size, Age, Mim12, Norm12, Coerc12				

The hierarchical regression model explains a substantial proportion of the variance of control variables in SSCM adoption (**R = 0.328**). After including the second block of independent variables the value of R increases to R=0.499 indicating that institutional pressures, particularly normative, play a meaningful role in shaping firm behavior. The relatively high F-statistic (F= 5.700, p < 0.000) also indicates a good overall model fit.

Table 3. ANOVA table

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.968	2	1.484	5.352	.006[b]
	Residual	24.681	89	.277		
	Total	27.649	91			
2	Regression	6.882	5	1.376	5.700	.000[c]
	Residual	20.767	86	.241		
	Total	27.649	91			
a. Dependent Variable: sust12						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Size, Age						
c. Predictors: (Constant), Size, Age, Mim12, Norm12, Coerc12						

Overall, the results of the regression analysis show that age, size, Coerc12, Norm12, and Mim12 all have significant impacts on the outcome variable. Age has a positive unstandardized coefficient of .211, indicating that as age increases, so does the outcome variable. Size, on the other hand, has a negative unstandardized coefficient of -.222, suggesting that larger sizes are associated with lower values of the outcome variable. Coerc12, Norm12, and Mim12 also show

significant relationships with the outcome variable, with Norm12 having the highest standardized coefficient of .724. This set of data indicates that there is a significant negative relationship between size and the dependent variable. The unstandardized coefficient of -.238 suggests that for every unit decrease in size, there is a corresponding decrease of .087 in the dependent variable. This relationship is statistically significant with a t-value of -2.730 and a p-value of .008. Therefore, we can conclude that as the size of the variable decreases, the dependent variable also decreases, supporting the hypothesis that there is a negative relationship between size and the dependent variable. The standardized coefficient of -.312 indicates that size accounts for 31.2% of the variance in the dependent variable.

Table 4 Regression coefficients

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.268	.151		28.195	.000
	Age	.183	.063	.332	2.899	.005
	Size	-.238	.087	-.312	-2.730	.008
2	(Constant)	3.357	.302		11.120	.000
	Age	.211	.067	.383	3.168	.002
	Size	-.222	.083	-.291	-2.665	.009
	Coerc12	-.378	.136	-.610	-2.782	.007
	Norm12	.499	.134	.724	3.714	.000
	Mim12	.070	.077	.114	.906	.367
a. Dependent Variable: sust12						

According to the frequency table above, the majority of respondents (34.78%) believed that the problem at hand had some impact on them. Not far behind, 19.57% of respondents said they were neither affected, and another 19.57% said they were only slightly affected. The lowest percentage of respondents (11.96%) felt extremely much affected, while a smaller percentage felt relatively much affected (14.13%). All things considered, the data demonstrates a variety of reactions to the problem.

Table 5 Implementation of sustainable practices

Frequency table					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither	18	19.57	19.57	19.57
	A little	18	19.57	19.57	39.13
	To an extent	32	34.78	34.78	73.91
	Relatively much	13	14.13	14.13	88.04
	Extremely much	11	11.96	11.96	100.00
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

5. Discussion

5.1 Implementation of sustainable supply chain practices

Based on cumulative frequency 73.91% of organizations in the study agree with sustainable practices from neither to an extent. 26.09% agree from relatively to extremely much with sustainable practices. The level of implementation of sustainable practices in Kosovo is still low. Many businesses in Kosovo still rely on single-use plastics and lack recycling programs. Additionally, there are limited regulations in place to promote renewable energy sources or enforce environmental standards. Overall, the results indicate that although some Kosovo organizations are starting to adopt sustainable practices, widespread adoption is still a ways off. Progress in this area is being hampered by the absence of laws and incentives encouraging companies to give sustainability top priority. It will be imperative that lawmakers enact stricter regulations in the future to promote and compel environmentally conscious business practices in Kosovo. Then and only then will the nation be able to make real progress toward a more sustainable future.

5.2 Influence of Coercive Pressure

Despite being negative (β = -0.378, p < 0.007), the coercive pressure variable is significant. The theoretical expectation that formal institutional mandates, government regulations, and compliance requirements have a significant and positive impact on businesses' adoption of sustainable practices is not supported by this. Coercive pressure may not be as successful in encouraging sustainable practices as previously believed, according to the negative coefficient. This might suggest that companies are figuring out ways to meet rules without really embracing sustainability. The lack of political support in developing countries is the most frequently mentioned barrier to SSCM implementation in the literature (Clarke & Boersma, 2015; Oelze, 2017). Among these are the lack of regulations (Latip et al, 2022, Huq et al, 2014) and the lax enforcement of existing ones (Govindan et al, 2021; Denu et al, 2023; Ehrgott et al, 2013). In certain situations, businesses may decide to pay pollution fees or fines because they are less costly than cleanup or preventative costs because they do not take into consideration the negative financial externalities associated with the environment (Lam, 2011). This can lead to a vicious cycle in which businesses keep putting short-term profits ahead of long-term viability. Businesses might not immediately reap the rewards of investing in sustainable supply chain practices if there are regulations and enforcement in place. Governments and regulatory agencies must intervene and establish a framework that encourages and rewards businesses for SSCM implementation in order to eventually create a business environment that is more socially and environmentally responsible.

5.3 Influence of Normative Pressure

The findings also demonstrate that normative pressure plays a significant role in the adoption of SSCM (β =0.499, p<0.000). This result is consistent with other research (Abdul Aziz et al, 2017; Martínez-Ferrero & García-Sánchez, 2017). According to this, companies may be more inclined to adopt sustainable supply chain practices if they experience pressure from outside parties like competitors, stakeholders, or government agencies. Businesses can better understand the reasons behind their sustainability initiatives and make well-informed decisions to enhance their supply chain practices by recognizing the impact of normative pressure on SSCM adoption. Industry standards, professional networks, and stakeholder expectations—such as those of clients, non-profits, or certifying organizations—are the usual sources of normative pressures. According to this research, businesses are feeling more and more pressure to meet sustainability standards that are widely accepted in their industry and professional communities. The importance of normative pressures suggests that stakeholder legitimacy and peer influence continue to be powerful drivers of SSCM practices.

5.4 Influence of Mimetic Pressure

Mimetic pressure has a positive but non-significant effect (β = 0.070, p <0.367). This implies that although businesses may follow the example of their supposedly successful rivals in adopting sustainable supply chain practices, the impact is less pronounced than that of normative forces. Furthermore, the results of other research papers (Huang et al, 2022; Chen et al, 2014) contradict these findings. Mimetic isomorphism might be more prevalent in settings with a lot of uncertainty or little enforcement of regulations, where businesses look to others for guidance on what is a successful or acceptable practice. Nonetheless, it seems that formal institutional factors have a greater influence in the context of this study than informal imitation.

6. Conclusions

First, the aim of this study is to increase the understanding of the implementation of sustainable practices. Second, to explain the relationship between institutional environment and sustainable practices in Kosovo. Based on the frequency table the implementation of sustainable practices is low in Kosovo. Normative forces influence positively implementation of sustainable practices which is in line with other studies (Dai et al, 2021; Shibin et al, 2017; Martínez-Ferrero & García-Sánchez, 2017), but not with government regulation which are negatively related to implementation of sustainable practices. Government agencies in order to increase the level of implementation of sustainable practices need to establish clear processes for monitoring businesses. Another approach should be implementing stricter regulations and penalties for organizations that do not comply with sustainability standards, in order to incentivize greater adherence to environmentally-friendly practices. One potential suggestion for government to increase implementation of sustainable practices is to provide financial incentives or subsidies for businesses and individuals who adopt sustainable measures.

Organizations looking to start or enhance their sustainability initiatives, should set clear goals, engage employees at all levels, and measure progress effectively. Additionally, education and awareness campaigns about the importance of sustainability could be crucial in changing mindsets and behaviors towards more environmentally-conscious choices at both individual and institutional levels. This study has also limitations. One limitation is regarding small sample. Another limitation is the data are collected in one point of time. One potential future research direction could be to explore the role of government policies and regulations in shaping sustainable practices within different industries. Another possibility is to include different factors like leadership, corporate culture, technical capabilities on the implementation of sustainable initiatives in organizations. An important area for consideration is analyzing the link between social responsibility initiatives, environmental sustainability goals, and economic performance within a broader institutional context. Explore case studies of companies that have successfully integrated sustainable practices into their operations and the positive outcomes they have experienced

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Apendix: Measurment scale of institutional pressures

Scale	Items
Coercive pressures (Coerc)	Coerc1- How influential are laws and regulations regarding social responsibility and environmental protection?
	Coerc2- The market for your product already has laws, regulations, and standards for social responsibility and environmental protection.
	Coerc3- Relevant departments increase the firm's oversight regarding compliance with laws, regulations, and standards of social responsibility and environmental protection.
	Coerc4- Enforcement of the law increases the penalty for firms' violations of relevant laws, regulations, and standards.
Normative pressures (Norm)	Norm1- Consumer expectations for ecologically sustainable products, product safety and increasing demands.
	Norm2- Product exports must meet environmental and safety standards.
	Norm3- Consumers demand a good image regarding environmental and social protection.
Mimetic pressures (Mim)	Mim1- The leading business in your industry has begun to implement sustainable management (environmental protection) in the supply chain.
	Mim2- Businesses that have implemented sustainability practices (environmental and social) in the supply chain in your industry have good environmental, social and economic performance.
	Mim3- Most businesses in your industry have begun to implement sustainable supply chain management practices.

Measurement scale of sustainable practices

Ecological product design (Ekod)	**Ekod1- Using life cycle analysis to assess the friendliness of products.**
	Ekod2- Designing products for the lowest impact of raw materials on the environment.
	Ekod3- Designing products to reduce the use of raw materials or energy.
	Ekod4- Designing products to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the production process
	Ekod5- Designing products for recycling or reuse.
	Ekod6- Design of products for disassembly.
	Ekod7- Creating a recycling system for waste products.
Sustainable packaging (Pack)	Pack1- Healthy materials in all end-of-life scenarios.
	Pack2- Maximizing the use of recyclable materials.
	Pack3- Use of clean production technology and best practices.
	Pack4- The packaging meets environmental standards.
	Pack5- Eco-labeling of product packaging.
	Pack6- Minimization of packaging materials.
Environmental protection management (Mgm)	Mgm1- Commitment to production by senior managers.
	Mgm2- Support for environmental protection from middle-level managers.
	Mgm3- Cross-functional cooperation for environmental improvement.
	Mgm4- Promoting and enforcing environmental laws and regulations.
	Mgm5- Establishing agencies for environmental protection and monitoring.
	Mgm6- ISO 14001 certificate.

	Mgm7- Regular inspection and maintenance of environmental protection equipment and facilities.
	Mgm8- Regular inspection and maintenance of equipment and facilities for environmental protection.
Human rights (Hum)	Hum1- We strictly respect labor laws, no child labor.
	Hum2- We pay a "living wage" higher than the country's minimum wage.
	Hum3- We offer our employees safe and healthy working conditions.
	Hum4- We do career planning for staff development.
	Hum5- We provide opportunities for continuing education for employees.
Philanthropisem (Fil)	Fil1- We often donate to charities.
	Fil2- We often volunteer at local charities.
	Fil3- We help develop local education and culture.
	Fil4- We promote social responsibility in our industry.

Safety (Sig)	**Sig1- We offer our customers safe products.**
	Sig2- We ensure the safe movement of product in our facilities.
	Sig3- We ensure that our locations operate safely.