

SME Environmental Practices: Towards a New Typology Integrating Managers' Environmental Concern

Anthony Vandersteene

Université de Mons, Belgium
anthony.vandersteene@umons.ac.be

Christiane Bughin

Université de Mons, Belgium
christiane.bughin@umons.ac.be

Abstract

Small businesses are of great interest when it comes to climate change. Although they are not always aware of their environmental impact, previous research indicates that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are responsible for around 60-70 per cent of European industrial pollution (Koirala, 2019). Therefore, we explore how owner-managers' environmental concerns influence the environmental practices of SMEs while taking into account the effects of company size and sector regulation. We conducted nineteen interviews with Belgian SME owner-managers. We contribute to the existing literature by providing a typology classifying SMEs' environmental practices according to their owner-managers environmental concerns and considering company size and environmental sectoral regulations. We found that micro-enterprises are more likely to adopt environmental practices when they are mandatory. In addition, the adoption of environmental practices is more likely to result from owner-managers environmental concerns in small to medium-sized firms.

Keywords: SMEs, environmental practices, environmental concern, SME owner-manager