

Navigating Green Building Certification, Sustainability, and Public Perception: Identifying and Understanding Barriers to Widespread Adoption of Green Building Practices in Smaller Municipalities

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Introduction

This research explores the underrepresentation of green building practices in smaller municipalities, highlighting a gap compared to larger city centers. It examines perceptions, barriers and motivations towards widespread green building adoption and identifies steps to improve it.



Research Question

What factors hinder the adoption of green building accreditation in smaller municipalities, and what strategies can bridge this gap to promote sustainable practices at the local level?

Methodology

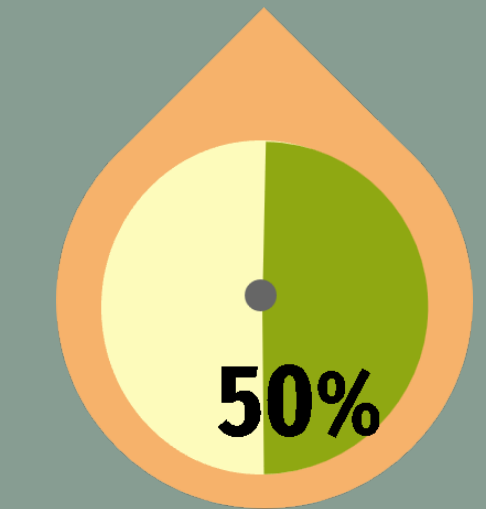
- Surveys: primary focus on identifying motivations and barriers to Green Building Accreditation.
- In-depth Interviews and systemic literature review.
- Thematic analysis to identify trends among participant groups.

Literature Review

Over 18 documents, multiple themes related to green building accreditation and practices emerged:

- Costs of green building
- Public perceptions and awareness
- Socio-Environmental benefits
- Sustainability and social equity
- Cultural and regional considerations
- Strategies for overcoming barriers

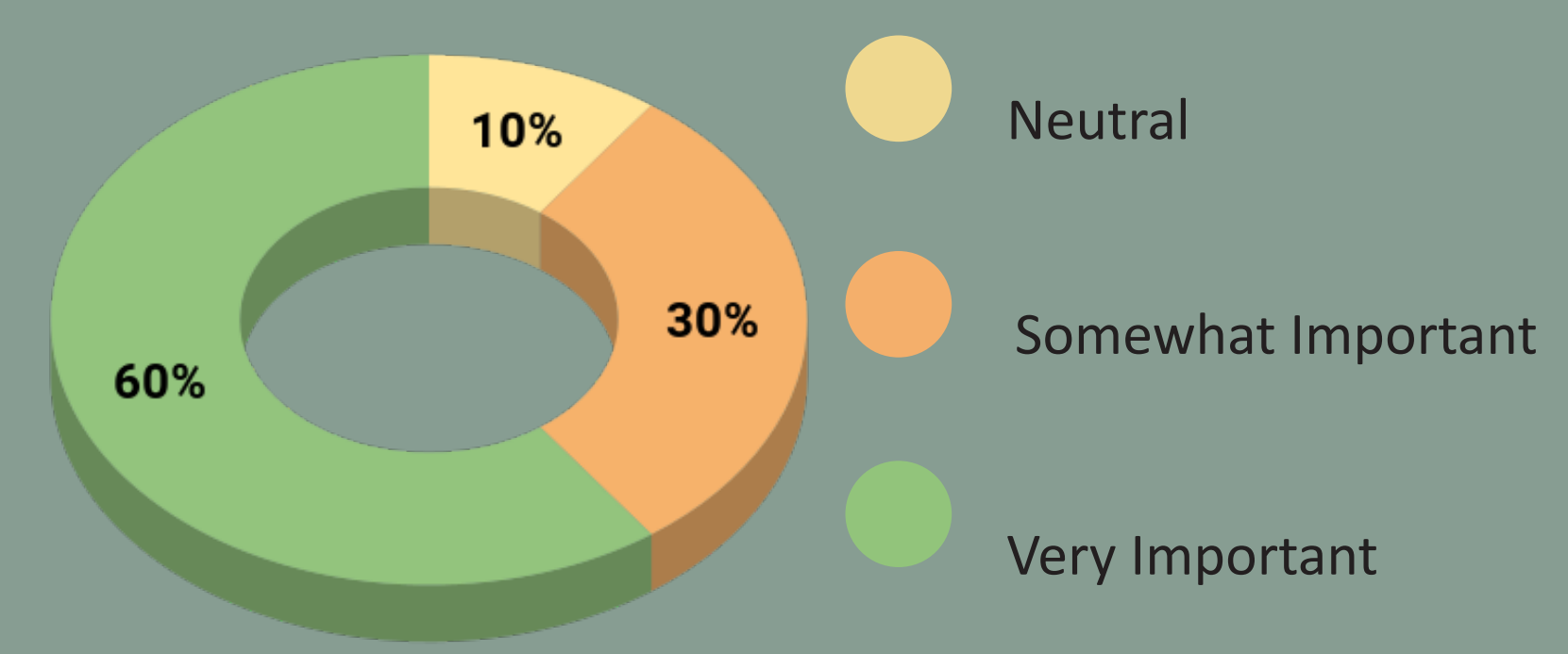
Percentage of total respondents aware of Green Building programs in their municipality



“I was thinking I was aware there was, but I’m not. I could not name a specific one.”
- Interview participant

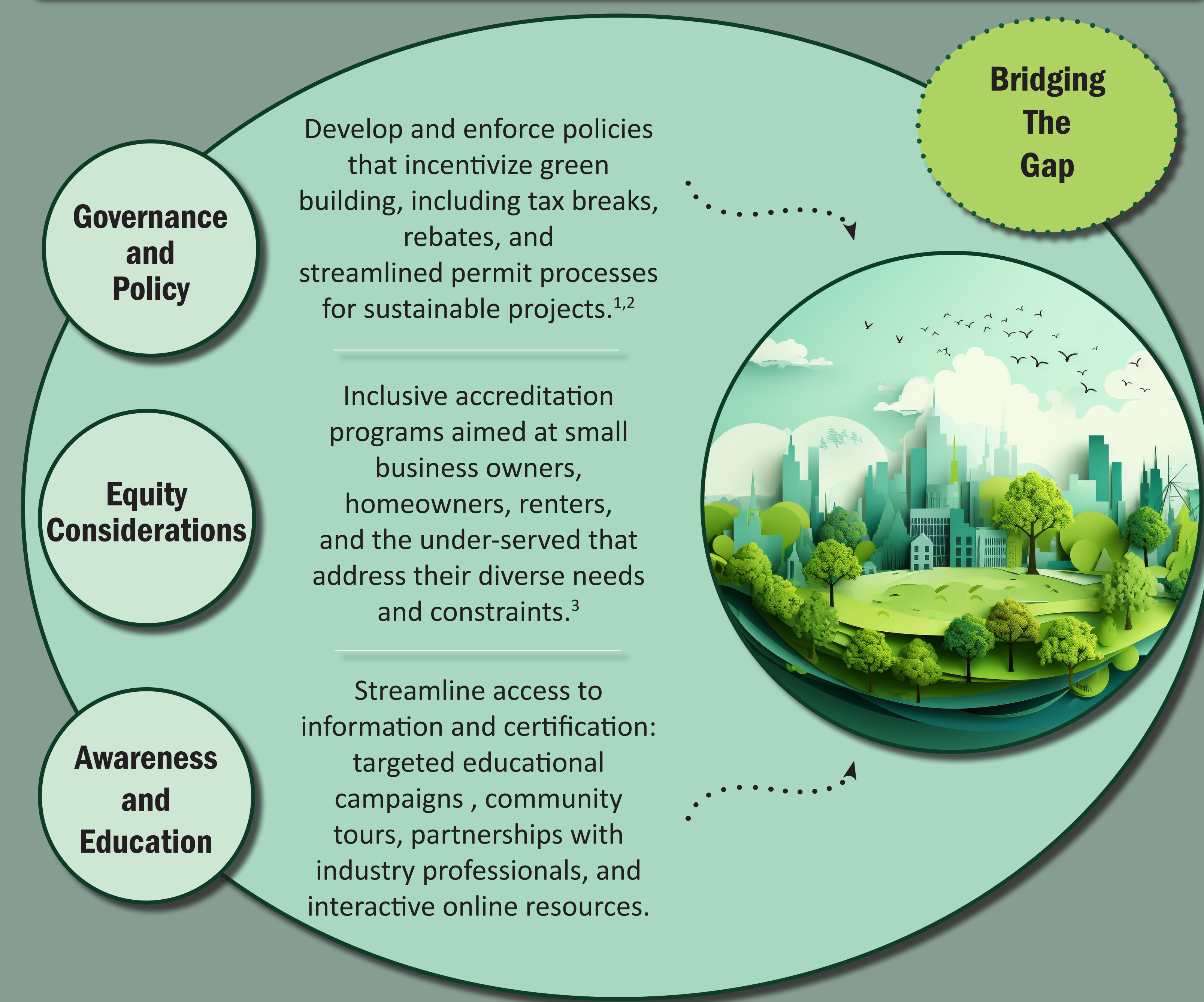
“If there weren’t the programs..there would be (fewer) educated people in the (field). Probably the programs were the catalyst for bringing education and conversation into (sustainable design).”
- Interview participant”

Survey Participant Sentiment Towards Roll of Green Building Accreditation Fostering Sustainable Construction



Discussion & Conclusion

There is a great need for municipal support to address the disconnect between perceptions vs. actual benefits for localized Green Building Accreditation. Promoting Accreditation in smaller municipalities and among diverse property ownership types requires a multi-faceted approach that involves improved governance, equity considerations and targeted education and research. Overcoming barriers also involves addressing cost and awareness issues, ensuring that Green Building practices are seen as accessible, beneficial, and integral to community wellbeing.



Barriers

- Insufficient municipal policies promoting green building.^{4,5,6}
- Specialized expertise and costs can be prohibitive for small businesses and homeowners.¹
- The one-size-fits-all approach of some programs overlooks local conditions and needs.

References

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 5) Golić, K., Kosorić, V., Kosić, T., Vučković, S. S., & Kujundžić, K. (2023, May 2). A platform of critical barriers to socially sustainable residential buildings: Experts' perspective. *Sustainability* 2023, 15, 7485. MDPI. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/15/9/7485>
 6) Chegut, A., Eichholtz, P., & Kok, N. (2019). The price of innovation: An analysis of the marginal cost of Green Buildings. *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, 98, 102248. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeem.2019.07.003>