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Article

The Impact of Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) on Sustainability and Ethical Marketing Practices

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Abstract: In the fast-paced business environment of to say, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) integration has become a strategic necessity for institutional investors and companies alike. No longer just about ethics, ESG is now a key factor in addressing emerging risks like climate change, data privacy, and regulatory compliance. It increases organizational resilience, promotes sustainable development, and is an effective brand differentiator. Companies that actively disclose their ESG initiatives establish more robust trust, brand value and values alignment with socially responsible consumers. Sophisticated ESG analytics and high quality information have allowed investors and marketers to embrace systematic, evidence based strategies that support transparency and authenticity. Strong ESG governance, with cross-functional leadership and customized reporting, guarantees integrated coverage and control. In the end, ESG is not a choice – it is an essential prerequisite for creating future- proof, credible, and value-anchored brands.
Keywords: ESG, Reporting, Ethics, Marketing, Investors, Disclosure.

1. Introduction:

Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) serves as a comprehensive framework for assessing non-financial factors in business operations. Its significance has surged recently due to the necessity of evaluating companies based on environmental, social, and governance criteria. Investors should anticipate that ESG reports encompass not only existing regulations but also an organization's strategic efforts aimed at positively influencing ESG aspects related to its activities. Many investors perceive ESG as an ethical component of decision-making. However, adhering to strategic standards can benefit companies by lowering costs, enhancing reputation, and increasing investment prospects. Neglecting ESG reporting can result in price volatility.

Through stringently following and upholding ESG criteria, organizations can reduce their exposure to risk and prevent being at the forefront of public controversy. ESG criteria have also been popular with investors as a template for the assessment of business conduct, investors, in the recent past, have come to see that ESG criteria provide a pragmatic utility besides ethical justification. The upcoming generation of investors is revolutionizing the practice of investments. Many studies have found that firms with strong ESG practices have lower capital charges and lower volatility.

It is important for the investors to expect ESG disclosures to include not just current regulations but also as an organizations strategy to have positive impact on the ESG factors associated with its activities. Many investors consider ESG as a matter of ethics in decision making.

But most of the earlier research work on this topic mainly concentrated on the implementation of this environmental, social, and corporate governance scenario and analyzed the investor's perception based on its performance. But this research is just another view in the implementation process of environmental, social, and corporate governance. (i.e.) employees perception towards environmental, social and corporate governance implemented in their respective organization and its impact on their performance. For this, it is proposed to conduct the survey empirically in the leading companies located in Bengaluru.

2. Background of research

This research focuses on environmental, social, and corporate governance from the perspective of employees, specifically examining selected companies in Bengaluru. The study aims to assess employees' awareness and opinions regarding the governance practices implemented in these areas. It considers various factors such as communication, awareness, participation, benefits, and challenges, and evaluates their impact on the organization's sustainability through performance. The conceptual model is illustrated in the figure below:

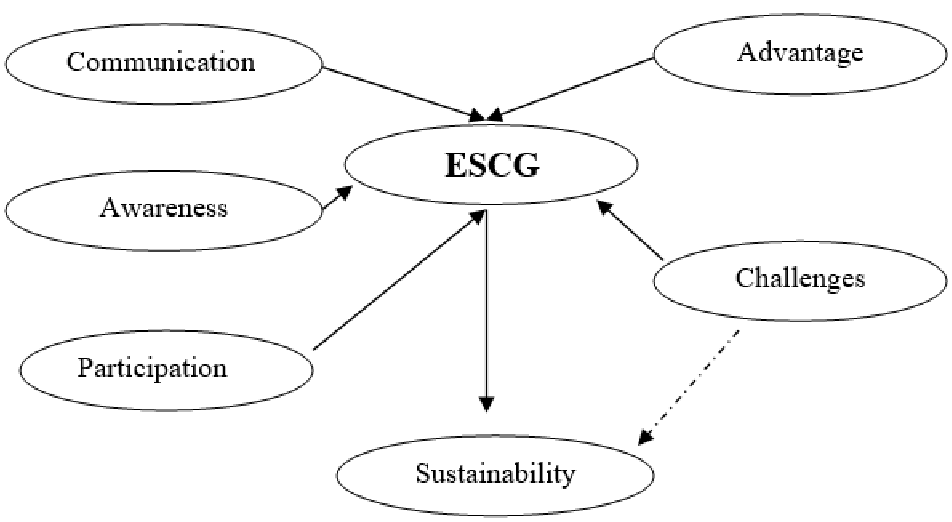

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the study

A deeper understanding has emerged that sustainable practices are not only economically sensible but also ethically commendable. Today, ESG factors are seen as crucial indicators of long-term success, risk management, and operational stability. Stakeholders such as investors, regulators, consumers, and employees are demanding greater transparency and accountability from companies, reshaping the business landscape. Additionally, regulatory bodies across different regions are implementing more stringent disclosure requirements and ESG standards, highlighting the need for companies to align with sustainable practices. Organizations lagging in ESG performance face increased risks related to reputation, legal issues, and costs. From a marketing standpoint, this transition presents a unique opportunity. ESG is not merely a checklist; it represents a narrative of purpose, impact, and competitive edge. Brands that prioritize ESG foster trust, enhance loyalty, and connect more deeply with a conscientious and informed consumer base.

3. INVESTIMENT IN ESG IS GROWING

Most of the institutional investors invest in ESG for the sustainable growth of the organization. As there are sustainable challenges such as floods, sea level rise, data security and regulatory pressures are bringing new risk factors for the investors. So the modern investors have come forward to adopt ESG and invest in ESG and thereby face all the challenges that are coming in its way effectively. Along with disclosure of ESG accounts and reports is also important for the organization in order to face the challenges and the government regulations. With better data from the organizations combined with ESG research and analytics capabilities, more systematic, quantitative, financially relevant approaches to ESG issues have paid way for many studies that explore more on ESG investing.

- Organizations investing in ESG sees more profitability and more competitive as to compared with those organizations without ESG.
- Organizations adopting ESG has low risk and compared with those organizations with low rated ESG adopters.
- Systematic risk associated with high rated ESG organizations is less as compared with low rated ESG organizations.

4. RECENT TRENDS IN BUSINESS RESEARCH SCENARIO

More opportunities are available for high rated ESG organizations as compared with low rated ESG organizations. Investing in ESG may carry high degree of risk by way of environment, social and governance instability. The research suggests the risk of uncertainty cause more damage- may be reduced by investing in ESG.

ESG Investing: A Strategic Marketing Advantage for Sustainable Growth

In the fast-paced business climate of today, institutional investors are increasingly adopting ESG approaches not only for ethical purposes, but as a prudent investment in sustainable development. New issues such as climate-related risks (floods, rising tides), data privacy risks, and compliance burdens are redefining the risk environment. ESG integration presents a forward-looking method of tackling challenges, making brands strong, responsible, and future-fit.

From a marketing perspective, ESG is more than compliance it's a compelling value proposition. Companies that invest in ESG demonstrate transparency through ESG disclosures and reporting, aligning with both consumer expectations and regulatory demands. These reports not only build trust but also enhance brand reputation and stakeholder engagement.

With the increase in sophisticated ESG analytics and solid data availability, investors now have the opportunity to use systematic, data-based strategies to apply ESG investing.

This transition aids strategic decision-making and provides marketers with richer insights to weave stories of impact, innovation and integrity.

Why ESG matters in Marketing and Investment: Improved Brand Positioning: well established ESG practices are regarded as more profitable and competitive in contrast to firms that fall behind.

ESG REPORTING

Disclosure of ESG reporting is also as important as adopting ESG without which organizations have to face many regulatory barriers. Disclosure of the reports is intended to help investors better understand how professional investors integrating ESG factors and disclosing it. This process in turn helps investors determine how to integrate ESG analysis into their own investment processes and in what manner that makes sense for them. ESG related material issues to be informed by the directors, to understand and assess and to make business decisions. Separate professional responsibility, self – study and reports from senior management people could benefit from disclosing of ESG matters. Some of the organizations hire expertise directors to look after ESG and its reporting or even outside experts are hired to provide advice and guidance to the boards regarding ESG.

Composition of Management-Level ESG Committees

As with other matters, day-to-day implementation of the ESG strategy usually rests with senior management, and companies employ different approaches in creating and staffing their ESG teams, delineating internal reporting lines, and determining whether any formal procedures are used for such management-level ESG governance. Since the role of the board is that of oversight, a cross-functional, senior management team can be critical for driving the development and implementation of the company's ESG strategy. Whether or not such team is formalized as a "committee" or a "council," its members frequently include the Chief Sustainability Officer, Corporate Secretary, General Counsel, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Human Resources Officer, and senior members from the areas of public/community affairs, environmental, health and safety, investor relations, corporate communications, risk management, and cybersecurity. It may also include representatives from the company's lines of business, real estate, innovation, and/or other areas.

Frequency of Management Reporting to the Board on ESG Issues

In a similar vein, there is no universally correct frequency for management to report ESG matters to the board and its committees. The frequency of these reports depends on various factors unique to each company, such as the board's oversight framework, the management's organizational structure and resources, the company's size, type, and industry, as well as regulatory changes and trends. Additionally, the importance of each ESG issue to the company, the pressures and priorities from investors and other stakeholders, and the company's strategies regarding these issues all play a role in determining reporting practices.

Critical Review of Literatures:

Sl.no	Authors	Title	Summary
1.	Salim Chouaibi and Habib Affes -2021	The effect of social and ethical practices on environmental disclosure: evidence from an international ESG data	The research analyzes the impact of social and ethical practices on environmental disclosure of ESG- listed companies in seven nations using regression and GMM techniques and identifies that robust CSR and ethical obligations contribute to greater environmental transparency. The findings further indicate that the disclosures are time consistent and institution and culute influenced, providing significant insights to stakeholders assessing corporate transparency and sustainability.
2.	Deinera P. D. Nugroho, Yi Hsu et. al.-2024	Investigating the Interconnection between Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG), and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategies: An Examination of the Influence on Consumer Behavior.	This research seeks to capture the linkage between ESG factors, CSR and consumer behavior. It concludes that ESG positively contribute to CSR, whereas social and governance factors are mixed in their contributions.a comprehensive ESG-CSR strategy as critical in building brand credibility, enhancing performance, and advancing long term sustaibability.
3.	M Karwowski et. al.-2021	The application of corporate social responsibility (CSR) actions for mitigation of environmental, social, corporate governance (ESG) and reputational risk in integrated reports	This research examines the application of CSR to manage ESG and reputational risks by companies. Based on content analysis, it identifies an association between risk reported. The study establishes a strong association between risk categories and CSR approaches, emphasizing the role of CSR in sustainable risk management.
4.	Nermain Al-Issa, Audil	Impact of environmental, social, governance, and corporate social	This study investigates how ESG and CSR engagement influence marketing spending and market values

	Rashid Khaki et.al.-2022	responsibility factors on firm's marketing expenses and firm value: A panel study of US companies	among S & P. It reveals that good ESG commitments lower marketing spending and raise market value with diversity on the board and improve brand positioning.
5.	W Puriwat, S Tripopsakul - 2022	From ESG to DESG: The Impact of DESG (Digital Environmental, Social, and Governance) on Customer Attitudes and Brand Equity	The influence of Digital ESG practice on customer attitude and brand equity is examined. The findings indicate that DESG has a positive effect on customer attitude and mediates brand equity and also highlights the significance of DESG in shaping brand perception during the digital age.

5. ESG ACTIVITIES DONE BY COMPANIES

1.TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES (TCS)

TCS adopted energy efficient practices, renewable energy supply, carbon reduction measures. TCS has multiple social initiatives that include education, healthcare, and skill development. It operates education programs to increase literacy, scholarships, and aid to poor students. It also adopted healthcare programs that offer medical treatment and awareness programs. TCS has sound corporate governance practices. It practices transparency, compliance with regulation acts, and ethical business practices.

Award

In 2017, TCS Received S & P Dow Johnes indices (S & P DJI) one of the world's leading index providers, have listed TCS in their annual Dow Jones sustainability index. On the environmental dimension, TCS was placed in the 94th percentile, TCS was placed in the 85th percentile in the world index.

2. INFOSYS

a) Energy efficiency measures and investments in renewables.

b) INFOSYS are carbon neutral

c) Invested in 60mw of solar PV capacity

d) Infosys will cut 75% of emission

e) To enable 10 million people to acquire digital skills by 2025

f) To have 45% women employees by 2030.

g) Considering stockholders

h) Creating new benchmarks in governance.

Award - INFOSYS received the prestigious united nations global climate action award.

3. APPLE

a) To offer carbon neutral products.

b) By the year 2030 all apple products will be produced using 100% clean energy.

c) 17.4 metric tons of carbon emissions reduced in 2022 through the use of renewable energy.

d) Encouraging education, special education and employment improving vocational skills and livelihood improvement projects.

e) Encouraging gender equality and women empowerment apple company is believes in transparency.

Award - It has won numerous awards and recognition for its ESG efforts. Environmental protection agency's safer choice partner of the year award for the year 2020 and 2021.

4. WIPRO

The firm's usage of energy, the quantity of waste it generates, conservation of natural resources, how it treats flora and fauna are utilized in assessing the environmental risk social criteria emphasize the firms selection of vendors to conduct business with along their value chains. Governance criteria is of prime significance and assigned a greater weightage by the majority of the rating agencies. Investors desire firms not to indulge in illegal activities, stay away from conflicts with board members and stakeholders, avoid politics.

Award - Wipro recognized as a leader in ISG Provider Lens 2022 for Sustainability and ESG Services in Australia, UK and US.

5. HAVELLS

Havells phased out the application of trace kr-85 radioactive isotope from the whole CMI (ceramic metal halide) lighting range a couple of years ago. None of Havells products today contain radioactive materials. The company has four zero water discharge units, two renewable energy projects biomass and solar lamps and four resource conservation projects in all its plants. In social criteria, Havells pillars are health and nutrition, education, skill development, sanitation, healthcare, environment, and heritage conservation.

Awards:

Havells was placed in MSC top 20 Sustainable companies. In the year 2021, Havells received ICSI CSR Excellence Awards.

6. ULTRATECH CEMENT

As cement is a carbon-intensive sector, UltraTech has incorporated low carbon strategy in its business plan to meet SDG 13 (climate change objective) as per COP21 of the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change. Projects such as cooler upgradation, calciner modification, voltage variable frequency drive installation and burner modification in their manufacturing facilities have significantly enhanced the energy productivity of the company. The priority areas are education, health, sustainable livelihood, infrastructure and social reform. Water and sanitation and women empowerment are cross-cutting concerns.

Award:

UltraTech cement has been awarded the Leaders Award in the category of Mega Large Business, Process Sector at Frost & Sullivan and TERI Sustainability 4.0 Awards 2021. The sustainability 4.0 Awards, being in the 12th year edition, honors initiatives of companies that integrate principles of sustainability into business culture

7. ASIAN PAINTS

It's Project NEW (Natural resource conservation, E-energy and emission reduction, W-waste reduction) had an emphasis on environmentally friendly manufacturing facilities and activities with the goal of reducing the operations impact and cultivating biodiversity. It comprises supporting the infrastructure ecosystem basic in order to provide quality education. Offers scholarship to students who need financial assistance to complete education.

Award Asian Paints Rohtak plant was one of the winners in the 'Best Managed Electrical System & Power Quality' category of the 3rd CII National Energy Efficiency Circle Competition.

8. PROCTER & GAMBLE

It launched Fairy Ocean Plastic bottles, which are composed of 10 per cent ocean plastic and 90 per cent post-consumer recycled plastic. It launched the 100 per cent recyclables bottle to demonstrate what can be done to keep plastic waste out of the ocean. It is concerned with enhancing education infrastructure, enabling marginalized girls through education and enhancing learning outcomes.

Award - P & G has awarded as Climate Leadership Award 2017: Organizational Leader, being active leadership within the industry to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emission.

Impact of ESG and Ethical Marketing on Business Valuation

1. **Improved Financial Performance:** The adoption of sustainable and responsible practices results in improved operational efficiency and cost savings. For example, the use of energy-efficient technology

can reduce utility expenses substantially, while reducing waste can minimize material costs. Ethical marketing, which ensures transparency and ethical messaging, can also ensure consumer trust and loyalty, resulting in long-term revenue growth.

2. **Ethical Investors Attraction:** Investors today are increasingly assessing companies from an ESG perspective. Proving a real commitment to sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical behavior draws in a wider base of investors who care more about long-term value creation than immediate returns. Ethical marketing also supports this image by ensuring that a company's values are communicated genuinely to stakeholders.
3. **Reputational Risks Management:** ESG activities assist in reducing risks associated with environmental mishaps, labor conflicts, unethical business practices, and weak corporate governance. Addressing them ahead of time not only shields the company's brand and image but also creates lasting trust among consumers, investors and society. Ethical advertising serves a critical function by encouraging truthful, authentic communications that mirror corporate ethics.
4. **Enhanced Access to Capital:** Companies with good ESG performance and a track record of responsible operations tend to find it simpler to raise capital. Investors and lenders are increasingly shifting towards companies that value ESG considerations as they see them as more robust and better equipped to weather ensuing economic, environmental or regulatory shocks.
5. **Enhancing Competitive Advantage:** A strong ESG strategy, combined with ethical marketing, can differentiate a company from its peers. By confronting environmental and social issues openly and ethically, a business not only becomes a leader in its sector but can also warrant premium prices, recruit mindful consumers, and develop more intimate brand loyalty.

FINDINGS

In today's rapidly evolving business environment, institutional investors are embracing ESG not merely for ethical purposes, but as a strategic approach to address emerging risks like climate change, data privacy, and regulatory compliance. ESG integration enhances risk management, boosts organizational resilience, and supports long-term sustainable development. In addition to risk management, ESG has emerged as a potent brand differentiator- firms that make proactive disclosure of their ESG activities engender more trust, develop stronger brand equity, and resonate with the values of today's socially-responsible consumers. Open ESG reporting satisfies both regulatory requirements and stakeholder demands, thus boosting corporate reputation and engagement. The emergence of sophisticated ESG analytics and the provision of high quality data enable investors to adopt systematic, fact-based approaches, and marketers to create convincing narratives highlighting authenticity, influence, and innovation. Consistent ESG practices not only enhance brand reputation making firms look more competitive and profitable but also facilitate strategic choices and value creation for the long term. Effective ESG governance, typically backed by cross-functional senior leadership terms, assures end to end integration across business functions, and customized reporting frequencies to boards assure oversight. As evidenced by recent literature, ESG has a profound impact on corporate transparency, consumer behavior, brand credibility, and even marketing spend. Exceptional firms like TCS, Infosys, and Apple showcase how combined ESG approaches can deliver environmental stewardship, social development, and governance excellence and gain international acclaim. In total, ESG is no longer a choice it is a requirement for future-proof brands aiming to earn investor trust, improve their reputation, and flourish in a value-based global economy.

Scope for Further Research

Subsequent research into ESG can examine a few priority areas to enhance its strategic value. Establishing standardized measures is critical to enable quantitative measurements of ESG's effect on company performance, investor returns, and brand reputation. Empirical analysis is necessary to determine the impact of ESG disclosure on consumer behavior across various cultures and segments. Research within industries can uncover industry specific ESG approaches for enhance efficacy. Furthermore, the function of new technologies such as AI and advanced analytics in improving the quality of ESG data, reporting and decision-making is also worth examining more closely. Long-term ESG governance research can provide knowledge on how ongoing practices lead to financial resilience across global disruptions. Finally, probing the impact of global ESG regulations on business strategies in both developed and emerging economies can inform global harmonization initiatives.

6. CONCLUSION:

ESG integration has become more than a moral obligation and a strategic imperative for institutional investors and companies alike. Aligning with ESG principles, companies can better respond to issues like climate change, regulatory changes, and privacy of data. ESG improves risk management, organizational resilience, and long-term value creation. In addition, it has emerged as a major brand differentiator in positioning, allowing businesses to establish trustworthiness, enhance stakeholder engagement, and attract socially responsible consumers. Its ability to drive corporate credibility, consumer behaviour, and performance has been proven by the effective embedding of ESG into core business activities, driven by leadership and buttressed by open reporting. Future looking companies that adopt ESG are not just protecting their own future but are also creating a more sustainable and fairer world economy.

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