

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Impact on Non-Traditional Sectors: SMEs, Gig Economy, and Emerging markets in Australia

Research Questions

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November 2024



Source: <https://solidflow.io/blog/esg-sme/>

This article presents the fundamental research questions guiding a study on the impacts of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices in Australia's non-traditional sectors: small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the gig economy, and emerging markets. These sectors are gradually increasingly relevant in Australia, but ESG adoption and its associated challenges within them remain underexplored. Through carefully crafted questions, this research intends to understand the specific impacts of ESG on worker conditions, investor expectations, business resilience, and adoption challenges in these sectors. The sections below outline each research question, the formulation process, and the identified gaps in current literature.

The Research Questions

1. How does the adoption of ESG practices impact resilience and growth in Australian SMEs operating in emerging markets?

This question explores the potential benefits of ESG on SMEs' long-term growth and resilience in unstable, emerging markets. SMEs face distinct financial and regulatory challenges, and this question aims to clarify whether ESG adoption could offer competitive advantages or stability, helping these businesses prosper under uncertain conditions.

2. What impact do ESG commitments have on labour rights and worker satisfaction within the Australian gig economy?

Given the high-profile labour issues within Australia's gig economy, this question seeks to understand how ESG practices could improve worker satisfaction, labour rights and working conditions. It is critical to investigate whether adopting ESG principles can offer substantial benefits to workers.

3. How do investor expectations around ESG influence funding availability and strategic planning for Australian SMEs in non-traditional sectors?

This question explores how investor-driven demands for ESG impacts SMEs in relation to funding and strategic direction. With increasing investor focus on sustainability, even smaller enterprises are under pressure to adopt ESG standards. This question seeks to clarify how investor expectations may shape both funding access and strategic choices for SMEs.

4. What are the barriers and incentives for ESG adoption among gig economy platforms in Australia, particularly around social and governance standards?

This question addresses the challenges of ESG adoption within the gig economy, where flexible work models make governance challenging. Understanding the elements that either endorse or block ESG integration will highlight the difficulties and motivators within this sector.

Formulation of the Research Questions

These core research questions were formulated based on gaps in the current literature on ESG practices in non-traditional sectors. While large corporations have implemented ESG frameworks, research on ESG's impacts in sectors such as SMEs, the gig economy, and emerging markets is uncommon, especially in Australia. Present studies usually focus on ESG in established industries, neglecting the unique ESG challenges faced by smaller, less-resourced businesses.



Source: <https://savvy.directorprep.com/blog/esg-for-smes>

Identified Gaps

Through the literature review, gaps emerged, especially regarding labour conditions in gig work, the pressure of investor-driven ESG expectations on SMEs, and the specific challenges that non-traditional sectors face in implementing ESG practices. By addressing these underexplored areas, the research questions aim to provide significant insights into the applicability and benefits of ESG in Australia's non-traditional sectors.

This research presents the primary research questions that guide the study of ESG impacts in SMEs, the gig economy, and emerging markets in Australia. Each question addresses a substantial gap in current research and concentrates on the unique challenges of non-traditional sectors. The next article will outline the research methodology, specific data collection and analysis methods employed. By focusing on these questions, the research intends to contribute new perspectives to the discourse on ESG in non-traditional sectors and inform policymakers and business leaders about potential opportunities and challenges associated with ESG adoption.

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