

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

Discussion

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December 2024



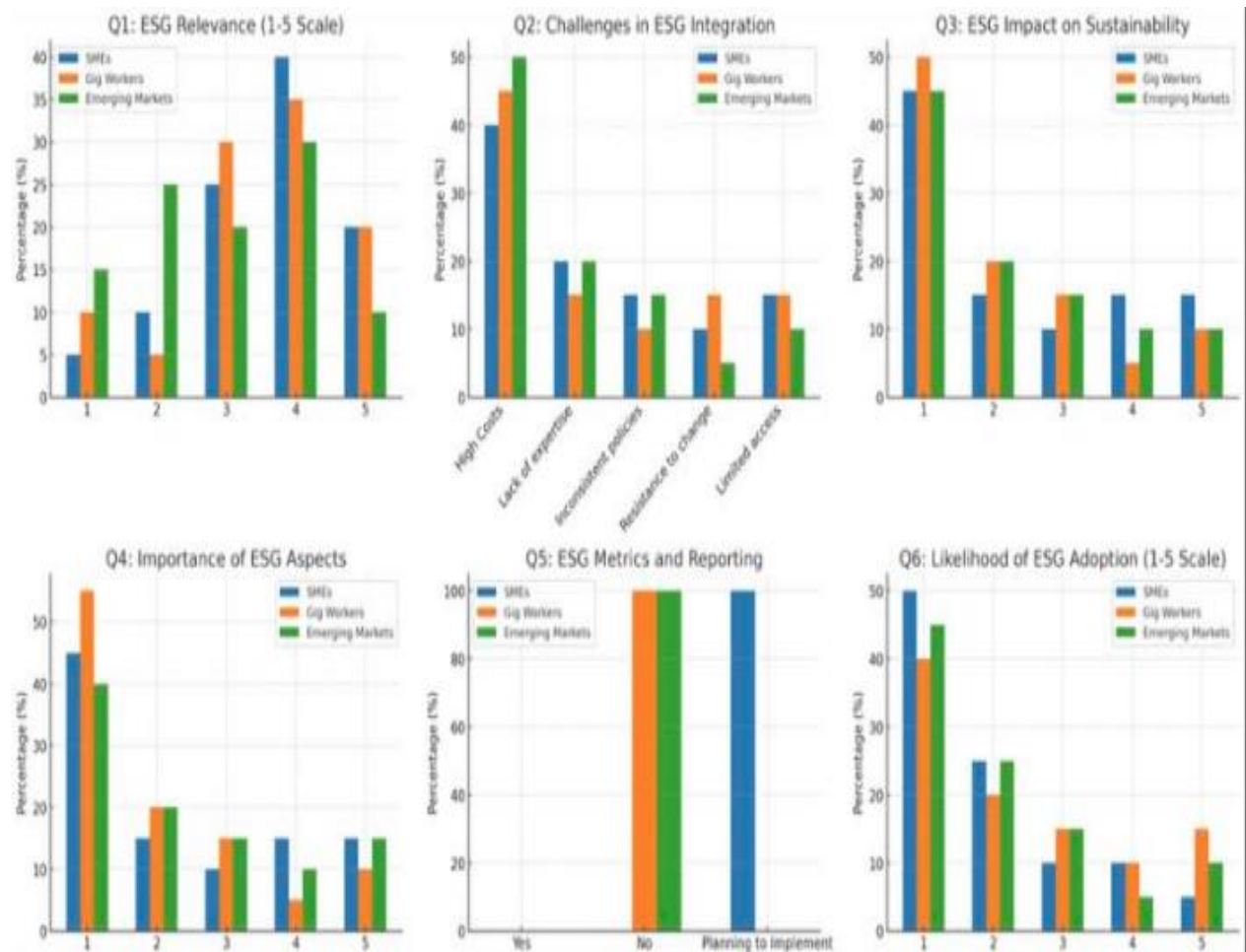
This article provides an in-depth discussion of the survey findings, linking them to the overarching research objectives and the theoretical framework of this study. It integrates the key results, explores their implications, and demonstrates how they align with or challenge existing knowledge on ESG practices in non-traditional sector. Additionally, it establishes how the data obtained contributes to understanding the impact of ESG in SMEs, the gig economy, and emerging markets in Australia. Finally, it outlines the theoretical and practical contributions of this research, setting the stage for the final chapter.

Linking

This research investigates the role of ESG in non-traditional sectors and its broader implications. The introductory chapter provided the background, context, and research questions, emphasizing the need for ESG studies beyond conventional industries. The literature review synthesized existing theories and practices related to ESG, identifying gaps in research regarding SMEs, the gig economy, and emerging markets. The methodology chapter detailed the design and execution of the survey, ensuring that robust and reliable data was gathered to answer the research questions. The findings presented in the previous chapter outlined the key trends and observations from the survey, which this chapter will now interpret and link to the theoretical framework. These connections ensure a coherent narrative that addresses the research problem comprehensively.

Data Obtained

Below are the data collected from SMEs, Gig workers and emerging markets



Source: Compiled by this study

Brief Summary of Survey Data:

1. **ESG Relevance (Q1):**
SMEs show strong recognition of ESG relevance, with 40% rating it as a 4. Gig workers and emerging markets display a more mixed perception, with higher responses in the middle ratings.
2. **Challenges in ESG Integration (Q2):**
High costs are the top barrier across all groups, most notably in emerging markets (50%) and gig workers (45%). Lack of expertise and inconsistent policies are secondary challenges.
3. **ESG Impact on Sustainability (Q3):**
Most respondents from all groups show moderate to low optimism about ESG's impact on their sector's growth, with SMEs and gig workers particularly leaning towards lower ratings (1-2).
4. **Importance of ESG Aspects (Q4):**
Environmental sustainability ranks as the top priority for gig workers (55%) and SMEs (45%), while emerging markets show balanced importance across environmental, social, and governance factors.
5. **ESG Metrics and Reporting (Q5):**
SMEs are planning to implement ESG reporting, but gig workers and emerging markets have no active adoption plans, indicating limited use of reporting tools across these groups.
6. **Likelihood of ESG Adoption (Q6):**
SMEs exhibit the highest likelihood of adopting ESG practices within three years (50% rating 1), followed by emerging markets. Gig workers show a more cautious outlook.

The findings of this research underscore the relevance of ESG practices in non-traditional sectors, revealing both opportunities and challenges. While SMEs lead in planning and optimism, cost and resource constraints remain pervasive challenges, especially for gig workers and emerging markets. This underscores the need for tailored strategies and support to enhance ESG adoption in these non-traditional sectors. The integration of survey findings with the theoretical framework enhances understanding and highlights practical implications for policymakers, businesses, and academics. This chapter bridges the findings to the study's theoretical contributions, setting the foundation for the final chapter, which will summarize the overall contributions and outline future research directions.

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