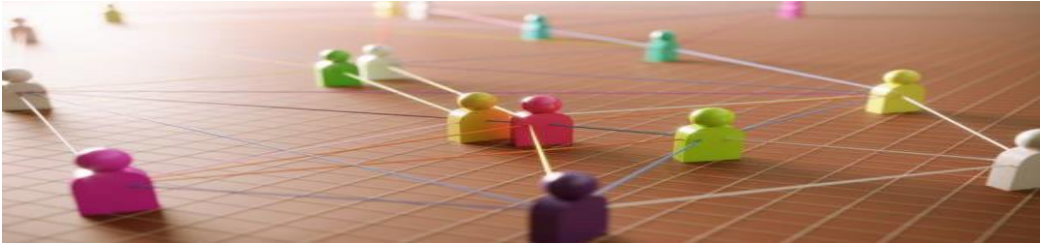


Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Impacts and Relevance on Non-Traditional Sectors: SMEs, Gig Economy, and Emerging markets in Australia

A Research Methodology

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This article outlines the research methodology used to examine the impact and relevance of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) factors on non-traditional sectors that include SMEs, the gig economy, and emerging markets in Australia. It provides a detailed account of the methodological approach, research design, and techniques, focusing on how it can be applicable to this complex and multi-dimensional subject.

Introduction to the General Methodological Approach

Justification of Methodological Approach

Given the diversity and dynamism of non-traditional sectors, a mixed-research methodology is most suitable. SMEs, gig workers, and emerging markets each present unique ESG challenges and opportunities. Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods provides a comprehensive framework, capturing both the depth of individual experiences and the breadth of industry trends.

What is Sought to Be Achieved

The research seeks to analyse the adoption, challenges, and impacts of ESG practices within these sectors. It aims to discover stakeholder perceptions, identify systemic challenges, and provide actionable insights to develop ESG implementation in non-traditional contexts.

Mixed-Methods Research Methodology

The mixed-methods approach combines qualitative techniques (interviews and focus groups) with quantitative tools (questionnaires). This allows for:

- A detailed exploration of stakeholder experiences and industry practices.
- The validation and generalization of findings across a larger sample, ensuring actionable conclusions.

Research Design and Overall Structure

Selection of Research Instruments

- **Interviews:** One-on-one interviews with key stakeholders such as SME owners, gig workers, and representatives of emerging markets provide deep insights into individual perspectives and challenges.
- **Questionnaires:** Surveys offer scalable data collection to identify trends and validate findings across sectors.
- **Focus Groups:** Group discussions facilitate a shared understanding of ESG implementation, encouraging collaborative insights and diverse viewpoints.

Sample Justification and Size

SMEs	GIG Economy	Emerging Markets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Micro Enterprises• Small Enterprises• Medium Enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Freelancers• Rideshare services• Delivery services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health Technology• Agriculture

A purposive sampling approach is used for interviews and focus groups to target individuals with direct experience in ESG practices. For surveys, classified random sampling ensures representation across the three sectors, capturing diversity in size, geography, and maturity of ESG adoption. The sample size is chosen to achieve qualitative saturation and quantitative statistical reliability.

Validity and Reliability Considerations

- **Validity:** Pre-testing of instruments ensures alignment with ESG frameworks and research objectives. The triangulation of data from interviews, focus groups, and surveys enhances the study's credibility.
- **Reliability:** Standardized data collection and analysis protocols are followed to ensure consistent results.

Techniques and Procedures

- **Interview and Questionnaire Schedules:** Developed based on ESG principles to guide structured and semi-structured inquiries.
- **Recording Techniques:** Qualitative data is transcribed and analysed thematically. Quantitative data is processed using statistical software to identify patterns and relationships.

This chapter establishes a robust methodological foundation for investigating ESG's impact on SMEs, the gig economy, and emerging markets in Australia. By combining qualitative depth and quantitative breadth, the study ensures comprehensive, reliable, and actionable insights. The next chapter will focus on analysing the collected data, linking findings to theoretical and practical implications.

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