International Journal of Business and Society, Vol. 25 No. 2, 2024, 484-508

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AND ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE (ESG): A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

Chow Kah Yong
Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Ervina Alfan♣
Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Mohd Zulkhairi Mustapha
Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive systematic literature review (SLR) of the empirical studies on the impact of sustainability committee (SC) and SC's characteristics on ESG issues. Using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) method, 34 papers published between 2017 and 2023 were selected from the Web of Science and Scopus databases. The majority of the existing literature explored this topic in a cross-country context, with a particular focus on stakeholder theory. It was further found that empirical studies extensively focused on the presence of SC in relation to ESG; while less emphasis was placed on the characteristics of SC. While SC size and independence are the most commonly studied characteristics, it is also essential for future studies to further examine how other SC characteristics, such as gender diversity, expertise, and education, can exert an influence on ESG matters. Notably, there is a significant methodological gap. In addition, limited studies adopt qualitative and/or mixed methods in examining this relationship. Finally, the paper provides future research opportunities related to SC and ESG issues and identifies gaps in knowledge.

Keywords: Sustainability Committee, ESG, Systematic Literature Review, ESG performance, ESG reporting, ESG reporting assurance, CSR strategy, CSR controversies.

Received: 1st August 2023
Accepted: 17th May 2024
https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.7603.2024

1. INTRODUCTION

Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues have recently acquired significant momentum in the corporate world. The heightened awareness of ESG issues can be attributed to various factors, including but not limited to a better understanding of the impact of business activities on the

♣ Corresponding author: Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Tel: +603-79673997, Email: ervina_alfan@um.edu.my

environment and society (Khlif et al., 2015), changes in the regulatory environment (García Martín & Herrero, 2020; Gerwing et al., 2022), and the increased pressure from investors for companies to adopt greater transparency and accountability in their ESG practices (Arvidsson & Dumay, 2022; Cucari et al., 2018). This heightened awareness has resulted in the establishment of a new board committee, the sustainability committee (SC), which serves as a governance mechanism for sustainability-related matters. It signifies a company's commitment to sustainability and allows its directors to play a more active role in developing the company's sustainability strategy and implementing it effectively (Adnan et al., 2018; Orazalin, 2020). Moreover, SC is responsible for overseeing and managing sustainability-related issues, providing recommendations to the board of directors, and assisting with critical decisions related to sustainability (Alcaide-Ruiz et al., 2022; Velte & Stawinoga, 2020).

Although the establishment of SC is a positive development that signifies a company's commitment to sustainability, it is still considered a voluntary practice at the board level. To date, it is not mandatory for companies to establish SC or similar mechanisms except in India, but they do encourage and recommend such adoption at the board level (Alcaide-Ruiz et al., 2022; Baraibar-Diez & Odriozola, 2019). Nonetheless, the increase in the number of studies that examine SC indicates that more companies are adopting these governance mechanisms. Recent studies have shown that SC can enhance a company's ESG performance (Govindan et al., 2021; Minciullo et al., 2022) by ensuring greater transparency and accountability through high-quality ESG reporting (Gerwing et al., 2022). This encourages firms to ensure the quality of their ESG reporting (Kılıç et al., 2021), facilitate the development of a better corporate sustainability strategy (Orazalin, 2020), and minimise sustainability controversies (Elmaghrabi, 2021).

Previous research has extensively investigated the relationship between SC and ESG issues. However, a limited number of systematic literature review (SLR) studies have summarised the findings in this area. To the authors' best knowledge, previous reviews mainly emphasised either SC (Alcaide-Ruiz et al., 2022) or the ESG (Bosi et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021; Steblianskaia et al., 2023), but not on the interrelationships between the two.

Yet, it is worth noting that Velte and Stawinoga (2020) previously reviewed the impact of SCs on corporate social responsibility (CSR) reporting, CSR reporting assurance, and CSR performance. This study differs from theirs in three ways. Firstly, this study goes further by including papers that examined the impact rather than the presence of SC's characteristics on ESG practices. Secondly, this study includes all peer-reviewed papers, irrespective of the methodology adopted by each paper to comprehensively uncover the literature in this research area, while Velte and Stawinoga (2020) primarily focused on empirical-quantitative research, which may limit the possible similar research areas conducted in different paradigms. Lastly, Velte and Stawinoga (2020) selected papers up to 2020, whereas this study included the latest empirical articles up to the first quarter of 2023, providing a more up-to-date review of the literature on this topic.

Noting the gap mentioned above, the paper advances this rapidly growing research area by conducting a SLR focusing on the effects of SC presence and attributes on ESG issues. This study systematically categorises and critically assesses these impacts, aiming to identify and discuss existing research gaps. In doing so, the study offers an up-to-date overview of the current research landscape and contributes to the identification of areas requiring further investigation.

Specifically, this study aims to analyse the development and theoretical underpinnings of the SC literature on ESG and identify potential avenues for future research. Hence, this study seeks to answer the following research questions (RQs):

1. What is the development of SC literature in relation to ESG?
2. What is the fundamental theory that forms the basis of the SC literature in relation to ESG?
3. What is the focus of the SC literature in relation to ESG?
4. How does SC impact ESG outputs?
5. What are the gaps and opportunities for future research in this area?

The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 outlines the methodology, while Section 3 presents and analyses the results. This is followed by Section 4, where the results are discussed. Finally, Section 5 summarises the findings and concludes the paper.

2. METHODOLOGY

To further understand the relationship between SC and ESG, this study employed a SLR approach to answer the research questions outlined above. The approach relies on scientific replicability, a thorough and transparent search, selection, synthesis, and analysis of the pertinent scientific literature, which allows for a precise and reproducible summary and conclusion of the current knowledge on the research topic (Ludwig & Sassen, 2022).

The SLR was conducted in March 2023 following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Literature Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. PRISMA is a standard protocol for article review that is widely accepted by academic researchers across categories (Bosi et al., 2022). There are four phases in conducting SLR: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion (Moher et al., 2009).

a) Identification

This study searched for relevant research documents by utilising the Web of Science (WOS) and Scopus databases. These databases were chosen because they offer a more extensive compilation of published documents across various disciplines and have solid content quality (Bosi et al., 2022; Khatib et al., 2022).

The documents were searched using keywords that exclusively pertain to SC and ESG based on the paper titles. The keywords utilised in this study are "TITLE-ABS-KEY ((“Sustainability committee” OR “Ethics committee” OR “CSR committee” OR “Environmental committee” OR “ESG committee” OR “Corporate Social Responsibility committee” OR “Environmental, Social and Governance Committee”) AND (“Environmental, Social and Governance” OR “ESG”)). The search was limited to papers written in English as it is the most used academic language worldwide. Based on this search string and the inclusion criteria, the search yielded a sample of 130 documents: 23 were from Web of Science (WOS), and 107 were from Scopus.

b) Screening

This study adopted a two-step approach in screening the identified papers. Firstly, any papers identified as duplicates were excluded. A total of 21 duplicated papers were identified and subsequently removed. Secondly, each of the papers' title and abstract was then evaluated to determine if they fell within the scope of the research. In general, a paper that examined the relationship between SC and ESG was regarded as pertinent to the inquiry, regardless of whether it examined the committee's presence at the board level or integrated the committee's characteristics into the paper.

The titles were then examined to ascertain their relevancy to be included for further review. This method was adopted to establish the linkage of the topic between SC and ESG. Therefore, papers that contain 'board characteristics' (or its synonyms) and 'ESG' in their titles were considered for further review. Subsequently, the paper abstracts were reviewed to confirm that they had investigated the SC-ESG relationship. This process resulted in the elimination of 58 papers that either failed to explicitly address the relationship between SC and ESG or assigned SC as a mediator or moderator, which was outside the scope of this study.

c) Eligibility

Based on the screening result in (b), the following criteria were then applied to the remaining 51 papers:

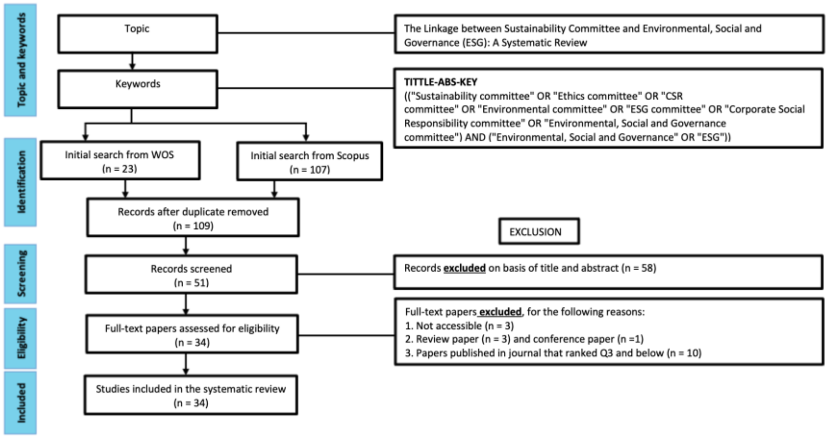
1. Accessibility
   Three papers were inaccessible and, thus, excluded from this study.
2. Document type
   This study limited the document type to only journal papers and excluded review papers and conference papers, resulting in the elimination of four papers.
3. Quality of the journal
   This study only included papers published in high-quality journals (Nwachukwu, 2022). A high-quality journal is defined as a journal ranked in Q1 and Q2 of the SCImago Journal Ranking (SJR) in 2022 (latest ranking). The papers must fit into specific areas that are linked with business, accounting, and economics in the ranking. Ten papers failed to meet this criterion, and hence, removed from the sample.

d) Inclusion

Finally, the remaining 34 papers were selected for further analysis.

Figure 1 illustrates the selection process and exclusion criteria in determining the papers to be examined in this study (following PRISMA guidelines).

Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram

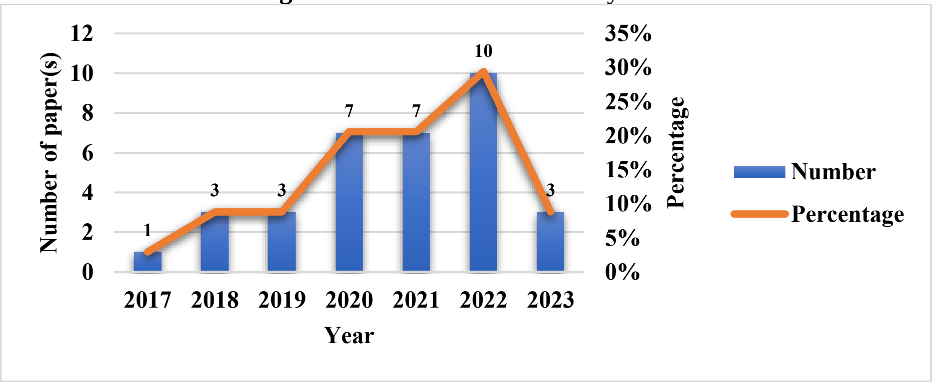


3. RESULTS

3.1. Sample Demographic (RQ1)

Figure 2 depicts the number of papers that examined the relationship between SC and ESG from 2017 to the first quarter of 2023. Most of the papers included in this study (10 papers) were published in 2022, accounting for 29% of the total number of papers analysed. The next highest number of papers, i.e. seven papers (21%) were published in 2020 and 2021. 2018, 2019, and the first quarters of 2023 saw the publication of three papers respectively, accounting for 9% of the total. In contrast, only one paper from 2017 was included, representing 3% of the total number of papers analysed. This indicates that the quantity of studies on this topic has increased steadily over time.

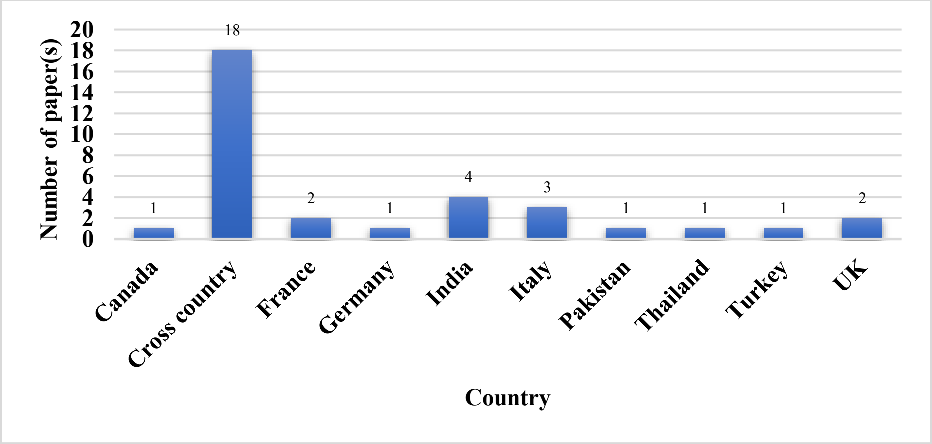
Figure 2: SC-ESG Publication by Year



Source: Author's compilation.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of the countries studied in the included papers. 18 of the 34 papers investigated multiple countries using a cross-country approach. For example, Eberhardt-Toth (2017) analysed 177 non-financial firms from 18 countries and Lu and Wang (2021) analysed 1,870 firms from 25 countries. This suggests that papers in this field of study typically adopted a cross-country perspective rather than focusing on a particular context. However, some papers examined the context in a particular country, such as India (four papers), Italy (three papers), France, and the United Kingdom (UK) (two papers each). Meanwhile, one paper each examined the context in Canada, Germany, Pakistan, Thailand, and Turkey.

Figure 3: Sample Countries



Source: Author's compilation.

The 34 papers included in the present study were published across 22 different journals (Table 1). To ensure a high-quality review, only papers published from Q1 and Q2 journals were considered.

The top three journals in terms of the H index included in this study are Energy Policy, Journal of Cleaner Production, and Journal of Business Ethics. The Sustainability (Switzerland) journal has the highest frequency of papers included in this study, with seven papers, accounting for 20.6%.

Table 1: Journal Reputation and its Publishers (Descending Order)

Journal	SJR quartile (2022)	H index	Publisher	Frequency	Percentage
Sustainability (Switzerland)	Q2	109	MDPI	7	20.6%
Business Strategy and the Environment	Q1	115	John Wiley and Sons	3	8.8%
Corporate Governance (Bingley)	Q1	64	Emerald	2	5.9%
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	Q1	82	John Wiley and Sons	2	5.9%
International Journal of Disclosure and Governance	Q2	19	Palgrave Macmillan	2	5.9%
Journal of Cleaner Production	Q1	232	Elsevier	2	5.9%
Benchmarking: An International Journal	Q1	66	Emerald	1	2.9%
Economies	Q2	19	MDPI	1	2.9%
Energy Policy	Q1	234	Elsevier	1	2.9%
International Journal of Accounting and Information Management	Q2	25	Emerald	1	2.9%
International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management	Q2	26	Emerald	1	2.9%
International Journal of Hospitality Management	Q1	136	Elsevier	1	2.9%
International Journal of Managerial Finance	Q2	27	Emerald	1	2.9%
International Journal of Production Economics	Q1	197	Elsevier	1	2.9%
Journal of Business Economics	Q1	24	Springer	1	2.9%
Journal of Business Ethics	Q1	208	Springer	1	2.9%
Journal of Environmental Management	Q1	196	Elsevier	1	2.9%
Journal of International Financial Markets, Institutions and Money	Q1	66	Elsevier	1	2.9%
Journal of Management and Governance	Q2	53	Springer	1	2.9%
Social Responsibility Journal	Q1	37	Emerald	1	2.9%
Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal	Q1	34	Emerald	1	2.9%
Tourism Management Perspectives	Q1	54	Elsevier	1	2.9%
			Total	34	100.0%

Source: Author's compilation.

To further address RQ1, the study conducted citation analysis (Table 2) to determine the most influential papers in the area of SC and ESG. Specifically, the number of citations provided by Scopus was used as a proxy for measuring influence in this analysis. The citation analysis in Table 2 reveals findings regarding the emphasis on the context of SC and ESG based on the ten most cited papers. The paper by Cucari et al. (2018) recorded the highest number of citations, with 219, while all other papers received fewer than 100 citations.

Table 2: Citation Analysis on the Top 10 Papers (Descending Order)

Authors (Year)	Title	Journal	Cited by
Cucari et al. (2018)	*Diversity of Board of Directors and Environmental Social Governance: Evidence from Italian Listed Companies*	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	219
Mahmood et al. (2018)	*Does corporate governance affect sustainability disclosure? A mixed methods study*	Sustainability (Switzerland)	88
García Martín and Herrero (2020)	*Do board characteristics affect environmental performance? A study of EU firms*	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	87
Birindelli et al. (2018)	*Composition and activity of the Board of Directors: Impact on ESG performance in the banking system*	Sustainability (Switzerland)	82
Orazalin (2020)	*Do board sustainability committees contribute to corporate environmental and social performance? The mediating role of corporate social responsibility strategy*	Business Strategy and the Environment	79
Baalouch et al. (2019)	*A study of the determinants of environmental disclosure quality: evidence from French listed companies*	Journal of Management and Governance	67
Eberhardt-Toth (2017)	*Who should be on a board corporate social responsibility committee?*	Journal of Cleaner Production	67
Uyar et al. (2020)	*The link among board characteristics, corporate social responsibility performance, and financial performance: Evidence from the hospitality and tourism industry*	Tourism Management Perspectives	62
Kılıç and Kuzey (2019)	*The effect of corporate governance on carbon emission disclosures: Evidence from Turkey*	International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management	62
Shahbaz et al. (2020)	*Board attributes, CSR engagement, and corporate performance: What is the nexus in the energy sector?*	Energy Policy	61

Source: Author’s compilation.

3.2. Review of the Underpinning Theory (RQ2)

The study identified theories applied in the selected papers to examine the relationship between SC and ESG. Specifically, if a paper incorporated multiple theories, only those used to investigate the relationship between SC-related and ESG variables were selected for this study. To illustrate this point, the resource dependence theory (RDT) discussed by Gerged et al. (2022) was applied in the context of board gender diversity, not SC-related variables. Since this study focused on the relationship between SC and ESG, the RDT was deemed inapplicable because it did not directly relate to the SC-related variables in the paper’s discussion.

It is evident that stakeholder theory has been the most prevalent theory, with 17 papers employing it to explain the concerned phenomenon (Table 3). Legitimacy theory and resource dependence theory were the next most frequently utilised theories, with six papers each using these theories. Four papers did not employ any theory to elucidate the association between SC and ESG.

Table 3: Application of Theoretical Perspectives (Descending Order)

Theoretical perspective	Authors (Year)	Frequency
Stakeholder theory	Baraibar-Diez and Odriozola (2019); Birindelli *et al*. (2018); Cancela *et al*. (2020); Eberhardt-Toth (2017); Fahad and Rahman (2020); García Martín and Herrero (2020); Govindan *et al*. (2021); Jarboui *et al*. (2022); Kılıç *et al*. (2021); Kumari *et al*. (2022); López-Arceiz *et al*. (2022); Menicucci and Paolucci (2022); Orazalin (2020); Orazalin and Mahmood (2021); Radu and Smaili (2022); Shahbaz *et al*. (2020); Spallini *et al*. (2021)	17
Legitimacy theory	Cosma *et al*. (2022); Gold *et al*. (2022); Goud (2022); Kılıç and Kuzey (2019); Lu and Wang (2021); Oyewo (2023)	6
Resource dependence theory	Baalouch *et al*. (2019); Chairina and Tjahjadi (2023); Kılıç *et al*. (2021); Orazalin (2020); Orazalin and Mahmood (2021); Uyar *et al*. (2020)	6
Not indicated	Cucari *et al*. (2018); Gerged *et al*. (2022); Mahmood *et al*. (2018); Moalla *et al*. (2021)	4
Agency theory	Gerwing *et al*. (2022); Suttipun (2021)	2
Stakeholder-agency theory	Elmaghrabi (2021); Minciullo *et al*. (2022)	2
Institutional theory	López-Arceiz *et al*. (2022)	1
Critical mass theory	Elmaghrabi (2021)	1
Upper echelons theory	Orazalin (2020)	1

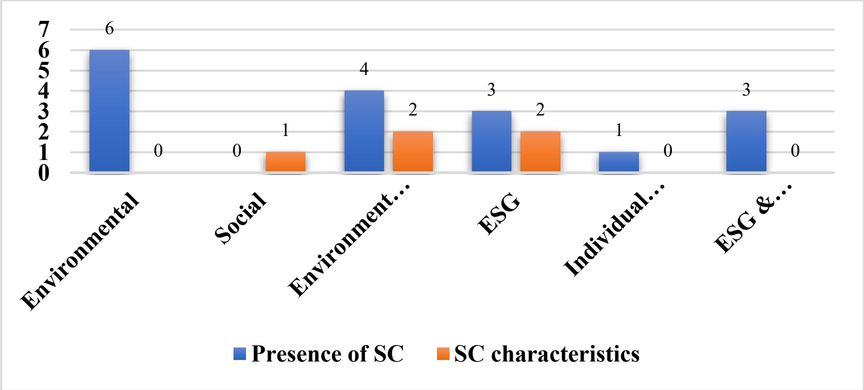
Source: Author's compilation.

3.3. Focus and Implication of SC on ESG (RQ3)

3.3.1. SC and ESG Performance

A total of 22 papers were reviewed concerning the presence and characteristics of SC in relation to ESG performance. ESG performance has been evaluated in various forms, such as by its individual pillars (E, S, and G) performance, environmental and social performance (E, S, and G), and/or the overall ESG performance. Most of the papers that examined the presence of SC focused on environmental performance (six papers). In contrast, papers investigating the characteristics of SC were more interested in environmental and social performance as well as overall ESG performance, with two papers addressing each of these areas. The findings are displayed in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Focus of SC on ESG Performance



Source: Author's compilation.

Meanwhile, Table 4 shows that 12 out of the 13 papers that examined SC-environmental performance reported a positive impact, with one paper documenting an insignificant relationship (Govindan et al., 2021). The inconsistent result found by Govindan et al. (2021) can be attributed, in part, to the SC in logistics companies displaying a greater interest in achieving CSR goals rather than prioritising environmental and governance accomplishments.

Table 4: Empirical Research on the Presence of SC and ESG Performance (Descending Order)

Author(s)	Sample	Country	Results			Dependent variable (DV)	DV source
			Positive	Negative	Neutral		
Oyewo (2023)	336 multinational entities	Cross-country	x			• Carbon Emission Performance	Thomson Reuters
Goud (2022)	220 non-listed firms	India	x			• Carbon Emission Performance	Carbon Disclosure Project website
Gold et al. (2022)	368 firms	Cross-country	x			• Corporate Sustainability Practices and Performance	
Menicucci and Paolucci (2022)	105 banks	Italy	x			• ESG Performance	Thomson Reuters
Minciullo et al. (2022)	185 firms	Cross country			x	• Corporate Sustainability Performance	
López-Arceiz et al. (2022)	536 firms	Cross-country	x			• Sustainability Performance (Environmental Performance & Social Performance)	
Radu and Smaili (2022)	164 firms	Canada	x			CSR Performance • Environment Performance	Bloomberg
					x	• Social Performance	
Orazalin and Mahmood (2021)	3023 firm- year observations	Cross-country	x			• Environmental Performance	Thomson Reuters
Lu and Wang (2021)	1870 firms	Cross-country	x			• Environmental Performance	Sustainalytics
Govindan et al. (2021)	504 firm-year observations (logistics firms)	Cross-country	x			• ESG Performance • Social Performance	Thomson Reuters
					x	• Environmental Performance • Governance Performance	
Cancela et al. (2020)	99 non-financial firms	Portugal & Spain	x			• Environmental Performance (expenses) • Social Performance (expenses)	Analysis System of Iberian Balances database (SABI)
Shahbaz et al. (2020)	414 global energy firms	Cross-country	x			• ESG Performance • Environmental Performance • Social Performance • Governance Performance	

Author(s)	Sample	Country	Results			Dependent variable (DV)	DV source
			Positive	Negative	Neutral		
Orazalin (2020)	109 firms	UK	x			• Environmental Performance • Social Performance	
García Martín and Herrero (2020)	644 non-financial European Union–based firms	Europe	x			• Environmental Performance	
Uyar et al. (2020)	920 firm-year observation (H&T firms)	Cross-country	x			• ESG Performance • Environmental Performance • Social Performance • Governance Performance	Thomson Reuters
Baraibar-Diez and Odriozola (2019)	197 firms	Cross-country	x			• Environmental Score • Social Score • Governance Score	
Birindelli et al. (2018)	108 banks	Europe and US	x			• ESG Performance	

Source: Author’s compilation.

Most of the papers that assessed the individual pillars of social and/or governance performance showed a positive correlation. Only Radu and Smaili (2022) and Govindan et al. (2021) found a non-significant relationship between social and governance performance. Meanwhile, one paper evaluated the presence of SC in terms of environmental and social performance and found a positive relationship (López-Arceiz et al., 2022). Furthermore, there are mixed findings concerning SC and overall ESG performance; five papers reported positive results, while one paper indicated insignificant results (Minciullo et al., 2022).

With regards to the relationship between SC characteristics and their impact on ESG performance, 10 out of 12 papers reported a significant impact (Table 5). In terms of committee size, two papers reported a positive effect on ESG performance, while two other papers reported insignificant effects. Only one paper found a negative effect of committee size on ESG performance. For committee independence, four out of the five papers reported a positive impact on ESG performance. Similarly, three out of the five papers uncovered that gender diversity positively affected ESG performance. The impact of other characteristics, such as committee expertise, meetings, culture diversity, compensation policy, CEO membership, director age, board chair member, and chairwomen, varied across the examined papers, as they demonstrated mixed findings towards ESG performance.

Table 5: Empirical Research on SC Characteristics and ESG Outputs (Descending Order)

Author(s)	Sample	Country	Results			Independent variable (SC/CSR committee's characteristics)	Dependent variable (DV)	DV Source
			Positive	Negative	Neutral			
ESG Performance								
Jarboui et al. (2022)	60 non-financial firms	India	x			• Size • Independence • Expertise	CSR Performance	Thomson Reuters
					x	• Meetings		
Minciullo et al. (2022)	185 firms	Cross-country			x	• Size	Corporate Sustainability Performance	
López-Arceiz et al. (2022)	536 firms	Cross-country	x			• Size • Independence • Gender diversity • Culture diversity • Compensation policy	Sustainability Performance	
Elmaghrabi (2021)	100 non-financial firms	UK			x	• Size • Expertise • Chair expertise • Gender diversity	CSR Performance	
			x			• Independence • Meetings • Gender president		
Eberhardt-Toth (2017)	177 non-financial firms	Cross-country		x		• Size • CEO member	Social Performance	RobecoSAM (Zurich)
			x			• Independence • Director age • Chairwomen		
					x	• Board chair member • Gender diversity		
CSR Strategy								
Elmaghrabi (2021)	100 non-financial firms	UK	x			• Size	CSR Strategy	Thomson Reuters
					x	• Independence • Expertise • Chair expertise • Meetings • Gender diversity • Gender president		
CSR Controversies								
Elmaghrabi (2021)	100 non-financial firms	UK			x	• Size • Expertise • Meetings • Gender diversity • Gender president	CSR Controversies	Thomson Reuters
				x		• Independence • Chair expertise		

Source: Author's compilation.

3.3.2. SC and ESG Reporting

Out of the 34 papers reviewed, 15 papers specifically examined the role of SC in ESG Reporting (Table 6). Among these, six papers studied the committee's impact on environmental reporting, while nine papers analysed its role in overall ESG reporting.

Table 6: Empirical Research on the Presence of SC and ESG Outcomes (Descending Order)

Author(s)	Sample	Country	Results: Positive	Results: Negative	Results: Neutral	Dependent variable (DV)	DV Source
ESG Reporting							
Chairina and Tjahjadi (2023)	154 firms	Cross-country			x	Sustainability Reporting Quality	Annual report (AR), Sustainability Report (SR) – Content analysis
Cosma et al. (2022)	101 banks	Europe	x			Climate Change Disclosure	AR – Content analysis
Kumari et al. (2022)	1158 firm-year observations	India	x			Environmental Disclosure	Bloomberg
Gerwing et al. (2022)	220 firms	Germany	x			Mandatory Sustainability Disclosure Quality	SR – Content analysis
Gerged et al. (2022)	113 firms	Cross-country	x			Environmental Disclosure	Bloomberg
Suttipun (2021)	120 firms	Thailand	x			ESG Disclosure and its individual pillar disclosure	AR – Content analysis
Spallini et al. (2021)	134 firms	Italy	x			GRI Disclosure	SR – Content analysis
Kılıç et al. (2021)	772 firm-year observations (H&T firms)	Cross-country	x			Sustainability Reporting	Thomson Reuters
Lu and Wang (2021)	1870 firms	Cross-country	x			CSR Disclosure	Sustainalytics
Fahad and Rahman (2020)	386 firms	India	x			CSR Disclosure	Bloomberg
Moalla et al. (2021)	81 non-financial firms	France		x		Environmental Reporting - timeliness of environmental reporting	SR & Thomson Reuters – Content analysis
					x	Environmental Reporting - voluntary environmental reporting	
Baalouch et al. (2019)	570 firm-year observations	France			x	Environmental Disclosure Quality	AR – Content analysis
Kılıç and Kuzey (2019)	154 firms	Turkey	x			Carbon Emission Disclosure	AR & SR – Content analysis
Cucari et al. (2018)	54 firms	Italy	x			ESG Disclosure	Bloomberg

Source: Author's compilation.

The presence of SC appears to have a positive impact on ESG reporting, as evidenced by 12 out of the 15 papers examining the relationship. Four papers reported a positive impact on environmental reporting, while eight papers showed a positive impact on ESG reporting. Three papers found insignificant findings, with two papers showing no effect on the relationship between SC and environmental reporting (Baalouch et al., 2019; Moalla et al., 2021), while one paper failed to prove the relationship between SC and ESG reporting (Chairina & Tjahjadi, 2023). Additionally, one paper found a negative relationship between SC and the timeliness of environmental reporting (Moalla et al., 2021).

3.3.3. SC and ESG Reporting Assurance

Besides investigating the SC-ESG reporting relationship, Kılıç et al. (2021) have extended the scope of the research to include an examination of the impact of SC on ESG reporting assurance. The paper reported that the presence of SC might result in a greater inclination among companies to obtain external assurance for ESG reports. This is attained by ensuring that the ESG reporting is prepared and published in accordance with GRI standards, thereby improving reporting quality.

3.3.4. SC and CSR Strategy

Only two papers analysed in this study investigated the relationship between SC and CSR strategy in the UK context. Orazalin (2020) investigated the impact of SC presence on CSR strategy (Table 6), while Elmaghrabi (2021) explored the relationship between SC characteristics and CSR strategy (Table 5).

Orazalin (2020) examined a sample of 109 UK companies and found a positive correlation between the presence of SC and CSR strategy. In contrast, Elmaghrabi's (2021) findings indicated that only the SC size had a significant positive impact on the company's CSR strategy, while no relationship was found between other committee characteristics to CSR strategy.

3.3.5. SC and CSR Controversies

Only one paper examined SC-CSR controversies relationship (Table 5). Elmaghrabi (2021) established that the independence and the expertise of the chair of SC had a negative relationship with CSR controversies, whereas the other characteristics had no significant impact on CSR controversies.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Current development of SC literature concerning ESG (RQ1)

The findings indicate that a limited number of papers, specifically those published in top-tier journals, investigated SC and ESG. In addition, the number of papers that studied the relationship has steadily escalated over the years. This implies that there is a growing interest among scholars to reveal the potential impact that SC has on ESG, considering that SC primarily oversees sustainability-related matters of an organisation.

The study further discovered that most of the papers on SC and ESG focused on cross-country settings, particularly concerning European countries. Europe has been at the forefront of ESG reporting and disclosure, as evidenced by the introduction of the European Union's Non-Financial Reporting Directive in 2014 and the significant evolution of its reporting requirements since then (Adel et al., 2019). Yet, few studies have been conducted in a single-country context (Gerwing et al., 2022; Goud, 2022; Radu & Smaili, 2022). This study argues that investigating the SC-ESG relationship in a mono-national context allows the researcher to gain a more nuanced understanding of the factors that could facilitate or hinder SC's effectiveness in influencing a company's ESG practices. Moreover, it also helps to uncover the unique institutional and cultural characteristics that may shape ESG practices in individual countries (Orazalin & Mahmood, 2021; Suttipun, 2021). Hence, future research could adopt a more country-specific perspective to investigate the impact of SC on ESG outcomes in a national context.

Another finding of the present study concerns the focus of the included papers. The included papers predominantly focused on non-financial firms. Only a limited number of empirical studies (seven papers) were conducted on a single sector, such as the financial sector (Birindelli et al., 2018; Cosma et al., 2022; Menicucci & Paolucci, 2022), hospitality and tourism sector (Kılıç et al., 2021; Uyar et al., 2020), energy sector (Shahbaz et al., 2020) and logistics sector (Govindan et al., 2021). These papers solely examined the influence of SC on ESG-related outcomes, overlooking the extent to which SC's characteristics affected these outcomes. It is important to understand the unique ESG challenges and opportunities encountered by various sectors, and how the presence and characteristics of SC can effectively address these issues, especially on industry-specific issues. Interestingly, none of the included papers examined the SC-ESG relationship in the context of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) despite this population playing a critical role in global economic activity and employment.

The findings further show that only one paper (Cucari et al., 2018) received more than 100 citations out of the 34 papers analysed in this study. This could be because it is one of the first studies to investigate the impact of board diversity on ESG disclosure~~.~~ This highlights the significance of their findings and their contribution to understanding the relationship between board diversity and ESG disclosure. The lower number of citations for the other papers is acceptable and justifiable given that the topic of SC is considered a novel and emerging area in the research field (Alcaide-Ruiz et al., 2022).

4.2. Underpinning Research Theory (RQ2)

Past literature has examined SC from two distinct perspectives: the presence of SC and/or the characteristics of SC. The presence and characteristics of SC in relation to ESG issues is predominantly analysed based on the stakeholder theory. According to this theory, the establishment of SC aims to strategically evaluate and monitor stakeholder needs by supervising the company's management (Eberhardt-Toth, 2017). Baraibar-Diez and Odriozola (2019) and Cancela et al. (2020) assert that the presence of SC can induce a company to place a higher value on corporate sustainability practices and eventually gain legitimacy from stakeholders. However, it remains unclear how SCs overcome the challenge of reconciling the needs of various stakeholders. Therefore, future research should delve deeper into this issue to enhance the practical applicability of the theory. Moreover, the theory offers a limited understanding of how different attributes of SC affect ESG-related outcomes. To address this gap, future research may consider employing other relevant theories, such as human capital theory. This approach could provide a more comprehensive explanation of how different SC attributes impact ESG-related outcomes.

Six papers applied legitimacy theory. The theory presumes that the formation of the SC can serve as an effective corporate governance mechanism by addressing stakeholders' interests and legitimising the firm's operations (Cosma et al., 2022; Oyewo, 2023). It rests on the notion of a social contract between business and society. As companies rely on natural resources provided by society, they are inherently tied to social and environmental responsibilities (Goud, 2022). Accordingly, companies may choose to disclose their ESG information voluntarily to exhibit that they are functioning in line with societal expectations (Lu & Wang, 2021), which can legitimise their behaviour and existence to stakeholders (Cosma et al., 2022; Goud, 2022). Nonetheless, the theory also posits that without any meaningful characteristics and significant influence, the establishment of SC may appear legitimate and act as a symbolic role that will not lead to any improvements in ESG-related outcomes (Peters & Romi, 2014). Hence, future studies should delve deeper into assessing whether the presence of SC can genuinely improve ESG-related outcomes within companies, rather than serving as mere symbolic representation.

Six papers employed RDT. In contrast to stakeholder theory, RDT emphasises managing relationships with external parties and neglects the importance of meaningful stakeholder engagement. This oversight may potentially undermine the relevance and credibility of reporting ESG-related information. According to RDT, SC is an essential channel of resource provision (Baalouch et al., 2019; Chairina & Tjahjadi, 2023; Orazalin & Mahmood, 2021) which can help firms in accessing critical resources, establishing a positive connection with external parties, and offering advice for the development of environmental strategies (Chairina & Tjahjadi, 2023; Homroy & Slechten, 2019; Kılıç et al., 2021; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Ruigrok et al., 2006). Following theoretical arguments on the resource provisioning roles of the board, the presence of the SC can enhance the effectiveness of ESG and sustainability-related initiatives, resulting in better environmental outcomes (Hillman & Dalziel, 2003; Orazalin & Mahmood, 2020).

Other theories used to investigate the relationship include agency theory, stakeholder-agency theory, institutional theory, upper echelons theory, and critical mass theory. Four papers did not explicitly mention any underlying theory but relied on inferences from past studies to explain the association between SC and ESG.

4.3. Focus and Implication of SC on ESG (RQ3)

Researchers have focussed the arguments on the role of SC on ESG issues across five areas: ESG performance, ESG reporting, ESG reporting assurance, CSR strategy, and CSR controversies.

4.3.1. SC and ESG Performance

The results reveal that 50% of the papers included in this study were dedicated to examining the relationship between SC-ESG performance, highlighting the emphasis placed by researchers on this topic. The presence of SC was represented by a binary variable, while ESG performance was measured by using a single indicator – the ESG scores provided by various databases such as Thomson Reuters Refinitiv, Sustainalytics, and Bloomberg (Table 4 & 5). These scores were analysed either individually or comprehensively.

The general evidence documented in the extensive body of literature shows that there is a favourable correlation between SC and ESG performance (Govindan et al., 2021; López-Arceiz et al., 2022; Menicucci & Paolucci, 2022). According to these studies, the presence of SC could demonstrate a company's commitment and awareness of ESG issues (Kılıç & Kuzey, 2019;

Mahmood et al., 2018) and recognise sustainability as a critical strategic issue in its governance system (Menicucci & Paolucci, 2022). For instance, the presence of SC can facilitate the adoption of active environmental policies in companies that can further lead to enhanced carbon performance (Goud, 2022).

However, other studies have produced contrasting findings. For instance, Radu and Smaili (2022) found that SC is an environmental focus committee, given the fact that they found a favourable link between SC and environmental performance but not towards social performance. Conversely, Govindan et al. (2021) limited their study to logistics firms and found that while SC could enhance overall ESG and social performance, it did not demonstrate improvements in environmental and governance performance. The variation in results across these studies may be attributable to their industry-specific focus. Additionally, it suggests that SC may require more time to generate an impact on a company's ESG performance (Minciullo et al., 2022), considering that the outcomes of ESG performance are generally more visible in the long term rather than the short term.

Some scholars extended the research by investigating specific SC characteristics (Table 5) on ESG performance. The most common characteristics examined by the papers are SC's size and SC independence. There are mixed findings regarding the relationship between SC size and ESG performance. Two papers (Jarboui et al., 2022; López-Arceiz et al., 2022) reported a positive relationship, one reported a negative relationship (Eberhardt-Toth, 2017), while two other studies found no significant relationship (Elmaghrabi, 2021; Minciullo et al., 2022). This discrepancy in findings regarding the relationship between SC size and ESG performance may be attributed to the fact that SC size typically only considers the number of directors on the committee, without accounting for the quality of these directors, which led to these variations. However, it is generally believed that a larger SC size can potentially increase its effectiveness, given that it may comprise more competent and experienced members from diverse backgrounds, which can contribute to better ESG performance (Elmaghrabi, 2021; Jarboui et al., 2022) in the long run.

All four papers that examined the committee's independence demonstrated a positive link toward ESG performance, supporting the notion of stakeholder theory. This implies that independent directors effectively play their role in addressing the stakeholders' concerns and thereby, enhance the transparency of ESG information (Elmaghrabi, 2021). Another possible reason might be the enactment of the law, such as in India, where the Companies Act stipulates that SC should comprise at least one independent director for CSR activity supervision (Jarboui et al., 2022).

Other characteristics, such as expertise, meetings, and gender/cultural diversity, were studied in more than two papers. The studies yielded contradicting findings. For instance, Jarboui et al. (2022) revealed a positive relationship between SC expertise and ESG performance, whereas Elmaghrabi (2021) found no significant relationship. This discrepancy may stem from regulatory differences between countries. For example, in India, regulatory regulations stipulate that SCs must comprise directors with prior experience in sustainability, whereas this regulatory provision is not found in the UK. Conversely, Elmaghrabi (2021) observed a positive relationship between SC meetings and ESG performance, while Jarboui et al. (2022) found no significant relationship. Such findings may be attributable to the variation in the frequency of meetings, where the former had a higher mean on the frequency of meetings compared to the latter.

4.3.2. SC and ESG Reporting

Companies use ESG reporting as a crucial platform to communicate their ESG information to stakeholders, which reduces information asymmetry between the principal and agent, thereby minimising agency conflicts (Suttipun, 2021). Methodologically, nine papers employed content analysis to measure ESG reporting, while others relied on ESG scores extracted from Thomson Reuters Refinitiv, Sustainalytics, and Bloomberg.

It was found that two types of reporting were the centre of focus in past empirical studies: environmental reporting and ESG reporting. Regarding environmental reporting, most of the papers demonstrated a positive correlation (Cosma et al., 2022; Gerged et al., 2022; Kılıç & Kuzey, 2019; Kumari et al., 2022) between SC and environmental reporting. This shows that SC's role in designing, coordinating, and supervising a firm's environmental strategy can influence the firm's awareness of sustainability issues (Cosma et al., 2022; Kumari et al., 2022). Additionally, SC also motivates firms to adopt environmentally responsible practices and voluntarily communicate them through their reports, which in turn leads to increased transparency in environmental reporting (Cosma et al., 2022; Kılıç & Kuzey, 2019). However, only Baalouch et al. (2019) found an insignificant impact on the relationship, partly due to their sample consisting solely of large companies, resulting in different findings compared to other studies.

Moalla et al. (2021) investigated environmental reporting from the perspective of timeliness and voluntary disclosure. Their findings indicate that the presence of SC is negatively associated with the timeliness of environmental reporting but not significantly linked with the voluntary disclosure of environmental information. This reveals that companies with SC prioritise quick and timely reporting of environmental information but may not be motivated to voluntarily disclose the environmental information (Moalla et al., 2021).

Similarly, there are mixed findings regarding the relationship between SC and ESG reporting. While most papers reported positive associations and asserted that the SC's oversight and coordination of the reporting process could enhance ESG reporting quality and increase transparency (Fahad & Rahman, 2020; Gerwing et al., 2022), some studies argued that the committee's presence might be merely symbolic and failed to effectively fulfil its role in improving ESG reporting (Chairina & Tjahjadi, 2023). However, these inconclusive findings cannot be generalised to diverse economies with varying institutional and regulatory frameworks. Additionally, methodological differences in calculating ESG reporting may also contribute to these mixed results.

4.3.3. SC and ESG Reporting Assurance

There is a lack of studies exploring the relationship between SC and ESG reporting assurance, as evidenced by only one paper in this review examining the relationship. Similar to financial reporting assurance, ESG reporting assurance can enhance accountability and transparency to stakeholders by ensuring the accuracy and credibility of reported information (Velte & Stawinoga, 2020). Specifically in the hospitality and tourism industry, findings by Kılıç et al. (2021) suggest that firms with SC are more likely to seek independent assurance on sustainability reporting, as it could enhance the accountability and transparency of the committee to stakeholders by providing information assured by an independent third party.

4.3.4. SC and CSR Strategy

There are only two papers that examined this relationship, and both were conducted in the UK context. On one hand, Orazalin (2020) presented positive results regarding the relationship between the presence of SC and CSR strategy. Meanwhile, Elmaghrabi (2021) delved deeper by analysing the influence of SC characteristics on CSR strategies. The author found that only the size of SC will lead to a better CSR strategy, while other SC characteristics show no relationship to the CSR strategy (Elmaghrabi, 2021). The small sample size in the paper is one reason that might have restricted the generalisability of the findings. Moreover, geographical differences may also yield different results, indicating that further research is needed to advance the understanding of this topic.

4.3.5. SC and CSR Controversies

The relationship between SC and CSR controversies has received limited attention in the literature, with only one paper available on this topic. Elmaghrabi (2021) found that the SC's independence and chair expertise could negatively affect CSR controversies, while other SC characteristics showed no significant relationship. These results suggest that SC with more independent directors and chairs with sustainability expertise could aid in reducing and managing CSR controversies, thereby minimising corporate reputation risk and enhancing overall ESG performance (Elmaghrabi, 2021).

4.4. Future Research Opportunity (RQ4)

The study identified several future research opportunities in the realm of SC and ESG. One of the potential avenues for future research involves exploring the impact of SC characteristics on various ESG outcomes. Most of the papers focused on investigating the presence of SC and ESG, while little is known about the relationship between SC characteristics and ESG outcomes, suggesting a potential research gap in this area. Further research could enhance our understanding of how various attributes of SC can influence a company's ability to address and manage ESG concerns.

Furthermore, the study found that all the papers included in this study relied on a quantitative approach, except for Mahmood et al. (2018), who employed mixed methods in their study. This presents a methodological gap that prompts future studies to consider utilising other methodologies, such as qualitative or mixed methods, to enhance and enrich the overall findings within this area of study. Using a diverse research approach to investigate the SC-ESG relationship may yield novel perspectives that quantitative methods may overlook.

The majority of the papers in this study utilised a collective of non-financial firms as the samples in their study (Gerwing et al., 2022; Gold et al., 2022; Spallini et al., 2021). One drawback of this approach is its inability to capture the impact of SC on ESG outcomes within a particular industry, given that different industries may face distinct ESG challenges and opportunities. By exploring the relationship further, particularly in an industry-specific context, researchers can provide a clearer picture of how SC can contribute towards the enhancement of a company's ESG-related outcomes.

It would be valuable to explore and compare the impact of SC on ESG issues in countries where SC is a mandatory governance mechanism, such as in India (Jarboui et al., 2022), and countries where it is not. This could cast light on any differences or similarities in ESG performance and reporting practises while providing insight into how the implementation of SC as a governance mechanism impacts sustainability outcomes.

Finally, it is important to note that the papers included in this study have solely focused on SC and ESG in public listed companies, leaving a gap in our understanding of the relationship in the context of SMEs. Given the significant economic activity and employment generated by SMEs, it is crucial for future research to consider including this population to examine the effectiveness of SCs in addressing ESG issues.

5. CONCLUSION

The primary objective of the study is to systematically review empirical studies in SC and ESG, guided by four research questions. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, a total of 34 papers were identified and selected. To this end, the results suggest that there is a growing interest in the study of the SC-ESG relationship, with the increased publication of studies annually. This indicates that many companies have started to adopt SC in promoting sustainable development practises within the organisation and thus, attracting the interest of researchers to examine the committee's impact on ESG outcomes. Predominantly, the existing literature investigated the context at a cross-country level, with an emphasis given to stakeholder theory.

Most of the empirical papers in this study addressed the impact of the presence of SC on ESG-related outcomes, with most papers reporting positive findings. This study argues that merely examining the presence of SC may not sufficiently capture the real impact of the committee on ESG outcomes. By considering the characteristics of SC, it could enhance the findings in this domain of study. Based on the review of several papers that explored SC characteristics and ESG-related outcomes, the SC's size and independence emerged as the most extensively studied characteristics.

This study is subject to three limitations. Firstly, some SC and ESG publications indexed in other databases may have been overlooked, as this study is limited to only publications listed in the WOS and Scopus databases. Secondly, the limited keywords applied in this study can lead to the exclusion of other relevant papers. Future studies could consider adding related keywords to the search string, such as sustainability and CSR, instead of solely relying on ESG. Thirdly, it is important to note that this literature review only included peer-reviewed articles and excluded other types of papers. These exclusions may have affected the findings of the review. Accordingly, readers should exercise caution when interpreting the results.

Finally, this study provides several valuable theoretical and practical contributions. By synthesising findings from 34 empirical studies, this SLR makes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge on the relationship between SC and ESG issues. Firstly, the study identifies the development of research conducted on SC-ESG issues and highlights the geographical regions where this topic has been investigated to date. Secondly, the study enriches the existing research by structuring the research on SC into five heterogenous ESG aspects (i.e. ESG performance, ESG reporting, ESG reporting assurance, CSR strategy, and CSR controversies), thus enhancing the understanding of these critical dimensions within the field. Thirdly, this study takes into account the impact of SC characteristics on various ESG outcomes, rather than merely considering the presence of SC on CSR outcomes (Velte & Stawinoga, 2020), thus providing a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of SC in addressing ESG issues. Fourthly, the structured synthesis of the existing empirical studies can provide valuable insights to both researchers and practitioners. The various avenues for future research outlined in this study can guide and inspire researchers to shed more light on the SC-ESG topic in future studies. Practitioners, such as the board of directors and policymakers, can leverage these findings to consider the potential inclusion of SC as a mandatory governance mechanism in the future.

REFERENCES

Adel, C., Hussain, M. M., Mohamed, E. K. A., & Basuony, M. A. K. (2019). Is corporate governance relevant to the quality of corporate social responsibility disclosure in large European companies? *International Journal of Accounting & Information Management, 27*(2), 301-332.

Adnan, S. M., Hay, D., & Van Staden, C. J. (2018). The influence of culture and corporate governance on corporate social responsibility disclosure: A cross country analysis. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 198*, 820-832.

Alcaide-Ruiz, M. D., Bravo-Urquiza, F., & Moreno-Ureba, E. (2022). Sustainability Committee Research: A Bibliometric Study. *Sustainability, 14*(23), 16136.

Arvidsson, S., & Dumay, J. (2022). Corporate ESG reporting quantity, quality and performance: Where to now for environmental policy and practice? *Business Strategy and the Environment, 31*(3), 1091-1110.

Baalouch, F., Ayadi, S. D., & Hussainey, K. (2019). A study of the determinants of environmental disclosure quality: evidence from French listed companies. *Journal of Management and Governance, 23*(4), 939-971.

Baraibar-Diez, E., & Odriozola, M. D. (2019). CSR Committees and Their Effect on ESG Performance in UK, France, Germany, and Spain. *Sustainability, 11*(18), 5077.

Birindelli, G., Dell'atti, S., Iannuzzi, A. P., & Savioli, M. (2018). Composition and Activity of the Board of Directors: Impact on ESG Performance in the Banking System. *Sustainability, 10*(12), 4699.

Bosi, M. K., Lajuni, N., Wellfren, A. C., & Lim, T. S. (2022). Sustainability Reporting through Environmental, Social, and Governance: A Bibliometric Review. *Sustainability, 14*(19), 12071.

Cancela, B. L., Neves, M. E. D., Rodrigues, L. L., & Gomes Dias, A. C. (2020). The influence of corporate governance on corporate sustainability: new evidence using panel data in the Iberian macroeconomic environment. *International Journal of Accounting & Information Management, 28*(4), 785-806.

Chairina, C., & Tjahjadi, B. (2023). Green Governance and Sustainability Report Quality: The Moderating Role of Sustainability Commitment in ASEAN Countries. *Economies*, *11*(1), 27.

Cosma, S., Principale, S., & Venturelli, A. (2022). Sustainable governance and climate-change disclosure in European banking: the role of the corporate social responsibility committee. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society, 22*(6), 1345-1369.

Cucari, N., Falco, S. E. D., & Orlando, B. (2018). Diversity of Board of Directors and Environmental Social Governance: Evidence from Italian Listed Companies. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, 25*(3), 250-266.

Eberhardt-Toth, E. (2017). Who should be on a board corporate social responsibility committee? *Journal of Cleaner Production, 140*(3), 1926-1935.

Elmaghrabi, M. E. (2021). CSR committee attributes and CSR performance: UK evidence. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society, 21*(5), 892-919.

Fahad, P., & Rahman, P. M. (2020). Impact of corporate governance on CSR disclosure. *International Journal of Disclosure and Governance, 17*(2), 155-167.

García Martín, C. J., & Herrero, B. (2020). Do board characteristics affect environmental performance? A study of EU firms. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, 27*(1), 74-94.

Gerged, A. M., Chijoke-Mgbame, A. M., Konadu, R., & Cowton, C. J. (2022). Does the presence of an environmental committee strengthen the impact of board gender diversity on corporate environmental disclosure? Evidence from sub-Saharan Africa. *Business Strategy and the Environment, 32*(4), 2434-2450.

Gerwing, T., Kajüter, P., & Wirth, M. (2022). The role of sustainable corporate governance in mandatory sustainability reporting quality. *Journal of Business Economics, 92*(3), 517-555.

Gold, N. O., Taib, F. M., & Ma, Y. (2022). Firm-level attributes, industry-specific factors, stakeholder pressure, and country-level attributes: Global evidence of what inspires corporate sustainability practices and performance. *Sustainability*, *14*(20), 13222.

Goud, N. N. (2022). Corporate governance: Does it matter management of carbon emission performance? An empirical analyses of Indian companies. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 379*(1), 134485.

Govindan, K., Kilic, M., Uyar, A., & Karaman, A. S. (2021). Drivers and value-relevance of CSR performance in the logistics sector: A cross-country firm-level investigation. *International Journal of Production Economics, 231*, 107835.

Hillman, A. J., & Dalziel, T. (2003). Boards of directors and firm performance: Integrating agency and resource dependence perspectives. *The Academy of Management Review, 28*(3), 383-396.

Homroy, S., & Slechten, A. (2019). Do board expertise and networked boards affect environmental performance? *Journal of Business Ethics, 158*(1), 269-292.

Jarboui, A., Hlima, N. D. B., & Bouaziz, D. (2022). Do sustainability committee characteristics affect CSR performance? Evidence from India. *Benchmarking: An International Journal, 30*(2), 628-652.

Khatib, S. F. A., Abdullah, D. F., Elamer, A., & Hazaea, S. A. (2022). The development of corporate governance literature in Malaysia: a systematic literature review and research agenda. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, *22*(5), 1026-1053.

Khlif, H., Guidara, A., & Souissi, M. (2015). Corporate social and environmental disclosure and corporate performance. *Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies, 5*(1), 51-69.

Kılıç, M., & Kuzey, C. (2019). The effect of corporate governance on carbon emission disclosures. *International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management, 11*(1), 35-53.

Kılıç, M., Uyar, A., Kuzey, C., & Karaman, A. S. (2021). Drivers and consequences of sustainability committee existence? Evidence from the hospitality and tourism industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 92, 102753*.

Kumari, P. S. R., Makhija, H., Sharma, D., & Behl, A. (2022). Board characteristics and environmental disclosures: evidence from sensitive and non-sensitive industries of India. *International Journal of Managerial Finance, 18*(4), 677-700.

Li, T. T., Wang, K., Sueyoshi, T., & Wang, D. D. (2021). ESG: Research progress and future prospects. *Sustainability (Switzerland), 13*(21), 11663.

López-Arceiz, F. J., Del Río, C., & Bellostas, A. (2022). The mediating effect of sustainability strategy between sustainability committees and business performance: can persistent assessment condition this effect? *Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal, 13*(3), 708-739.

Lu, J., & Wang, J. (2021). Corporate governance, law, culture, environmental performance and CSR disclosure: A global perspective. *Journal of International Financial Markets, Institutions and Money, 70*, 101264.

Ludwig, P., & Sassen, R. (2022). Which internal corporate governance mechanisms drive corporate sustainability? *Journal of Environmental Management, 301, 113780*.

Mahmood, Z., Kouser, R., Ali, W., Ahmad, Z., & Salman, T. (2018). Does Corporate Governance Affect Sustainability Disclosure? A Mixed Methods Study. *Sustainability*, *10*(1), 207.

Menicucci, E., & Paolucci, G. (2022). Board Diversity and ESG Performance: Evidence from the Italian Banking Sector. *Sustainability*, *14*(20), 13447.

Minciullo, M., Zaccone, M. C., & Pedrini, M. (2022). The Antecedents of Corporate Sustainability Performance: A Study on Generic and Sustainability-Related Corporate Governance Mechanisms. *Sustainability, 14*(15), 9761.

Moalla, M., Salhi, B., & Jarboui, A. (2021). An empirical investigation of factors influencing the environmental reporting quality: evidence from France. *Social Responsibility Journal, 17*(7), 966-984.

Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., & Altman, D. G. (2009). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *BMJ, 339*, b2535.

Nwachukwu, C. (2022). Systematic review of integrated reporting: recent trend and future research agenda. *Journal of Financial Reporting and Accounting*, *20*(3/4), 580-598.

Orazalin, N. (2020). Do board sustainability committees contribute to corporate environmental and social performance? The mediating role of corporate social responsibility strategy. *Business Strategy and the Environment, 29*(1), 140-153.

Orazalin, N., & Mahmood, M. (2020). Determinants of GRI-based sustainability reporting: evidence from an emerging economy. *Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies, 10*(1), 140-164.

Orazalin, N., & Mahmood, M. (2021). Toward sustainable development: Board characteristics, country governance quality, and environmental performance. *Business Strategy and the Environment, 30*(8), 3569-3588.

Oyewo, B. (2023). Corporate governance and carbon emissions performance: International evidence on curvilinear relationships. *Journal of Environmental Management, 334*, 117474.

Peters, G. F., & Romi, A. M. (2014). Does the Voluntary Adoption of Corporate Governance Mechanisms Improve Environmental Risk Disclosures? Evidence from Greenhouse Gas Emission Accounting. *Journal of Business Ethics, 125*(4), 637-666.

Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*. Harper & Row.

Radu, C., & Smaili, N. (2022). Alignment Versus Monitoring: An Examination of the Effect of the CSR Committee and CSR-Linked Executive Compensation on CSR Performance. *Journal of Business Ethics, 180*(1), 145-163.

Ruigrok, W., Peck, S., Tacheva, S., Greve, P., & Hu, Y. (2006). The determinants and effects of board nomination committees. *Journal of Management and Governance, 10*(2), 119-148.

Shahbaz, M., Karaman, A. S., Kilic, M., & Uyar, A. (2020). Board attributes, CSR engagement, and corporate performance: What is the nexus in the energy sector? *Energy Policy, 143*, 111582.

Spallini, S., Milone, V., Nisio, A., & Romanazzi, P. (2021). The Dimension of Sustainability: A Comparative Analysis of Broadness of Information in Italian Companies. *Sustainability, 13*(3), 1457.

Steblianskaia, E., Vasiev, M., Denisov, A., Bocharnikov, V., Steblyanskaya, A., & Wang, Q. (2023). Environmental-social-governance concept bibliometric analysis and systematic literature review: Do investors becoming more environmentally conscious? *Environmental and Sustainability Indicators, 17*, 100218.

Suttipun, M. (2021). The influence of board composition on environmental, social and governance (ESG) disclosure of Thai listed companies. *International Journal of Disclosure and Governance, 18*(4), 391-402.

Uyar, A., Kilic, M., Koseoglu, M. A., Kuzey, C., & Karaman, A. (2020). The link among board characteristics, corporate social responsibility performance, and financial performance: Evidence from the hospitality and tourism industry. *Tourism Management Perspective, 35*, 100714.

Velte, P., & Stawinoga, M. (2020). Do chief sustainability officers and CSR committees influence CSR-related outcomes? A structured literature review based on empirical-quantitative research findings. *Journal of Management Control, 31*(4), 333-377.