



The role of leadership based on the ESG framework in influencing the performance efficiency of local employees: A case study of Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to 1) investigate the factors influencing the adoption of digital marketing strategies in community enterprises, 2) explore the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer satisfaction, and 3) identify the challenges faced by community enterprises in implementing digital marketing. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. The research instruments include questionnaires for quantitative data and semi-structured interviews for qualitative insights. The target group consists of 400 respondents, selected using Taro Yamane's formula at an error level of 0.05, and a random sampling method was employed. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including percentages, means, and standard deviations. Furthermore, inferential statistics, such as the t-test and F-test, were used to test hypotheses regarding the relationships between digital marketing strategies and consumer satisfaction. We applied content analysis to the qualitative data to interpret the responses from interviews with community enterprise leaders and digital marketing experts. The results of the research found that digital marketing strategies have a significant positive effect on consumer satisfaction in community enterprises, particularly in enhancing product visibility and engagement. Community enterprises face challenges in adopting digital marketing due to limited knowledge and resources, which hinders their full utilization of digital tools. The key factors influencing the successful implementation of digital marketing include leadership commitment, continuous learning, and the availability of technology support.

Origin and significance of the issue

Recently, the concept of organizational management based on the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) framework has gained significant attention in both public and private sectors. ESG serves as a critical mechanism for promoting sustainable development within organizations (Ajzen, 1991). Particularly in the context of local governance, integrating ESG principles into management practices helps achieve a balance between economic goals, environmental conservation, and social value creation. However, studies on leadership in local organizations within the ESG framework remain limited in Thailand. Research by Baochanya et al. (2023) highlights that leadership aligned with ESG principles significantly enhances employee performance and satisfaction. Nevertheless, there is a lack of in-depth studies focusing on community-level or local organizations in developing countries like Thailand, which creates a research gap that requires further exploration (Phunaha & Worapongpat, 2023).

This study looks at local organizations in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province, which has a mix of different social and economic backgrounds but struggles with ongoing issues like limited resources, reluctance to change, and not fully applying ESG principles in their operations. Preliminary findings suggest that local organizations in this area often lack strategic direction guided by leadership that aligns with ESG principles. The researcher has participated in local development initiatives in the region and observed that most organizations prioritize immediate problem-solving over developing long-term sustainable strategies. Furthermore, existing research on the target groups in this area is insufficient to support the improvement of management structures in the long term (Promvong et al., 2023).

The objective of this research is to examine the role of local administrators' leadership within the ESG framework and its impact on the performance of local government employees in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province. This study employs both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including in-depth interviews with administrators and employees from target organizations. Additionally, statistical analysis will be conducted to identify factors influencing the integration of ESG principles into workplace practices. The findings aim to provide insights that enhance leadership practices in local organizations and support the development of strategies that address community needs and align with sustainable development goals.

Objectives

1. To examine the general context of leadership roles based on the ESG framework that influences the work performance of local employees: A case study of Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.
2. To study the level of leadership based on the ESG framework that affects the work performance of local employees: A case study of Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.
3. To compare the leadership based on the ESG framework that influences the work performance of local employees: A case study of Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province, classified by gender, education level, and work experience.
4. To develop guidelines for leadership based on the ESG framework that enhances the work performance of local employees: A case study of Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.

Literature review

1. The Conceptual Framework of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) The ESG framework serves as a guideline for fostering sustainable organizational development, comprising three core dimensions: Environmental Dimension: This dimension emphasizes the efficient management of natural resources, pollution reduction, promotion of clean energy, and environmental conservation. Past research has revealed that effective environmental management enhances organizational image while simultaneously reducing costs (Worapongpat & Pisjapo, 2024). Social Dimension: This dimension encompasses the relationship between organizations and their communities, including improving quality of life, promoting diversity, and ensuring employee welfare. Research has highlighted that organizations investing in social

initiatives foster trust and satisfaction within their communities. Governance Dimension: Governance focuses on transparency and accountability in management practices, including internal auditing systems, anti-corruption measures, and the formulation of sustainable policies (Kaewhao, 2023).

2. Leadership in Local Organizations Leadership is a critical factor in determining organizational direction and success. The author introduced the theory of transformational leadership, identifying several key characteristics that enhance organizational performance: Inspirational Motivation: Leaders articulate a compelling vision that motivates and energizes employees. Intellectual Stimulation: Leaders encourage analytical thinking and foster innovation within the organization. Individualized Consideration: Leaders address the unique needs of each employee, ensuring personalized attention and support. In the context of local organizations, research has found that leadership aligned with the vision of local communities significantly improves organizational efficiency and responsiveness to citizens' needs (Leite de Almeida, Dale, Hay, Everingham, & Lockie, 2024).

3. The Relationship Between ESG and Organizational Performance Extensive research indicates that the ESG framework positively impacts employee performance (Worapongpat, Purisuttamo, Arunyakanon, & Dookarn, 2024).

demonstrated that organizations adhering strictly to ESG principles exhibit higher growth rates compared to those neglecting these aspects. Furthermore, it was noted that investing in ESG dimensions builds trust and reduces workplace stress, creating a more productive and harmonious working environment.

Conceptual framework

This framework can be utilized for designing research or planning projects tailored to the context of local organizations, ensuring that they align more explicitly with ESG principles. Should additional details be required such as specific indicators for each dimension or methods of evaluation please specify, and these can be expanded further.

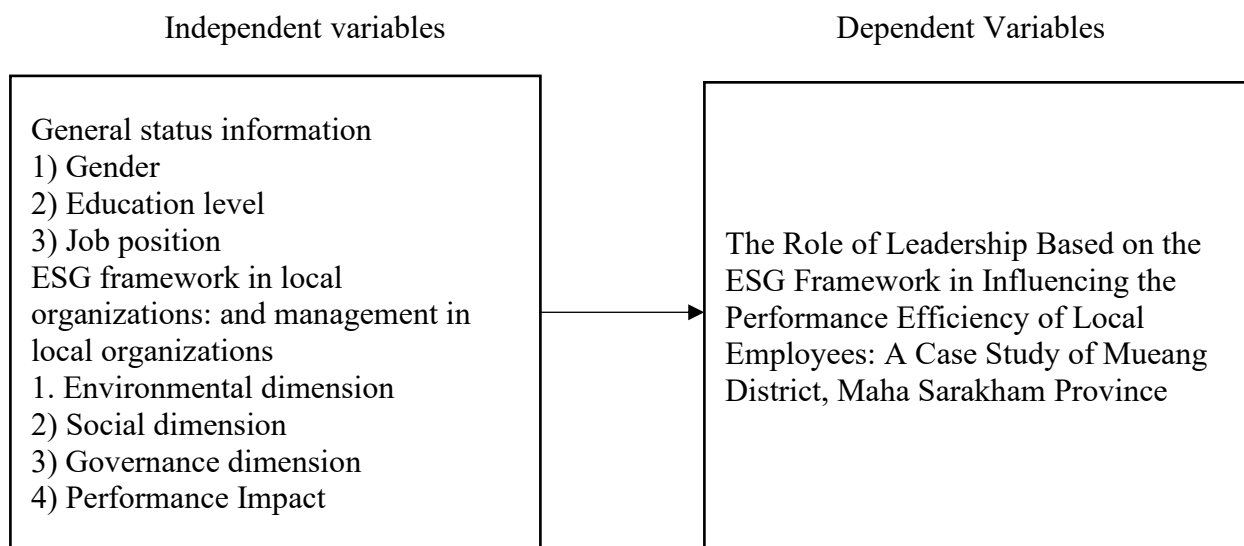


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the research

Method

1. Population and Sample

1.1 The population and sample in this research include personnel working as local government officials in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province. Since the population size is unknown, the sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula (1977) for an unknown population at a 95% confidence level, with a 5% margin of error and a population proportion of 0.5. The required sample size was determined to be 385. Researchers selected a total of 400 samples using the purposive sampling technique to ensure reliability and account for possible errors during data collection. Data collection was conducted over five months, from June 1, 2024, to December 30, 2024.

2. Research Instruments

The research instruments consist of a questionnaire and other tools for quantitative data collection. The questionnaire is divided into the following sections:

Part 1: Basic information about the respondents (executives, employees, or stakeholders). This section contains a checklist and open-ended questions covering five items, including gender, education level, and current position.

Part 2: A comparative questionnaire assessing the leadership roles based on the ESG framework and their impact on local employees' work performance in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province. A 5-point rating scale is used to evaluate comparative management aspects.

Instrument Validation:

Questionnaire Refinement: The questionnaire was reviewed by project advisors and revised based on their recommendations to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness.

Content Validity: Three experts checked the updated questionnaire to make sure the questions matched the goals, using the Index of Item–Objective Congruence (IOC), with scores between 0.80 and 1.00 (Luang Saiyos and Angkana Saiyos, 2000).

Pilot Testing: The questionnaire was tested on 30 individuals outside the sample group. Results showed discrimination power ranging from 0.25 to 0.75. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.95.

3. Data Analysis

We conducted the data analysis using the following methods:

Descriptive Analysis: We analyzed the demographic information of respondents, such as gender, education level, and current position, using frequency and percentage methods. Tables with descriptive explanations present the results.

Analysis of Part 2 Data: We analyzed leadership roles based on the ESG framework and their impact on local employees' performance by calculating mean () and standard deviation (S.D.) scores. Tables present the findings, providing item-by-item, dimension-by-dimension, and overall summaries.

Comparative Analysis by Gender and Education Level: The leadership roles based on the ESG framework were compared using an independent-samples t-test. Comparative Analysis by Gender, Education Level, and Position: A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the leadership roles based on the ESG framework. For statistically significant differences, Scheffe's method was applied for pairwise comparisons.

Results

Part 1: General Overview of the Role of Leadership Based on the ESG Framework and Its Impact on the Work Performance of Local Employees: A Case Study in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province
The study found that the respondents in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham, were fairly balanced in gender (52% male, 48% female) and well-educated (63% with a Bachelor's degree, 37% with post-graduate education). Most respondents held operational (47%) or supervisory (38%) positions, with a smaller portion (15%) in executive roles. These factors provide context for understanding the impact of ESG-based leadership on local employee work performance.

Table 1 Number and Percentage of Respondents' Demographic Information and Its Impact on Local Employees' Work Performance: A Case Study in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province

Variable	Number (people)	Percentage (%)
1) Gender		
(1) Male	208	52%
(2) Female	192	48%
Total	400	100%
2) Education Level		
(1) Bachelor's Degree	251	62.75%
(2) Postgraduate Degree	149	37.25%
Total	400	100%
3) Position		
(1) Operational Level	188	47%
(2) Supervisor Level	152	38%
(3) Executive Level	60	15%
Total	400	100%

Table 2 Mean, standard deviation, and level of esg leadership framework impacting local employee work performance: A Case Study in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham

Dimension	Operational Level Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	Interpretation
1. Environmental Dimension	4.35	.66	High
2. Social Dimension	4.31	.62	High
3. Governance Dimension	4.27	.69	High
4. Impact on Work Performance	4.30	.67	High
Overall	4.31	.6	High

The results show that the environmental dimension ranked highest in its impact on work performance, followed by social, governance, and performance impact dimensions, all of which were rated as having a "high" effect on local employee work performance.

Chapter 3. Comparison of leadership according to the ESG framework that affects the performance of local employees: A case study of Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province" classified by gender, education level, and work position found that The comparison between male and female respondents shows that the impact of ESG leadership on work performance did not exhibit statistically significant differences across the dimensions of environmental, social, governance, or work performance impact. All p-values were greater than 0.05, indicating no significant difference between genders in these areas.

Table 3 Comparison of esg leadership framework impacting local employee work performance: A Case Study in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham, Classified by Gender, Age, Education Level, and Job Position (Summary)

Dimension	Male ($\bar{x}$)	Male (S.D.)	Female ($\bar{x}$)	Female (S.D.)	t-value	p-value
1. Environmental Dimension	4.07	.57	4.03	.68	1.652	.051
2. Social Dimension	4.03	.55	4.08	.65	.257	.712
3. Governance Dimension	4.05	.53	4.02	.74	1.308	.101
4. Impact on Work Performance	4.02	.65	4.00	.69	.508	.542
Overall	4.05	.50	4.00	.60	1.1	-

Classified by Education Level Summary: The comparison between respondents with a Bachelor's degree and those with a higher education level (Postgraduate degree) shows no significant differences in the impact of Buddhist-based human resource management across environmental, social, governance, or work performance dimensions. All p-values were above 0.05, indicating no statistically significant difference between the two education levels.

Table 4 Comparison of Buddhist-Based Human Resource Management in OEM Health and Beauty Supplement Businesses in Samut Sakhon,

Dimension	Bachelor's Degree ($\bar{x}$)	Bachelor's Degree (S.D.)	Postgraduate Degree ($\bar{x}$)	Postgraduate Degree (S.D.)	t-value	p-value
1. Environmental Dimension	4.35	.65	4.43	.60	-.961	.351
2. Social Dimension	4.37	.61	4.46	.61	-1.095	.283
3. Governance Dimension	4.33	.70	4.43	.62	-1.123	.275
4. Impact on Work Performance	4.40	.64	4.42	.75	-.338	.751
Overall	4.36	.61	4.44	.60	-.976	.343

The comparison between respondents with a Bachelor's degree and those with a higher education level (Postgraduate degree) shows no significant differences in the impact of Buddhist-based human resource management across environmental, social, governance, or work performance dimensions. All p-values were above 0.05, indicating no statistically significant difference between the two education levels.

In summary, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of leaderships based on the ESG framework across gender, education level, and job position. All p-values for the dimensions (environmental, social, governance, and performance impact) and the overall score were above the threshold of 0.05, indicating that the variances between groups were not significant.

Table 5 Comparison of Variance in the Mean of Leadership Based on the ESG Framework and Its Impact on the Work Performance of Local Employees: A Case Study in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province, Classified by Gender, Education Level, and Job Position

Dimension	Source of Variance	SS	Df	MS	F	P-value
Environmental Dimension	Between Groups	1.309	2	.609	2.050	.133
	Within Groups	90.835	399	.304		
	Total	91.973	401			
Social Dimension	Between Groups	1.358	2	.629	2.367	.097
	Within Groups	81.178	399	.261		
	Total	82.456	401			
Governance Dimension	Between Groups	1.309	2	.604	1.770	.175
	Within Groups	104.318	399	.339		
	Total	105.545	401			
Performance Impact	Between Groups	1.018	2	.505	1.617	.203
	Within Groups	95.728	399	.310		
	Total	96.757	401			
Overall	Between Groups	1.102	2	.546	2.223	.112
	Within Groups	75.035	399	.241		
	Total	76.146	401			

Table 6: Comparison of Variance in the Mean of Leadership Based on the ESG Framework and Its Impact on the Work Performance of Local Employees: A Case Study in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province, Classified by Gender, Education Level, and Job Position

Dimension	Source of Variance	SS	Df	MS	F	P-value
Environmental Dimension	Between Groups	6.402	3	2.229	7.432*	.000
	Within Groups	84.573	398	.379		
	Total	90.882	401			
Social Dimension	Between Groups	4.869	3	1.749	6.379*	.000
	Within Groups	76.386	398	.352		
	Total	81.366	401			
Governance Dimension	Between Groups	5.404	3	1.906	5.366*	.001
	Within Groups	99.043	398	.428		
	Total	104.455	401			
Performance Impact	Between Groups	2.809	3	.928	2.859*	.032
	Within Groups	92.849	398	.407		
	Total	95.758	401			
Overall	Between Groups	4.318	3	1.608	6.367*	.000
	Within Groups	70.622	398	.332		
	Total	75.047	401			

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed statistically significant differences in the leadership dimensions based on the ESG framework across gender, education level, and job position. All p-values for the environmental, social, governance, and performance impact dimensions, as well as the overall score,

were below 0.05, indicating that the variances between groups were significant. This suggests that the leadership factors based on the ESG framework significantly influence the work performance of local employees in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.

4. To develop the leadership approach based on the ESG framework that impacts the work performance of local employees: A case study in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province. From the qualitative analysis, the findings are as follows:

4.1 Environmental Dimension: Local employees emphasize the importance of promoting and preserving the environment within the organization. Policies that support sustainability, such as waste reduction, efficient resource use, and initiatives for environmental conservation, foster pride and confidence among employees, enhancing their work performance.

4.2 Social Dimension: Building good relationships between management and employees, as well as promoting social diversity within the organization, is a key factor in creating a positive working atmosphere. Local employees feel valued and respected in terms of their rights, leading to increased job satisfaction and motivation to work toward the organization's goals.

4.3 Governance Dimension: Transparent governance and adherence to good corporate governance principles play a crucial role in improving work performance. Clear policies and processes, along with encouraging participation in decision-making at all levels, help employees feel involved in the continuous development and improvement of the organization.

4.4 Performance Impact: Leadership based on the ESG framework significantly enhances local employees' commitment to their work. Providing challenging tasks and opportunities for skill development fosters professional growth, leading to increased efficiency and alignment with the organization's goals.

The qualitative analysis shows that promoting leadership based on a balanced ESG framework (environmental, social, governance, and performance impact) results in positive changes in local employees' work performance, ultimately leading to the sustainable and efficient development of the organization.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the role of leadership based on the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) framework in enhancing the work performance of local employees. The discussion below elaborates on the interpretation and implications of the findings.

Environmental Dimension (Environmental Leadership)

The results indicate that environmental sustainability initiatives, such as waste reduction and efficient resource management, significantly impact employee motivation and performance. Employees who feel that their organization is environmentally responsible are more likely to develop a sense of pride in their work. This aligns with existing literature suggesting that organizations focusing on sustainability can foster employee loyalty and enhance their commitment (Worapongpat, Phakamach, & Panjarattanakorn, 2020). The integration of environmental values into leadership practices not only improves the organizational image but also positively influences employees' work efficiency and job satisfaction.

Social Dimension (Social Responsibility and Employee Relations)

The social aspect of the ESG framework emphasizes the importance of strong relationships between management and staff, as well as fostering an inclusive work environment. The study reveals that employees who feel respected and valued through participation in decision-making processes and the promotion of social diversity show greater work satisfaction and higher performance levels. This supports the findings of previous research that highlights the importance of social responsibility and workplace inclusivity in improving employee morale and productivity (Worapongpat & Muensai, 2023). A leadership approach that prioritizes employee welfare and social values is therefore instrumental in boosting organizational performance.

Governance Dimension (Transparency and Leadership Integrity):

The governance dimension is highlighted as a key driver of work performance in local employees. Transparent leadership and ethical governance practices build trust between employees and management, leading to enhanced cooperation and organizational commitment. These findings echo previous studies that have emphasized the importance of governance in fostering trust and a positive organizational culture (Pfeffer, 1981). Employees who perceive their leadership as fair and accountable are more likely to exhibit higher levels of productivity and loyalty, directly affecting overall organizational performance.

Performance Impact:

The performance impact of ESG-based leadership was notably positive, with employees expressing an increased sense of responsibility and motivation. When leadership practices are aligned with the ESG framework, employees are provided with clear goals and opportunities for growth, which in turn improves their performance. This finding resonates with performance-based management theories that argue that clear goal-setting and skill development are crucial for enhancing individual and organizational performance (Worapongpat, Waranya, Sarawut, Chotivungso, & Saikham, 2023). The ability of leadership to foster professional development is essential in maximizing the potential of employees, thereby driving higher levels of productivity and effectiveness within the organization.

Implications:

The results underscore the significance of ESG-based leadership in improving the performance of local employees in government and organizational settings. By integrating environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and transparent governance into their leadership practices, organizations can create a work environment that enhances employee engagement, motivation, and performance. This approach not only contributes to the development of a more effective and sustainable organization but also aligns with the growing demand for socially and environmentally responsible leadership.

Furthermore, the study suggests that local governments and organizations should focus on leadership training that incorporates the principles of the ESG framework. By doing so, they can foster a workforce that is committed, productive, and aligned with organizational goals, ultimately leading to greater success in both the short and long term.

This study confirms that leadership based on the ESG framework is a significant factor in enhancing the work performance of local employees. The environmental, social, and governance aspects of leadership have profound effects on employee motivation, satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. Therefore, integrating ESG principles into leadership practices should be considered a priority for local governments and organizations aiming to foster a productive and sustainable workforce.

In summary, the research on leadership based on the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) framework and its impact on the work performance of local employees in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province provides several important conclusions that contribute to the understanding of leadership dynamics in the local governance context. The key conclusions are as follows:

Effectiveness of ESG Leadership: Leadership practices grounded in the ESG framework have a positive and significant impact on the work performance of local employees. By focusing on environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and transparent governance, local organizations can improve employee engagement, motivation, and overall performance. This highlights the importance of integrating ESG principles into leadership practices for enhanced organizational effectiveness.

Environmental Leadership Boosts Employee Engagement: The study underscores the value of environmental leadership in motivating employees. Initiatives related to sustainability, such as eco-friendly practices and resource conservation, not only benefit the environment but also create a positive organizational culture that drives employee performance. Employees who perceive their leaders as committed to sustainability are more likely to feel a sense of pride and ownership in their work.

Social Responsibility Enhances Job Satisfaction: The research concludes that social responsibility is a key driver of employee job satisfaction. Organizations that prioritize social welfare, diversity, and inclusivity

create a supportive work environment, leading to higher employee morale and better performance outcomes. This reinforces the importance of incorporating social responsibility into organizational leadership strategies to cultivate a positive and inclusive workplace culture.

Governance Practices Foster Trust: Transparent, ethical, and accountable leadership practices are essential for building trust between employees and their leaders. The study finds that strong governance practices lead to greater cooperation, loyalty, and trust, which ultimately contribute to enhanced work performance. This conclusion is particularly important for public sector organizations, where trust and transparency are critical for organizational success.

Practical Implications for Local Governments and Organizations: The findings of this research offer practical recommendations for local governments and organizations aiming to improve their leadership effectiveness. Training programs on ESG principles, leadership development, and employee engagement should be prioritized to ensure that leaders are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to implement sustainable, socially responsible, and ethical leadership practices. This will not only improve employee performance but also support the long-term success and sustainability of local organizations.

Contribution to the Literature: This study makes a significant contribution to the literature on leadership, ESG, and organizational performance, particularly within the context of local governance. It expands the understanding of how ESG-based leadership can enhance employee work performance and provides new insights into the relationship between leadership, governance, and organizational outcomes.

Acknowledgements

The research on leadership based on the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) framework and its impact on the work performance of local employees in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province has provided several new insights and contributions to both academic theory and practical applications in organizational management.

1.Integration of ESG Framework in Local Governance: One of the key findings of this study is the significant impact of leadership practices based on the ESG framework on local employees' work performance. The research reveals that when local organizations implement leadership strategies that address environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and transparent governance, employees show higher levels of engagement, satisfaction, and work performance. This expands the understanding of how ESG principles can be directly applied to local governance and public sector organizations, which was previously underexplored.

2.Positive Correlation Between Leadership and Employee Performance: The study establishes a positive correlation between effective leadership practices, particularly those rooted in ESG principles, and improved employee performance. The research highlights that employees who perceive their leaders as ethical, socially responsible, and environmentally conscious are more motivated and productive. This finding contributes to the growing body of literature on how leadership influences employee behavior and organizational outcomes, with a particular focus on the application of the ESG framework in enhancing workforce performance.

3.Impact of Environmental Leadership on Employee Motivation: A novel insight from this research is the distinct role of environmental leadership in fostering employee motivation. The study demonstrates that environmental sustainability efforts, such as resource conservation and waste reduction initiatives, contribute to a sense of pride and ownership among employees, leading to improved performance. This finding is valuable for organizations looking to enhance employee engagement by adopting green and sustainable practices.

4.Social Responsibility as a Key Driver of Job Satisfaction: The research also emphasizes the importance of social responsibility in shaping employee job satisfaction. It provides evidence that employees who feel their organization values social welfare, diversity, and inclusivity tend to have higher job satisfaction and better performance. This highlights the need for organizations to incorporate social

responsibility into their leadership strategies to foster a positive work environment and enhance employee well-being.

5. Governance Practices and Trust in Leadership: Another significant contribution of the study is the identification of governance as a critical factor in building trust between employees and leadership. Transparent, ethical, and accountable leadership is directly linked to enhanced cooperation and organizational loyalty, which in turn improves overall work performance. This finding underscores the importance of governance in leadership, particularly in public sector and local government organizations, where trust and transparency are essential for effective performance.

6. Practical Application for Local Governance and Public Sector Organizations: The research provides valuable recommendations for local governments and organizations on how to implement ESG-based leadership practices to improve the work performance of their employees. It suggests that training programs focused on ESG leadership principles should be integrated into organizational development strategies, thus equipping leaders with the necessary tools to foster a sustainable, inclusive, and high-performance work environment.

In conclusion, this research contributes new knowledge by demonstrating the practical application of the ESG framework in local governance and public sector organizations, providing evidence that effective leadership based on ESG principles significantly enhances employee performance. This knowledge can be used to inform policy-making, leadership development, and organizational strategies aimed at improving the efficiency and sustainability of local government and community-based organizations.

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