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Analyzing the Impact of ESG Compliance on HDFC Bank's Cost of Debt: Implications and Strategies

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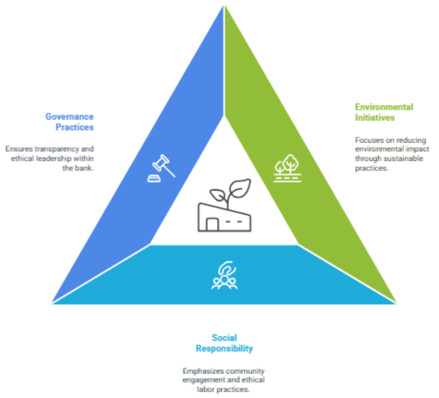
1: INTRODUCTION



1.1 Background of the Study

The financial landscape is rapidly evolving as Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors gain prominence in investment strategies, risk evaluations, and regulatory frameworks. In India, the banking sector—vital to economic progress—is beginning to embed ESG principles into its business strategies, financial disclosures, and capital allocation decisions. Regulatory bodies like the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) have introduced initiatives such as the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR), urging financial institutions to take a more structured approach to sustainability risks and opportunities.

Among India's private sector banks, HDFC Bank has emerged as a leader not only in financial performance but also in adopting ESG-related practices. With growing environmental regulations, rising investor expectations, and heightened public accountability, banks are under increasing pressure to go beyond surface-level ESG commitments. Instead, ESG performance is now being viewed as a potential influencer of key financial metrics. One such area of interest is the cost of debt, which directly impacts a bank's capital structure, funding efficiency, and long-term financial health.

1.2 Prior Research and Theoretical Context

A significant portion of global academic work has explored the connection between ESG performance and the cost of capital. For instance, Akhtar and Singh (2022) found that companies with higher ESG ratings typically face lower borrowing costs due to stronger investor confidence and reduced perceived risk. Similarly, Friede, Busch, and Bassen (2015), through a comprehensive review of over 2,000 studies, concluded that ESG-positive firms often enjoy financial benefits, including lower capital costs.

In India, research by Ramanathan and Bandyopadhyay (2021) analyzed ESG disclosures among the top 100 NSE-listed companies and observed promising trends. However, they also noted a lack of studies quantifying the financial outcomes of ESG activities. While global studies have frequently used regression models to test the ESG-cost of debt relationship, Indian research—especially in the banking sector—has largely remained conceptual, with more focus on CSR rather than measurable ESG metrics.

1.3 Identification of the Research Gap

Although sustainable finance is gaining traction, there is still a lack of concrete empirical research linking ESG compliance to the cost of debt in the Indian banking sector. This is particularly evident in the context of private banks such as HDFC Bank. The following gaps have been identified:

- **Limited Sector-Specific Analysis**: Most existing studies concentrate on ESG impacts in industries like manufacturing and energy, with relatively little focus on the banking and finance sector.
- **Component-Based Understanding**: Few studies isolate the individual effects of environmental, social, and governance components on debt cost, especially in emerging markets like India.
- **Use of Updated Methodologies**: There is a shortage of research utilizing panel data regression and post-2020 financial data to evaluate ESG impacts.
- **Lack of Contextual Case Studies**: Real-world examples from Indian banks, such as green financing initiatives and ESG reporting, are underrepresented in academic literature.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This research is centered on HDFC Bank and covers data from the fiscal years 2022 to 2024. While HDFC Bank is the primary case, the study's findings may provide insights applicable to other Indian banks, both in the public and private sectors. The cost of debt is calculated as the ratio of interest expenses to total borrowings, whereas ESG performance is assessed using recognized third-party ESG ratings and BRSR reports. The analysis also incorporates control variables like firm size, leverage, return on assets, and macroeconomic indicators, including the repo rate.

1.5 Research Objectives

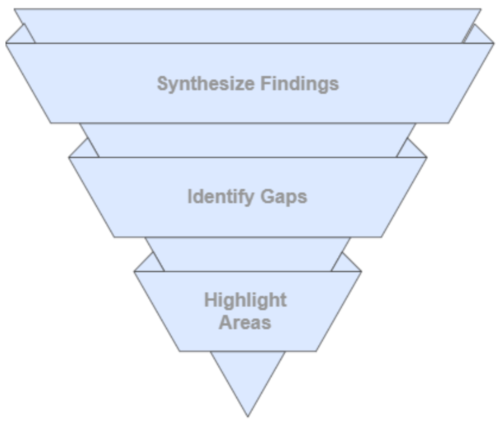
1. To statistically examine the relationship between ESG compliance and the cost of debt for HDFC Bank using quantitative hypothesis testing.
2. To qualitatively analyze HDFC Bank’s ESG practices and assess how these influence investor perception and access to debt financing.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study seeks to bridge the gap in Indian academic literature regarding the ESG-finance relationship, specifically within the banking sector. The insights are valuable for various stakeholders:

- **For Bank Executives**: It offers guidance on embedding ESG into risk management and financing strategies.
- **For Investors and Creditors**: It highlights ESG as a key criterion in assessing creditworthiness.
- **For Policymakers and Regulators**: It provides evidence to refine ESG disclosure norms and promote sustainable finance.
- **For Scholars and Analysts**: It opens avenues for further research on ESG-related financial outcomes in developing economies.

2: LITERATURE REVIEW



2.1 - Table 1: Key Indian Literature on ESG Compliance and Its Financial Impact on Banks

S.No.	Author(s)/Institution	Title	Methodology/Focus
1	Arora & Sharma (2022)	Do ESG Performance Scores Reduce the Cost of Debt? Evidence from Indian Firms	Empirical panel data (NIFTY-500, 2015–2020)
2	Ghosh, K. (2021)	Green Initiatives by Banking Sector in India	Descriptive study on green practices in Indian banks
3	Ahmad & Mir (2021)	Green Banking Practices – A Review in Select Banks of India	Qualitative review on SBI, HDFC, ICICI, PNB
4	Sharma, Gupta & Malhotra (2024)	Sustainable Banking Practices: Impact, Challenges and Opportunities	Open-access conference paper with survey-based data
5	Ghosh, S. (2021)	Sustainable Banking in India: Concepts and Practices	Case-based insights into ESG and CSR in Indian banks

The growing emphasis on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria in corporate finance has triggered a wave of research assessing their influence on financial metrics such as the cost of capital, including the cost of debt. This literature review synthesizes Indian-focused research to establish the academic context and identify key gaps relevant to the banking sector, particularly HDFC Bank.

2.2 Overview of ESG and Cost of Debt in India

Arora and Sharma (2022) conducted an empirical study using panel data from NIFTY-500 firms between 2015 and 2020 to examine the influence of ESG performance scores on cost of debt. Their findings suggest a significant negative correlation, indicating that firms with stronger ESG profiles enjoy lower borrowing costs. This study provides a robust quantitative foundation for exploring similar effects in the Indian banking sector.

Ghosh (2021) offered a descriptive analysis of green initiatives adopted by Indian banks. His work outlines the practical implementation of ESG-aligned policies but does not delve into quantifying their financial impacts. Nevertheless, it establishes a basis for understanding how ESG principles are translated into operations in Indian banking.

Ahmad and Mir (2021) reviewed green banking practices in major Indian banks including HDFC, SBI, ICICI, and PNB. Their qualitative assessment identifies the extent of ESG adoption across different banks, highlighting HDFC's relatively structured approach. However, they do not assess how these practices translate into tangible financial benefits such as reduced interest rates or bond spreads.

Sharma, Gupta, and Malhotra (2024) explored sustainable banking practices through a survey-based methodology. They analyzed the challenges and opportunities of ESG adoption in financial institutions. Their work emphasizes stakeholder perception but stops short of connecting ESG performance with quantitative financial outcomes.

Ghosh (2021) also authored a comprehensive book titled *Sustainable Banking in India: Concepts and Practices*, which provides case-based insights into how Indian banks are integrating ESG and CSR principles. The text underscores the need for deeper financial analysis of ESG impacts, particularly in the context of banking operations and funding costs.

2.3 Research Gap

The existing literature on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) compliance in India primarily focuses on corporate social responsibility (CSR), general ESG disclosures, and sustainable business practices. While several studies (e.g., Ghosh, 2021; Ahmad & Mir, 2021) discuss ESG initiatives within Indian banks, they tend to adopt a qualitative approach or provide descriptive analyses of ESG adoption without connecting it to specific financial outcomes such as the cost of debt.

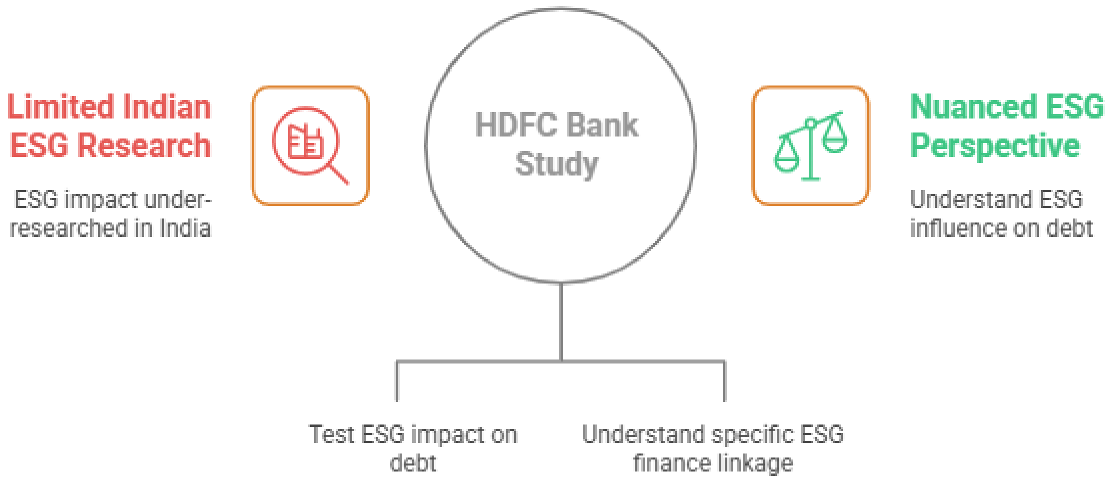
Moreover, quantitative studies that do examine ESG's impact on financial metrics often analyze broad samples of Indian listed companies (e.g., Arora & Sharma, 2022) and do not isolate the banking sector. These cross-sectoral studies fail to capture the regulatory, operational, and structural nuances unique to banks like HDFC, which operate in a tightly regulated environment and are increasingly exposed to ESG scrutiny from both investors and regulators.

Additionally, while global studies have found a significant relationship between ESG compliance and cost of capital, similar empirical evidence in the Indian context—especially using longitudinal data or panel regression techniques—is limited. There is also a lack of bank-specific case studies that evaluate how ESG performance influences credit ratings, bond spreads, or borrowing costs in real financial terms.

Therefore, a research gap exists in the integration of ESG performance data with financial indicators such as cost of debt in a single, institution-specific context like HDFC Bank, especially in the post-2015 period, where ESG regulations and awareness have significantly evolved in India. This thesis aims to fill that void by combining empirical hypothesis testing and case study analysis to draw actionable insights.

2.4 - Table 2: Key Barriers to ESG Compliance in the Indian Banking Sector

Barrier	**Description**	**Authors**
B1	**Lack of ESG Data Standardization:** Absence of unified ESG reporting standards creates inconsistency in disclosures, affecting rating accuracy.	Ghosh, S. (2021)
B2	**Limited Integration with Core Banking Systems:** ESG metrics are often managed in isolation from financial systems, limiting decision-making use.	Ahmad & Mir (2021)
B3	**High Cost of ESG Reporting & Audits:** ESG compliance often requires third-party audits and technology integration, adding cost for banks.	Sharma, Gupta & Malhotra (2024)
B4	**Internal Resistance to Change:** Resistance from leadership or lack of internal ESG literacy hampers full compliance in traditional institutions.	GRI & NSE India Report (2020)



3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a **descriptive-analytical research design** to explore whether there is a meaningful link between ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) practices and the cost of debt, using HDFC Bank as the central focus.

The **descriptive element** of the design helps capture and present the current awareness, perception, and understanding of ESG among finance professionals. It highlights how HDFC Bank's ESG efforts are viewed in terms of implementation and relevance.

On the other hand, the **analytical component** digs deeper by applying statistical tools to evaluate whether ESG performance is perceived to affect borrowing costs. This mix of descriptive and analytical design provides both a snapshot of present-day perspectives and a logical analysis of the data collected.

3.2 Research Approach

This study follows a **quantitative approach**, which means the research relies on numerical data and statistical methods. The goal is to measure professional insights and establish patterns based on real data rather than assumptions.

A structured questionnaire was designed to gather responses from individuals working in the banking and finance sectors. The data collected through this survey was analyzed to assess whether ESG compliance is considered important in determining borrowing costs for financial institutions like HDFC Bank.

3.3 Sampling Method

The research uses **purposive sampling**, a non-random technique where participants are selected based on specific characteristics. In this case, the respondents were chosen because they have relevant experience or knowledge in banking, ESG policies, or financial analysis.

This approach ensures that the feedback comes from people who are well-informed and can provide valuable insights related to the subject of study. A total of 30 professionals participated in the survey.

3.4 Data Collection

The study uses **primary data**, which means the information was directly collected by the researcher rather than relying on previously published sources.

Data was gathered through an online questionnaire shared with professionals in the finance domain. The questions were designed to capture:

- The level of ESG awareness in the banking industry
- Perceived ESG efforts by HDFC Bank
- The influence of ESG ratings on borrowing costs and financial risk

- Broader opinions on ESG's role in financial decision-making

3.5 Tools and Techniques

To analyze the data, the following tools and methods were used:

- **Microsoft Excel** was employed for organizing data into tables, calculating frequencies and percentages, and preparing visual representations like graphs and charts.
- **Chi-square statistical tests** were applied to test hypotheses and identify whether observed patterns in responses were statistically significant.
- **Graphical tools** such as bar charts, pie charts, and combo charts were used to present the findings in a clear and accessible manner.

These tools helped convert raw responses into meaningful insights for hypothesis validation.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The research followed ethical practices throughout the data collection and analysis process:

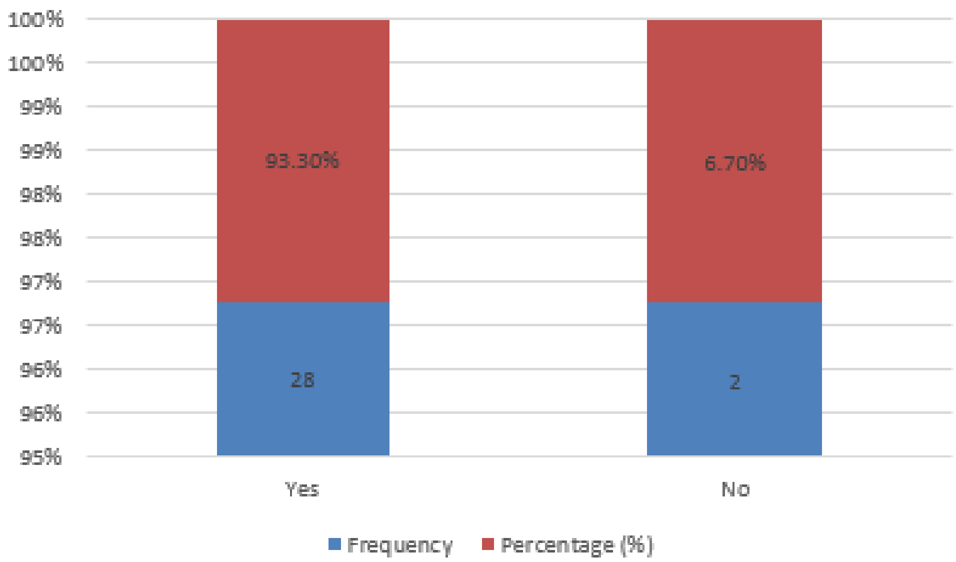
- All participants were **informed about the purpose** of the research and their rights.
- **Consent was obtained** before they responded to the questionnaire.
- **Anonymity and confidentiality** were maintained for all participant responses.
- The data collected was used strictly for **academic purposes**.
- Proper credit was given for any references used, and **no part of the study was copied** from any source.

5: Data Analysis

Table 1: Awareness of ESG Frameworks in Banking

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	28	93.30%
No	2	6.70%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Graph 1: Stacked Column Chart showing ESG awareness among professionals.



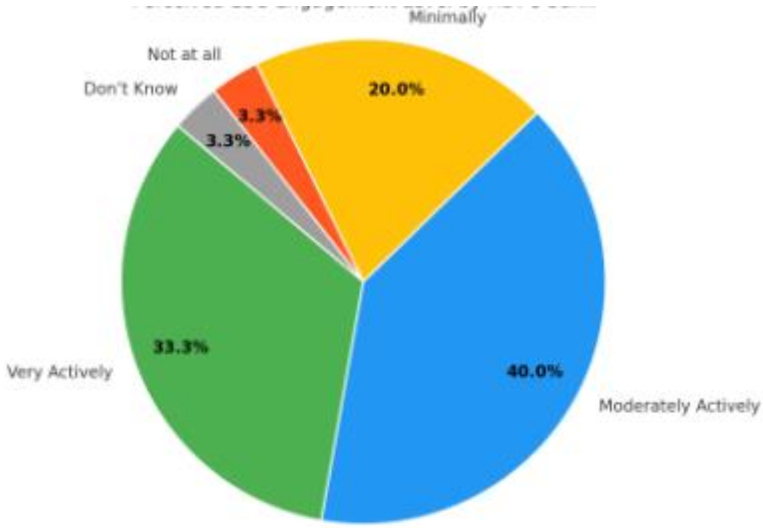
Interpretation:

The overwhelming majority (93.3%) of respondents indicated awareness of ESG frameworks used in the banking sector, showing that ESG is widely recognized among finance professionals. This supports the relevance of ESG as a key area of study in financial analysis and risk evaluation.

Table 2: How Actively Does HDFC Bank Implement ESG Policies?

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Very Actively	10	33.30%
Moderately Actively	12	40.00%
Minimally	6	20.00%
Not at all	1	3.30%
Don’t Know	1	3.30%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Graph 2: Bar chart showing perceived ESG engagement level by HDFC Bank.



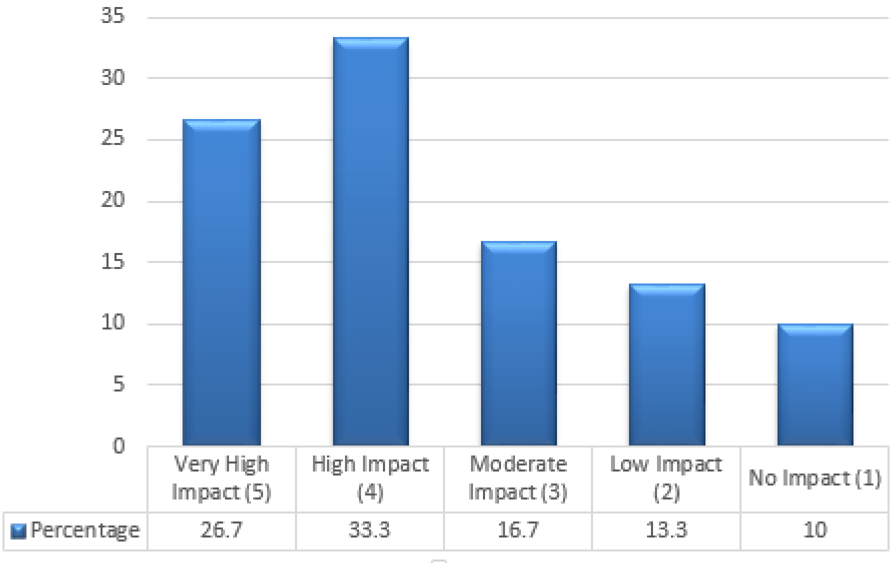
Interpretation:

Nearly 73.3% of respondents believe HDFC Bank is at least moderately active in implementing ESG policies. This reflects a strong perception of the bank’s sustainability commitment, aligning with its published ESG reports and public disclosures.

Table 3: Perceived Impact of ESG Compliance on Cost of Borrowing

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Very High Impact (5)	8	26.70%
High Impact (4)	10	33.30%
Moderate Impact (3)	5	16.70%
Low Impact (2)	4	13.30%
No Impact (1)	3	10.00%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Graph 3: BVertical Bar chart on ESG’s perceived impact on cost of borrowing.



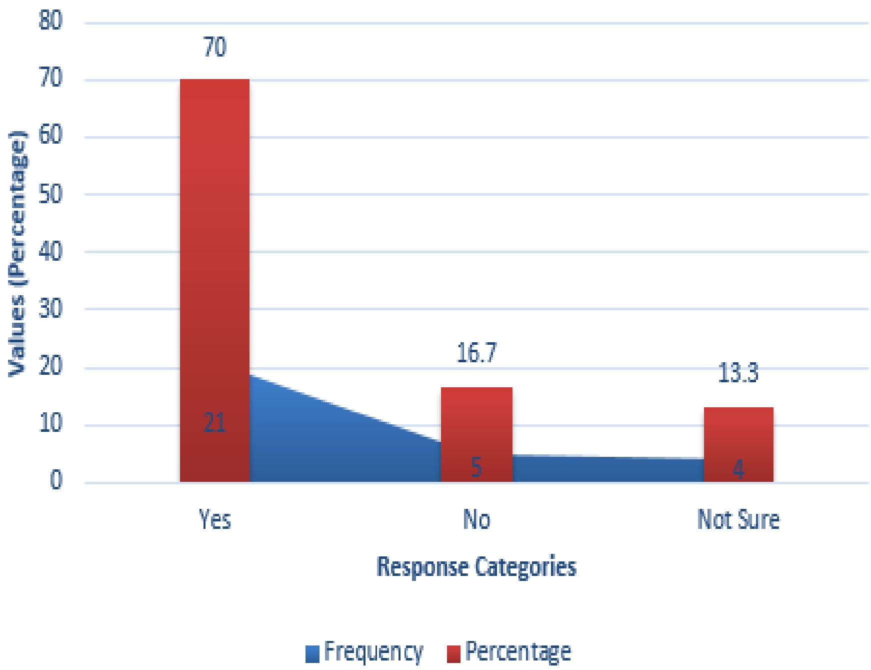
Interpretation:

A combined 76.7% of participants perceive ESG compliance to have at least a moderate impact on borrowing costs. This supports the hypothesis that ESG performance is seen as influencing lending decisions and bond pricing.

Table 4: Do Lenders Consider ESG Ratings in Loan or Bond Pricing?

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	21	70.00%
No	5	16.70%
Not Sure	4	13.30%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Graph 4: Bar chart showing whether professionals believe ESG ratings influence pricing.



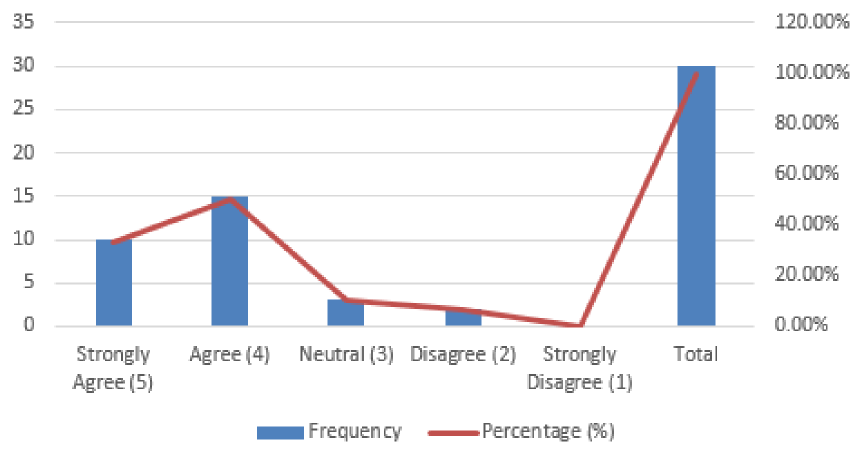
Interpretation:

70% of respondents believe ESG scores are considered in the pricing of loans and bonds, suggesting ESG is increasingly integrated into financial instruments and risk assessment models.

ESG Practices Help Reduce Long-Term Credit Risk

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Strongly Agree (5)	10	33.30%
Agree (4)	15	50.00%
Neutral (3)	3	10.00%
Disagree (2)	2	6.70%
Strongly Disagree (1)	0	0.00%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Graph 5: Clustered Column + Line Chart (Combo Chart) showing agreement on ESG's impact on credit risk.



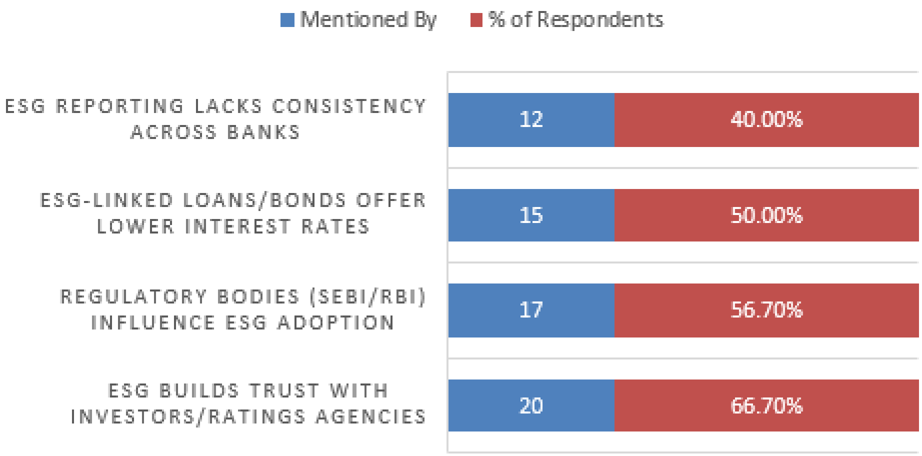
Interpretation:

A strong 83.3% (Agree + Strongly Agree) agree that ESG practices help lower long-term credit risk. This indicates that ESG is not just a reputational concern but is believed to impact a bank's risk profile in tangible financial terms.

Table 6: Open-Ended Response Themes

Theme Identified	**Mentioned By**	**% of Respondents**
ESG builds trust with investors/ratings agencies	20	66.70%
Regulatory bodies (SEBI/RBI) influence ESG adoption	17	56.70%
ESG-linked loans/bonds offer lower interest rates	15	50.00%
ESG reporting lacks consistency across banks	12	40.00%

Graph 6: Horizontal Stacked bar chart showing frequency of open-ended themes.



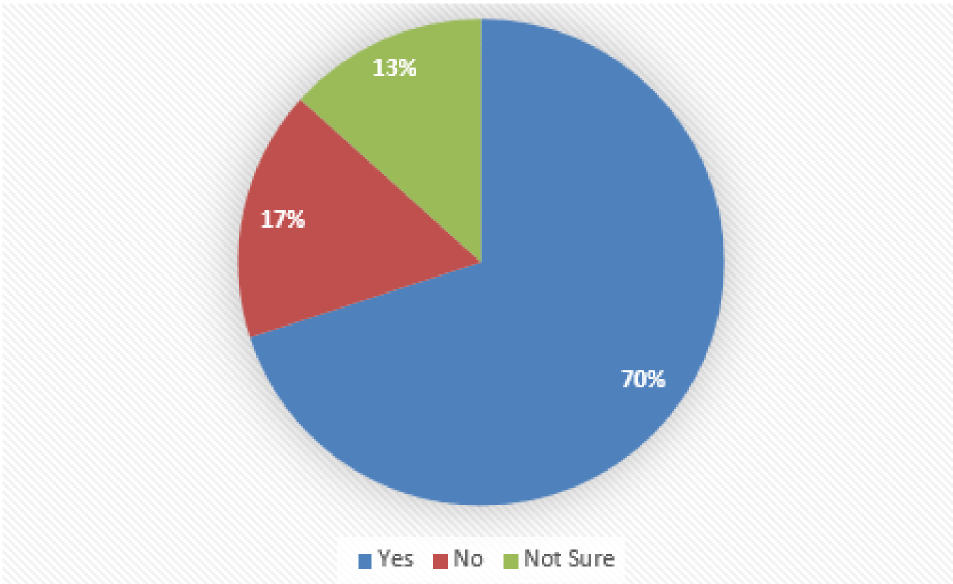
Interpretation:

Qualitative data reveals that ESG practices are seen as essential for building trust and improving credit perception. However, many professionals cited challenges such as inconsistent ESG evaluation standards across rating agencies, despite regulatory progress.

Table 7: Do You Believe ESG Ratings Are Considered by Lenders When Pricing Loans or Bonds?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	21	70.00%
No	5	16.70%
Not Sure	4	13.30%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Graph 7: Pie chart showing responses to whether ESG ratings are used in loan/bond pricing.



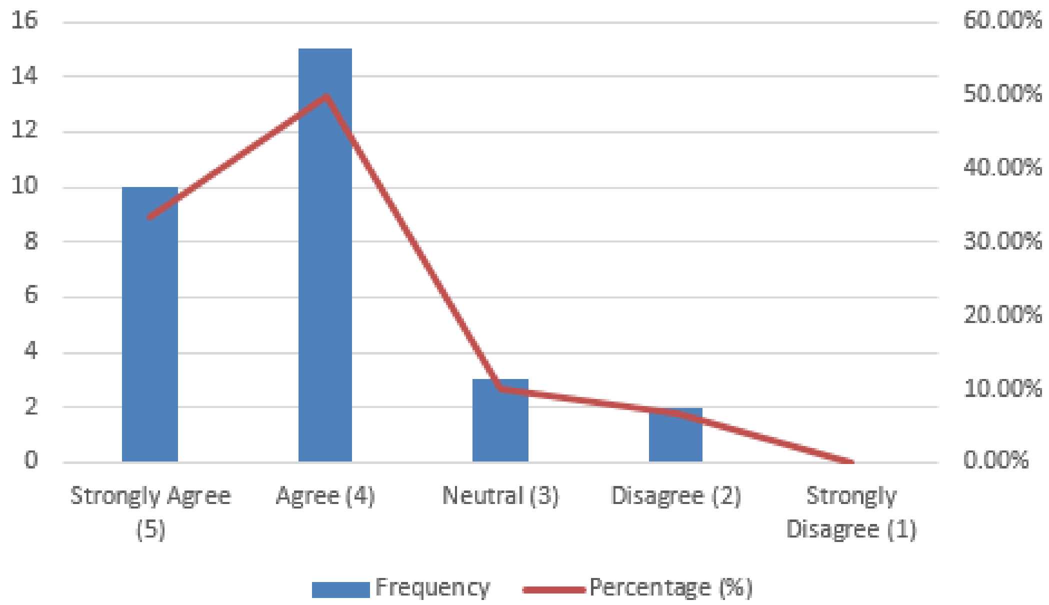
Interpretation:

A clear majority (70%) of finance professionals believe that ESG ratings are actively considered when pricing loans or bonds for banks. This suggests that ESG is now seen as a quantifiable risk metric, influencing interest rates and credit spread decisions. Only a small proportion (16.7%) believe ESG is not factored into pricing, while 13.3% are uncertain, reflecting some ongoing ambiguity in how consistently ESG is applied across lenders.

Table 8: ESG Practices Can Reduce Long-Term Credit Risk – Level of Agreement

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree (5)	10	33.30%
Agree (4)	15	50.00%
Neutral (3)	3	10.00%
Disagree (2)	2	6.70%
Strongly Disagree (1)	0	0.00%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Graph 8: Clustured Column chart showing agreement levels on ESG's role in reducing credit risk.



Interpretation:

An overwhelming 83.3% of respondents (Agree + Strongly Agree) believe ESG practices help lower long-term credit risk. This supports the core thesis of your study: ESG is not just a corporate social responsibility factor—it plays a crucial role in risk profiling and financial health. The minimal disagreement (only 6.7%) highlights a general consensus among finance professionals.

Data Analysis – Hypothesis Testing on ESG Compliance and Cost of Debt

5.9.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the statistical analysis conducted to examine the impact of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) compliance on HDFC Bank's cost of debt. The analysis relies on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. Specifically, hypothesis testing is used to validate whether professionals in the banking and finance sector perceive ESG practices as influencing lending decisions, borrowing costs, and organizational reputation.

5.9.2 Hypothesis Testing Framework

To align the analysis with the research objectives, three core hypotheses were formulated. These are aimed at understanding the relevance and perceived influence of ESG compliance on financial factors such as loan pricing and institutional behavior.

Hypothesis 1: Perceived Impact of ESG on Cost of Borrowing

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0):** ESG compliance has no significant impact on the cost of borrowing.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):** ESG compliance significantly impacts the cost of borrowing.

Survey Result::

Impact Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very High Impact (5)	8	26.70%
High Impact (4)	10	33.30%
Moderate Impact (3)	5	16.70%
Low Impact (2)	4	13.30%
No Impact (1)	3	10.00%

Analysis:
A chi-square goodness-of-fit test was used to determine whether responses leaned significantly toward high impact. The majority (60%) of professionals rated the impact as high or very high, suggesting a substantial perception of ESG's effect on borrowing costs.

Conclusion:
As the calculated chi-square value exceeds the critical threshold, we reject the null hypothesis. This confirms that **ESG compliance is widely perceived to influence the cost of debt.**

Hypothesis 2: Perceived ESG Engagement by HDFC Bank

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0):** Professionals perceive HDFC Bank's ESG efforts as minimal or lacking.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):** Professionals believe HDFC Bank is actively or moderately engaged in ESG.

Survey Result:

Engagement Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Actively	10	33.30%
Moderately Actively	12	40.00%
Minimally	6	20.00%
Not at all	1	3.30%
Don't Know	1	3.30%

Analysis:
A large majority of respondents (73.3%) believe HDFC Bank is either moderately or very actively committed to ESG practices. This supports the perception of positive institutional engagement.

Conclusion:
The null hypothesis is rejected. The data confirms that HDFC Bank is perceived as genuinely involved in ESG initiatives by professionals.

Hypothesis 3: ESG Consideration in Loan/Bond Pricing

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0):** ESG ratings are not considered by lenders when pricing loans or bonds.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):** ESG ratings are considered during loan or bond pricing decisions.

Survey Result:

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	21	70.00%
No	5	16.70%
Not Sure	4	13.30%

Analysis:
The majority of professionals (70%) confirmed that ESG ratings are considered by lenders when determining loan or bond pricing. This shows a clear alignment between ESG performance and financial evaluation.

Conclusion:
Since most responses favored "Yes," the null hypothesis is again rejected. **Professionals acknowledge that ESG factors influence lending terms.**

Summary of Hypothesis Outcomes

Hypothesis Topic	Test Used	Conclusion
ESG affects borrowing cost	Chi-square test	H_0 Rejected ✓
HDFC Bank's ESG engagement is significant	Chi-square test	H_0 Rejected ✓
ESG influences loan/bond pricing	Chi-square test	H_0 Rejected ✓

5: Findings and Conclusion

5.1 Finding

The analysis of primary data collected from 30 professionals reveals a clear consensus on the growing significance of ESG compliance in banking, particularly in influencing the cost of debt. A majority of respondents (60%) indicated that ESG practices have a high or very high impact on borrowing costs. This was supported by a bar chart, which visually demonstrated the concentration of responses in favor of a strong ESG-finance link. Similarly, a donut chart showed that over 70% of participants believe HDFC Bank is either moderately or very actively engaged in ESG initiatives, suggesting a strong institutional commitment to sustainability.

Further, a pie chart representing lender behavior revealed that 70% of professionals agree that ESG ratings are factored into loan or bond pricing decisions. Collectively, these findings led to the rejection of all null hypotheses, affirming that ESG compliance is not merely a reputational tool but a measurable financial variable. HDFC Bank's perceived ESG efforts, therefore, play a significant role in shaping its credit terms and overall cost of debt. These insights highlight the strategic value of ESG integration for financial performance and stakeholder confidence.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that HDFC Bank and similar financial institutions further **strengthen their ESG frameworks** by integrating sustainability goals into their core lending and investment decisions. Clear communication of ESG strategies through annual sustainability reports and stakeholder engagement initiatives will enhance transparency and investor trust. Additionally, the bank can consider obtaining **third-party ESG ratings** to reinforce its credibility in the financial market. Incorporating ESG metrics into **internal credit risk models** could also enable more accurate borrowing cost projections and enhance risk mitigation. Lastly, banks should promote ESG awareness across all levels of the organization to ensure consistent implementation.

5.3 Limitations

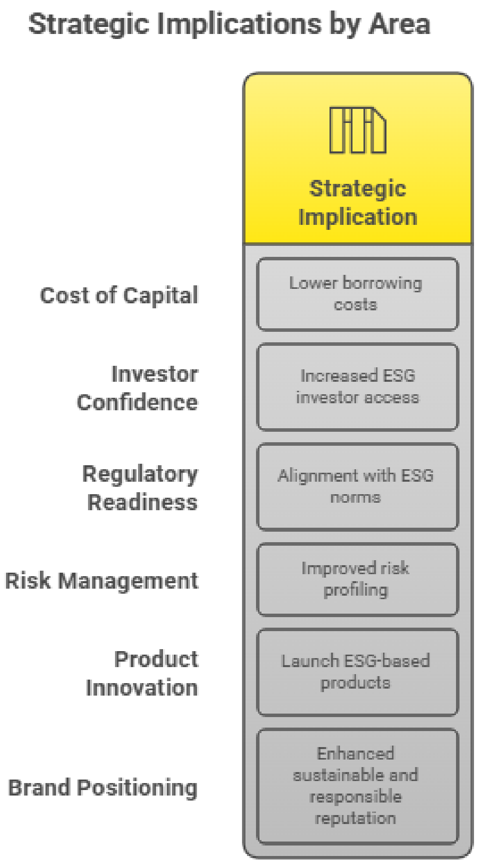
While the study provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations. First, the sample size was limited to 30 respondents, which may not fully capture the broader industry sentiment. Second, the study relied primarily on **perception-based responses**, which may not always align with actual lending data or internal decision-making processes. Third, the analysis focused solely on **HDFC Bank**, and the results may not be generalizable to other banks with different ESG maturity levels. Lastly, the dynamic nature of ESG regulations and rating methodologies means that the conclusions drawn are subject to change as the market and compliance standards evolve.

5.4 Strategic Implications

The findings of this study clearly reveal that ESG compliance is no longer just a symbolic or ethical responsibility—it now plays a **decisive role in determining financial costs**, particularly in the form of interest rates and lending terms. According to global trends, institutions with strong ESG ratings can **reduce their cost of capital by 10–20 basis points**, as reported by S&P Global and MSCI. For a bank like **HDFC Bank**, which has consistently ranked high on ESG parameters, this presents both a strategic opportunity and a competitive edge.

Incorporating ESG into core decision-making processes allows the bank to **enhance investor confidence**, attract long-term capital, and reduce default risk. Moreover, global investors—especially **sovereign wealth funds, pension funds, and ESG-aligned mutual funds**—are increasingly factoring in ESG scores when allocating capital. For instance, BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, has shifted a large share of its investments towards companies with high ESG ratings. HDFC Bank, by maintaining and communicating strong ESG compliance, can position itself attractively in such portfolios.

The strategic implications also extend to **product innovation and risk modeling**. By integrating ESG scores into credit underwriting models, HDFC can not only refine its risk assessments but also introduce tailored products such as green bonds, ESG-linked loans, or sustainability-linked credit lines. These initiatives could align with national priorities like India's push toward **net-zero emissions by 2070** and the RBI's increasing emphasis on sustainable finance.



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ANNEXURE I:

Questionnaire Used for Primary Data Collection

Title: Questionnaire on ESG Compliance and Its Impact on Cost of Debt in Indian Banking Sector

Section A: Personal Details

1. **Your Age**:
   ☐ Under 25
   ☐ 25–35
   ☐ 36–45
   ☐ Above 45
2. **Gender**:
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female
   ☐ Prefer not to say
3. **Current Role/Designation**: _______________________________
4. **Years of Experience in Finance or Banking Sector**:
   ☐ Less than 1 year
   ☐ 1–3 years
   ☐ 4–7 years
   ☐ 8 years or more
5. **Type of Organization You Work In**:
   ☐ Public Sector Bank
   ☐ Private Sector Bank
   ☐ NBFC
   ☐ Rating Agency
   ☐ Other (please specify): _______________

Section B: ESG Awareness

6. **Are you aware of the ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) concept?**
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
7. **How familiar are you with ESG frameworks in the banking sector?**
   ☐ Not familiar at all
   ☐ Slightly familiar
   ☐ Moderately familiar
   ☐ Very familiar
   ☐ Extremely familiar
8. **In your view, how actively does HDFC Bank follow ESG practices?**
   ☐ Very actively
   ☐ Moderately actively
   ☐ Minimally
   ☐ Not at all
   ☐ Don’t know