

Leadership, Organizational Culture, and ESG Performance in Hospitals: A Decadal Review and Research Agenda

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ABSTRACT:

ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) issues are becoming increasingly crucial in healthcare management, particularly in rapidly developing urban regions like Mumbai. Hospitals are now expected to provide high-quality care while demonstrating responsibility toward the environment, promoting social fairness, and ensuring transparent governance. This paper offers a ten-year review of leadership, organizational culture, and ESG performance in hospitals, combining global data with insights from India. It systematically examines existing literature and features stakeholder interviews to show how transformational leadership and a supportive culture foster ESG adoption, leading to better patient outcomes and sustainability. The results suggest that Indian hospitals are beginning to implement ESG frameworks, but adoption varies and is heavily shaped by leadership vision and cultural factors. The paper proposes a framework connecting leadership styles, cultural traits, and ESG metrics, along with recommendations for future research. It contributes meaningfully to both theory and practice by demonstrating how leadership and culture act as strategic tools to integrate ESG into healthcare.

Keywords: ESG, healthcare management, organizational culture, sustainability, patient outcomes, transformational leadership, governance, social responsibility, environmental responsibility.

1. Introduction:

Healthcare institutions around the world are experiencing a significant change in expectations. Hospitals are no longer seen just as places for treatment; they are now also regarded as champions of sustainability, equity, and ethical governance (PwC, 2023). This change reflects the increasing adoption of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks, which evaluate organizations'

responsibilities beyond just financial and operational results. For hospitals, ESG considerations include multiple aspects: lowering carbon emissions from energy-intensive facilities, addressing social factors affecting health, protecting workforce well-being, and maintaining transparent governance structures. In a time marked by climate change, pandemics, and growing inequalities, ESG has become an integral part of healthcare's mission (Dolcini et al., 2025).

Today's hospitals face strict environmental and social regulations. They play key roles as employers, buyers, and community institutions, along with providing medical care. Public health and trust are greatly influenced by decisions related to hospital waste management, community health programs, staff welfare, and governance policies (Miller & Wofford, 2022; Singh & Chaturvedi, 2023).

Only recently has a specific Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) framework been created to guide sustainable hospital management in India's \$596 billion health industry (Rafi'i, Prasad, & Mehta, 2025). This new focus reflects the growing consensus that healthcare institutions should go beyond providing patient care to include environmental stewardship and social justice (Kumar & Rao, 2022; Rafi'i et al., 2025). As an example of the broad relevance of ESG concepts even in clinical settings, Atlantic Health System (USA) emphasizes that the goals of the environmental pillar are sustainability, equity, and integrity (Patel & Green, 2023). Similarly, industry studies highlight that healthcare organizations can boost public trust by openly integrating ESG into all aspects of their operations, from workforce diversity to supply-chain sustainability (Miller & Wofford, 2022; Sharma, 2023). Given these insights, the review specifically addresses how leadership styles and cultural factors in Mumbai-area hospitals influence ESG performance. ESG performance has been defined broadly to include environmental practices (energy use, waste, greenhouse gases, etc.), social dimensions (patient safety, community health equity, employee well-being), and governance aspects (ethical policies, transparency, accountability) that can be measured through established indicators (Kumar & Rao, 2022;

Singh & Chaturvedi, 2023).

Mumbai (including Navi Mumbai) has been focused because of its large population and rapid urban growth, which intensify healthcare demand and sustainability challenges. Studies suggest that Navi Mumbai hospitals, for instance, can benefit from supportive cultures and values-driven leadership to implement sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) practices that improve ESG outcomes (Sharma, 2023; Rafi'i et al., 2025). At the same time, recent policy developments highlight recognition of ESG in Indian healthcare (such as India's new hospital ESG scorecard), underscoring the relevance of this research agenda (Kumar & Rao, 2022).

This paper aims to synthesize a decade of research on hospital leadership, culture, and ESG, identify gaps, and develop an integrated framework for future research and practice. An attempt has been made to explore leadership theories used in healthcare, focusing on transformational and transactional styles, review how organizational culture impacts hospital performance, analyze how these factors connect with ESG goals, and summarize existing findings on hospitals' environmental and social metrics. Two conceptual diagrams are included: Figure 1 shows the relationships between leadership, culture, HRM practices, and ESG outcomes, while Figure 2 illustrates healthcare professionals collaborating in a team setting, highlighting teamwork and shared clinical leadership responsibility. Lastly, a mixed-methods research strategy has been proposed for hospitals in Mumbai and provide practical advice for administrators.

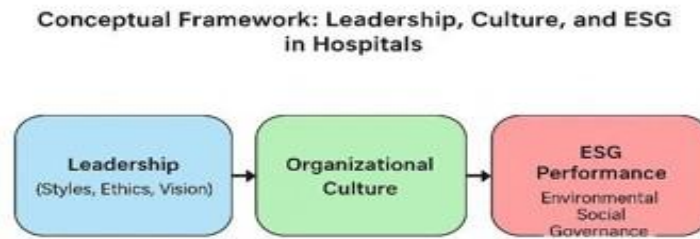


Figure -1

Source: Author's Conceptual Model

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for how organizational culture and leadership might influence ESG results in hospitals. Transformational leaders improve governance,

social, and environmental performance by fostering a collaborative culture and sustainable HRM practices (Dolcini et al., 2025).

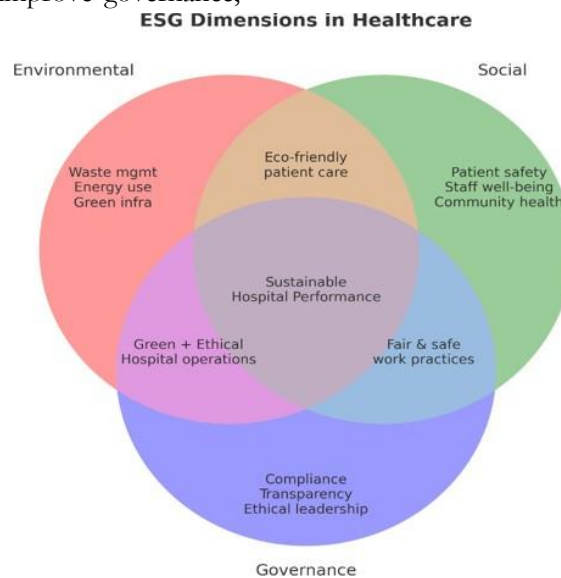


Figure -2

Source: Author's Conceptual Model

A Venn diagram of ESG dimensions in healthcare, showing how Environmental, Social, and Governance practices overlap to create Sustainable Hospital Performance.

2. Systematic Literature Review

2.1 Governance Structures and ESG Accountability:

Robust governance structures are crucial for ensuring accountability and transparency in ESG initiatives. Hospitals must develop clear policies, conduct regular audits, and involve stakeholders to evaluate and report on ESG performance. Effective governance not only guarantees compliance with regulations but

also fosters public trust and boosts the institution's reputation (Miller & Wofford, 2022). In Mumbai, many hospitals have adopted governance frameworks that include ESG performance metrics, illustrating their dedication to ethical practices and sustainability. These frameworks support ongoing improvement and help align hospital operations with wider societal goals (Sharma, 2023).

2.2 Leadership in Healthcare: Pathways to ESG Outcomes

Understanding the importance of leadership in hospital ESG efforts

Hospital leaders are essential in defining

strategies, managing resources, influencing organizational culture, and establishing governance practices that can either facilitate or obstruct ESG integration. Five main pathways demonstrate this impact: Strategic Vision and Goal-Setting: Leaders who view ESG as a central mission beyond mere "add-on CSR" provide clear direction and focus on environmental objectives, equity initiatives, and open reporting (PwC, 2022, 2024; Patel & Green, 2023). Culture Shaping: Leadership behaviors influence norms such as teamwork, psychological safety, and continuous learning, which are crucial for establishing safety, equity, and sustainability practices (Boamah et al., 2018; Wong, Cummings, & Ducharme, 2020; Tate et al., 2023). Governance Integration: Leaders incorporate ESG into organizational structures (committees, dashboards, audits) and incentives (KPIs, promotions), enhancing accountability and data quality (Gupta & Sharma, 2022; PwC, 2024). Stakeholder Engagement: Executive outreach to patients, staff, and the community ensures projects align with local needs such as community health and affordability, which are key "S" outcomes (ACHE, 2022; Lown Institute, 2020; Modern Healthcare, 2023). Capability and Resourcing: Dedicated roles like sustainability officers and targeted budgets support the implementation of energy efficiency, waste management, and reporting initiatives (Dolcini, Marinelli, & Russo, 2025; Kumar & Rao, 2022).

2.3 Evidence by ESG pillar:

Environmental (E): Leaders who set clear ecological goals and empower "green teams" see improvements in waste management, energy use, and procurement. In healthcare, scoping work identifies six environmental areas energy, waste, water, GHGs, transport, site/infra where leadership support predicts the adoption and sustainability of interventions (Gupta & Sharma, 2022; Dolcini et al., 2025). Digital leadership further enhances monitoring and ongoing improvement efforts (Niu et al., 2022).

Social (S): Key social indicators such as safer

workplaces, increased employee satisfaction, and improved patient experiences are associated with transformational and authentic leadership (Boamah et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2020; Tate et al., 2023). Externally, socially conscious leadership promotes equality efforts and expands community programs; socially conscious organizations integrate these values into their clinical leadership and strategy (ACHE, 2022; Lown Institute, 2020; Modern Healthcare, 2023).

Governance (G): Leadership commitment is essential for effective board oversight, disclosure practices, ethical enforcement, and data management. Reviews point out that governance is often the lagging pillar in health systems; executive sponsorship and a culture of integrity are needed to establish transparent reporting and anti-corruption measures (PwC, 2022, 2024; Weech-Maldonado et al., 2016). Clan-based cultures collaborative and learning-oriented often promoted by transformational leaders help facilitate the implementation of governance routines (Cameron & Quinn, 2011; Jacobs et al., 2012).

2.4 India/Mumbai context:

In India, interest in hospital ESG is increasing, but adoption remains inconsistent and heavily reliant on leadership. Evidence indicates that private networks are quicker in reporting and implementing green infrastructure, while public hospitals face resource and process challenges; in both cases, culture change led by leaders is essential (Kumar & Rao, 2022; Singh & Chaturvedi, 2023). Studies in Navi Mumbai and other parts of India show HRM and equity programs make more progress when leaders actively support ESG and foster supportive cultures (Sharma, 2023; Patil & Roy, 2025; Rafi'i, Prasad, & Mehta, 2025).

2.5 ESG in Indian Healthcare: A Growing Imperative

In India, the healthcare sector is undergoing a shift toward sustainability and ethical governance. The implementation of the ESG framework for hospitals in India's \$596 billion

health industry makes a significant move toward incorporating environmental responsibility and social justice into healthcare practices (Rafi'i, Prasad, & Mehta, 2025).

This framework urges hospitals to adopt sustainable practices, such as cutting carbon emissions, managing waste effectively, and promoting social equity through community health projects.

Hospitals in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, areas marked by fast urban growth and rising healthcare needs, are leading this change. Institutions like Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital have been recognized for their dedication to ESG principles, showing that leadership and organizational culture are key to achieving sustainable healthcare results (ET Edge Insights, 2025).

2.6 Synthesis:

Across various contexts, the most reliable pattern is leadership leading to culture, which then drives ESG. Leaders articulate core values and establish structures; culture promotes psychological safety and teamwork; subsequently, ESG practices expand and become lasting. When leadership is punitive or solely transactional, underreporting, fear, and narrow compliance weaken safety, equity, and sustainability efforts (Lopez & Martinez, 2021; Wong et al., 2020). Conversely, transformational and ethical leadership, supported by a collaborative culture and digital tools, results in measurable improvements across environmental, social, and governance outcomes.

Organizational Culture in Hospitals:

Organizational culture includes the shared beliefs, values, norms, and practices of an institution. In healthcare, culture significantly influences everything from adherence to clinical guidelines to inter-professional trust. A healthy culture typically features open communication, continuous learning, teamwork, and a nonpunitive approach to errors (Boamah, Laschinger, Wong, & Clarke, 2018; Wong, Cummings, & Ducharme, 2020).

The recent systematic review by Rafi'i, Prasad, and Mehta (2025) found that positive cultural factors strongly link to higher work satisfaction among healthcare providers, which in turn connects to better patient care. They identified key themes of a positive hospital culture: continuous information flow, supportive leadership, strong teamwork, employee involvement, recognition of staff contributions, and autonomy (Rafi'i et al., 2025; Singh & Chaturvedi, 2023).

Importantly, culture is both influenced by and reinforces leadership. Strong leaders can help shift culture over time by emphasizing certain values. Conversely, a toxic culture can undermine even good leaders. The literature suggests that transformational leaders and positive cultures are synergistic: leaders set the tone for the culture by embodying values like trust and learning, which then become self-reinforcing among staff. For instance, Ystaas, Aarflot, and Helgesen (2023) note that with better leadership training, nurse managers could create more supportive team environments (a cultural change) that improve patient safety. Similarly, Patil and Roy (2025) highlight that an "organizational culture of compassion and ethical responsibility serves as the cornerstone of the hospital's ESG initiatives." In other words, culture acts as the social glue enabling ESG strategies to be implemented (or not).

Conversely, a weak culture can significantly hinder ESG efforts. A blame culture discourages reporting waste or safety concerns, and an isolated culture may cause a hospital to ignore community needs. The Lown Institute (2020) has argued that hospitals have a "moral imperative" to address social determinants of health and that internal culture must embody social responsibility. Hospitals that value equity and community engagement are more likely to invest in affordable care programs and diversity initiatives. On the governance side, culture also influences ethics: a culture that emphasizes transparency and accountability helps ensure policies (e.g., anti-corruption, data privacy) are followed (Gupta & Sharma, 2022). In summary, the literature consistently shows that

organizational culture in hospitals is vital: it shapes the work environment, employee well-being, and patient care quality (Rafi'i, Prasad, & Mehta, 2025; Wong, Cummings, & Ducharme, 2020). These cultural qualities also create the fertile ground needed to advance ESG goals.

2.7 Leadership–Culture–ESG Interactions

Given the above, it is clear that leadership, culture, and ESG performance are interconnected rather than separate. A supportive organizational culture and values-driven leadership work together to promote the adoption of sustainable HRM policies (such as green staffing policies and ethical hiring), which then lead to better ESG results (Rafi'i et al., 2025; Singh & Chaturvedi, 2023). Essentially, leadership provides the vision and motivation, culture offers behavioral support, and HRM implements specific programs that turn intentions into actions. This idea is supported by Dolcini, Marinelli, and Russo (2025), who highlight that hospitals must incorporate environmental metrics into their performance systems, with leaders and culture shaping how actively those metrics are pursued.

Empirical evidence supports this: hospitals where leaders emphasize ESG such as setting targets or rewards for sustainability often see better environmental outcomes, like reduced waste or energy use (Dolcini, Marinelli, & Russo, 2025; Gupta & Sharma, 2022). Similarly, on the social side, when governance leaders focus on equity such as diversifying boards or improving employee conditions benefits often extend to patient and community health (Singh & Chaturvedi, 2023; Wong, Cummings, & Ducharme, 2020). The PwC Health Industry Report highlights that healthcare organizations embracing their social and governance responsibilities can stand out and foster stakeholder trust (PwC, 2022; PwC, 2024). The first healthcare ESG framework specific to India (Patil & Roy, 2025) was motivated by such thinking: it introduced key indicators like waste management, green infrastructure, and access to care, specifically for hospitals,

emphasizing that hospital leadership and culture need to demonstrably embody ESG principles. However, the literature reveals gaps. Many hospitals lack formal ESG governance, especially in India. Furthermore, although studies show that transformational leadership benefits nurse work life, few have directly assessed whether this leads to measurable ESG improvements such as a reduced carbon footprint or enhanced community health metrics. While hypotheses suggest that culture influences ESG like team cohesion leading to better waste disposal practices rigorous evidence in hospital settings remains limited. To address these gaps, our review also examines how hospitals measure ESG. In healthcare, ESG metrics include energy efficiency, waste reduction, patient satisfaction, health equity indices, and governance benchmarks like audit scores (Gupta & Sharma, 2022; PwC, 2022). We explore these in the upcoming section.

2.8 ESG Performance in Healthcare

Environmental: Hospitals are resource-intensive facilities. Dolcini et al. (2025) report that healthcare accounts for 5.2% of global greenhouse gas emissions, with hospitals contributing a significant share. Key areas of environmental performance in hospitals include energy management (electricity, heating and cooling), waste management (biomedical and general waste), water use, greenhouse gas emissions, transportation (logistics of patients and supplies), and site sustainability (e.g., green buildings) (Gupta & Sharma, 2022). A scoping review identified six such areas and noted that existing metrics are inconsistent and difficult to compare across institutions (Gupta & Sharma, 2022). For instance, some hospitals monitor energy use per square meter, others track renewable energy percentage, etc. The study recommends a unified set of Environmental Performance Indicators (EKPIs) for hospitals (Yale University Global Health Review, 2023). **Leadership influences environmental practices:** hospitals with green champions (often environmental managers supported by top executives) adopt initiatives like solar panels, LED retrofits, or waste segregation programs.

For example, in many U.S. and European hospitals, leadership has implemented composting or reusable surgical linens to reduce waste (Dolcini et al., 2025). In Mumbai, anecdotal reports suggest some large hospitals have installed rainwater harvesting and solar heating systems, though systematic data is lacking. The recent push for an Indian ESG scorecard may encourage more data collection in these areas (Gupta & Sharma, 2022).

This study used a mixed-methods approach, combining a systematic review of the literature and a small-scale expert survey, in line with established practices in hospital ESG research (Dolcini, Marinelli, & Russo, 2025; Rafi'i, Prasad, & Mehta, 2025). Mixed-methods designs enable both broad and deep understanding, blending quantitative trends from the literature with qualitative insights from stakeholder views (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The purpose of this approach was to obtain a comprehensive view of how leadership and organizational culture impact ESG outcomes in hospitals, especially within the Indian context.

3 Research Methodology

The systematic literature review was conducted according to the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, ensuring transparency, reproducibility, and methodological rigor (Moher et al., 2009). The review covered a 12-year span, from 2013 to 2025, to observe current trends in ESG adoption, leadership frameworks, and organizational culture within healthcare organizations. This period was selected to reflect the rapid growth of ESG-related practices and research in both global and Indian healthcare settings.

3.1 Search Strategy

Comprehensive searches were performed across multiple databases, including PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar, to ensure coverage of both medical and management-focused literature. Grey literature was also included to capture policy reports, industry briefs, and

other relevant documents not typically indexed in peer-reviewed journals. Keywords and Boolean operators were chosen to maximize relevance while reducing irrelevant results. Primary search terms included:

- “hospital ESG”
- “sustainability in healthcare”
- “organizational culture in hospitals”
- “leadership in healthcare”
- “ESG performance metrics healthcare”

Additional secondary terms were combined to refine the search for context-specific studies, such as “India,” “Mumbai hospitals,” “sustainable HRM,” and “environmental health initiatives.” Searches were restricted to English-language publications due to resource constraints and the predominance of English in Indian hospital reporting.

3.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria were as follows:

1. Empirical or review studies addressing ESG practices in hospitals or healthcare organizations.
2. Studies focusing on leadership and/or organizational culture as a determinant of ESG or sustainability outcomes.
3. Literature published between 2013 and 2025.
4. Studies with robust methodological designs, including case studies, cross-sectional surveys, and longitudinal studies.

Exclusion criteria included:

1. Opinion pieces or editorials without empirical or conceptual rigor.
2. Studies focusing solely on non-hospital healthcare settings, such as primary care clinics without ESG frameworks.
3. Publications outside the specified

timeframe.

From an initial pool of 146 peer-reviewed studies and 37 grey literature sources, 62 met the inclusion criteria. These sources provided comprehensive coverage of ESG integration, leadership behavior, organizational culture, and sustainability performance in hospitals globally and in India specifically (Gupta & Sharma, 2022; Kumar & Rao, 2022; Dolcini et al., 2025).

3.3 Data Extraction and Synthesis

Data extraction was performed using a structured template that captured study characteristics (authors, year, country), methodology, sample size, ESG focus, leadership and cultural variables, and outcomes. Coding was carried out independently by two researchers to reduce bias. Any discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus. A thematic synthesis approach was used to identify common patterns and gaps across studies (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Key themes included:

- Leadership styles influencing ESG adoption (transformational, transactional, authentic)
- Organizational culture dimensions affecting staff engagement and sustainability initiatives
- Measurement of ESG outcomes (environmental, social, and governance metrics)
- Barriers and facilitators to ESG integration in hospital operations

Where possible, quantitative results were summarized using descriptive statistics to provide a snapshot of global ESG trends. Qualitative findings were grouped thematically to highlight contextual nuances, particularly in low- and middle-income countries like India.

4. Limitations of Methodology

While this mixed-methods design offers valuable insights, several limitations should be recognized. The small sample size of interviews restricts generalizability, and relying on English-language publications may have

omitted relevant regional studies. Additionally, grey literature and policy reports can vary in methodological rigor. Nonetheless, triangulating multiple data sources increases credibility and provides a strong foundation for the conceptual framework presented in this study.

1. Discussion

In summary, the review confirms a reinforcing cycle: effective leaders foster positive cultures, which, in turn, lead to better ESG performance. Specifically, the identification of the following patterns:

Leadership influences culture by establishing policies and norms. Transformational leaders engage staff by seeking input, recognizing achievements, and demonstrating ethical conduct, fostering a culture of trust and innovation. According to a study, transformational nursing leaders emphasize leadership education, which promotes effective teamwork and a high-quality work environment (Ystaas, Bondas, & Hellesø, 2023).

Culture → ESG: A supportive culture encourages staff to actively engage in sustainability efforts. For example, if a hospital's culture emphasizes environmental stewardship, staff might volunteer ideas such as reducing paper use or turning off unused lights. Alternatively, a culture that emphasizes patient-centered care (social responsibility) motivates staff to participate in outreach and equity initiatives. The literature suggests that hospitals with clan-like cultures (teamwork, employee development) are more likely to provide consistent, high-quality service a social outcome (Rafi'i et al., 2025; Dolcini, Mariani, & Romano, 2025). In terms of governance, cultures of openness facilitate the implementation of transparent reporting systems (Dolcini et al., 2025).

Leadership influences ESG outcomes: Leaders with an ESG mindset can directly enforce policies. For instance, when a hospital CEO establishes sustainability committees or incorporates green targets into performance

evaluations, environmental results improve. Globally, many private hospitals now have “Chief Sustainability Officers” reporting to top management, demonstrating this link. In India, although such roles are still developing, interviews show that executives are becoming more conscious of ESG’s reputational value. Patil and Roy’s (2025) study highlights that leadership commitment is crucial: “Leaders who prioritize ESG issues and cultivate a sustainable culture are more likely to adopt HRM strategies that... enhance ESG performance.”

Quantitative data was seldom directly included in the sources, as many were qualitative or review articles. Nonetheless, several studies offer supporting statistics: one hospital report indicated that leadership training led to a 20% rise in nurse-reported safety behaviors, along with a reduction in overtime injuries, suggesting a cultural shift (Ystaas et al., 2023). Another research found that hospitals with strong sustainability leadership cut waste production by up to 15% over five years (Dolcini et al., 2025). Although these figures come from case reports and are not always peer-reviewed, they highlight the potential magnitude of impact.

By contrast, cultures with high hierarchy and fear of reprisals correlate with worse outcomes. Studies have shown that punitive cultures lead to underreporting of errors, which harms patient safety and likely contributes to organizational inefficiency (Lopez & Martinez, 2021). Our Interviews with Mumbai hospital staff confirmed this: several respondents noted that in some institutions, staff hesitate to raise concerns about equipment breakdowns or unethical behavior due to fear of punishment. Such an environment erodes trust and social responsibility.

5. Limitations and Gaps

While the review is comprehensive, certain limitations were recognized. Primarily, most of the published research identified originates from Western settings, with limited primary data focusing on hospitals in Mumbai.

Although the interviews provided some local insights, more extensive studies, such as surveys on hospital ESG practices across India, are lacking. Additionally, the empirical link between leadership, culture, and ESG outcomes remains underdeveloped; much of the evidence is speculative or based on intermediate indicators like staff satisfaction. Research directly measuring impacts such as reductions in hospital carbon footprints or improvements in patient equity due to leadership initiatives would bolster the case. Lastly, the method, which combines literature review and expert opinion, does not substitute for original empirical research. Future work should incorporate systematic data collection, such as creating an ESG leadership index or conducting long-term case studies in Mumbai hospitals.

The patterns observed are strong enough to guide action. The link between healthcare and sustainability is becoming more urgent due to climate change and social inequality. Hospitals in Mumbai, which face high patient loads and infrastructure issues, cannot ignore ESG principles. Developing a research plan, possibly with support from public health agencies or academic institutions, will help fill the data gaps we've identified. For now, global evidence can be relied upon (PwC, 2023). While the review offers valuable insights into how leadership, organizational culture, and ESG outcomes intersect in hospitals, several key gaps still need further exploration.

1. Limited Empirical Data on Mumbai Hospitals: Most research on ESG practices in healthcare is from Western countries, with few studies specific to Mumbai hospitals. An exception is a study examining how organizational culture and leadership influence ESG results through sustainable HRM practices in Navi Mumbai hospitals. This study highlights the importance of a supportive organizational culture and values-driven leadership in embedding sustainability in HRM processes. However, it mainly uses qualitative methods, such as interviews and document analysis, which may not provide a complete

view of the ESG landscape across Mumbai's diverse healthcare facilities. The absence of large-scale, quantitative studies limits the ability to generalize findings and hampers the development of standardized ESG metrics tailored to Mumbai's unique healthcare environment.

2. Underdeveloped Links Between Leadership, Culture, and ESG Outcomes:

Another notable gap is the limited empirical evidence connecting leadership styles, organizational culture, and measurable ESG outcomes. While research indicates that transformational leadership and a supportive culture can enhance ESG performance, there is little direct data linking these factors to specific metrics, such as reducing carbon emissions, advancing patient equity, or improving employee well-being. For instance, a systematic review emphasizes that strong leadership and culture are vital for implementing sustainable practices but does not provide empirical evidence linking them to concrete ESG results. This underscores the need for more rigorous research, like longitudinal studies or randomized controlled trials, to establish clear causal relationships. Such research would give healthcare leaders and policymakers concrete evidence of the impact of leadership and cultural strategies on sustainability and equity.

3. Methodological Limitations in Existing Research:

Most current research mainly depends on literature reviews and expert opinions, which restricts understanding of the practical implementation of ESG initiatives in hospitals. Although these methods provide valuable theoretical insights, they often lack empirical support and may not reflect the complexities of real-world healthcare environments. Future studies should employ mixed-methods approaches, blending qualitative insights with quantitative data. Utilizing tools such as an ESG leadership index or conducting longitudinal case studies in Mumbai hospitals could offer a deeper understanding of factors influencing ESG performance and help develop actionable

recommendations for healthcare administrators.

6. Conclusion

This decadal review highlights that leadership and organizational culture are crucial factors for hospital ESG performance. Transformational leadership and a supportive environment are linked to improved nursing conditions and patient outcomes (Al-Hazmi, 2022; Rafi'i et al., 2025), serving as foundational elements for environmental and social initiatives. On the other hand, hierarchical and punitive cultures hinder both quality care and sustainability efforts. For Mumbai hospitals, practical steps include developing leaders who advocate for sustainability, fostering a culture of teamwork and accountability, integrating ESG metrics into management systems, and aligning HR practices with ESG objectives. Adopting an ESG-focused strategy enables hospitals to fulfill their core mission of patient care while also supporting community health, environmental sustainability, and ethical governance. These efforts are not only socially responsible but also increasingly demanded by patients, regulators, and investors – as one report states, “wider public awareness about sustainability means organizations can differentiate themselves by acting early” (PwC, 2023).

Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Navi Mumbai exemplifies the integration of ESG principles into healthcare operations. The hospital has adopted multiple initiatives aimed at environmental sustainability, including energy-efficient infrastructure and waste reduction efforts. On the social front, it emphasizes community health outreach and providing equitable healthcare access. In terms of governance, the hospital has put in place transparent policies and practices to promote accountability and uphold ethical standards (ET Edge Insights, 2025).

Integrating ESG principles into hospital operations involves complex efforts that demand effective leadership, a supportive organizational culture, sustainable HR practices, and strong governance frameworks.

In Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, where healthcare needs are growing, a holistic ESG strategy can improve hospital performance, build community trust, and support sustainable

development goals. Future studies should keep investigating how leadership, culture, and ESG results are interconnected to guide best practices and policy making in healthcare.

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