

Strengthening Sustainability Literacy Through an International Guest Lecture on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to describe the implementation of an international guest lecture on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and examine its role in enhancing students' understanding of sustainability issues in business and management education.

Methodology: This study employed a descriptive, qualitative approach. This activity was conducted through an academic collaboration between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan, Indonesia, and Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia. The lecture was delivered by undergraduate students from the Faculty of Business Management and Accounting. Data were collected through observation, documentation of the activity, and student feedback, and were analyzed using descriptive analyses.

Results: The findings indicate that the international guest lecture contributed to increasing students' awareness and understanding of Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) concepts and sustainability practices. Students actively participated in the lecture and discussion sessions, demonstrating a strong interest in topics related to responsible business practices and global sustainability challenges.

Conclusions: This study concludes that international guest lectures can serve as an effective educational platform for introducing ESG awareness and strengthening sustainability education in higher education institutions.

Limitations: This study is limited to a single guest lecture activity involving students from one institution and relies primarily on descriptive analyses. As such, funding should be interpreted with caution and may not be generalizable to other institutional settings.

Contributions: This study contributes to sustainability education by highlighting the role of international academic collaboration in enhancing ESG literacy among students in the business and management disciplines.

Keywords: *ESG, International Collaboration, Sustainability*

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1. Introduction

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) has become one of the most important frameworks guiding sustainable business practices and responsible decision-making globally (Harfiahani, 2022). ESG principles emphasize the importance of environmental protection, social responsibility, and transparent governance in ensuring long-term organizational sustainability (Salama, 2026). This global shift demonstrates that sustainability is no longer considered an optional initiative but a critical component of long-term economic and social development (Petrus Yeimo, 2026; X. Wang, Song, &

[Sun, 2023](#); [Yan, Cheng, Huang, Lin, & Lin, 2022](#)). The urgency of ESG implementation is further reinforced by the growing environmental and social challenges worldwide ([Tian, Yu, & Gulzar, 2025](#)). A recent report highlighted that the growing demand for minerals used in green technologies has triggered environmental issues such as deforestation, pollution, and community conflicts, emphasizing the importance of responsible governance and sustainability that must be strengthened not only within corporations but also within educational institutions that prepare future professionals ([Lestari, 2026](#); [W. Wang, Wang, & Mei, 2023](#)).

In the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, ESG awareness is increasing as organizations recognize that sustainability is not merely a compliance requirement but a strategic approach to creating long-term value and resilience ([Octavio, Setiawan, Aryani, & Arifin, 2025](#)). Companies and institutions are gradually integrating ESG principles into their operations, governance structures, and decision-making processes to respond to stakeholder expectations and global sustainability agendas ([Zahid, Taran, Khan, & Chersan, 2023](#)). Consequently, universities play an important role in equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to understand sustainability challenges and contribute to responsible business practice ([Saygili, Arslan, & Birkan, 2022](#)). Higher education institutions are increasingly expected to promote sustainability education and encourage students to develop a global perspective on environmental and social issues. Universities are responsible for producing academic knowledge and fostering awareness and ethical responsibility among future leaders. Integrating sustainability concepts into educational programs enables students to understand how environmental and social considerations influence business decisions and organizational performance ([Syarif, 2025](#)).

One effective approach to strengthening student sustainability literacy is through international academic collaborations, such as guest lecture programs involving international experts ([Fuadah, Mukhtaruddin, Andriana, & Arisman, 2022](#); [J. Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2022](#)). Guest lectures offer students the opportunity to gain insights from global scholars, practitioners, and industry experts who share their experiences and perspectives from diverse countries. Such programs can broaden students' understanding of global sustainability challenges while promoting cross-cultural academic interactions. Based on this perspective, an international guest lecture program was organized collaboratively between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan, Indonesia, and Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia. The program focused on discussing ESG and sustainability issues in the context of global business and education. Through this activity, students were expected to gain deeper insights into ESG implementation, sustainability challenges, and the role of future professionals in promoting responsible and sustainable development. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the implementation and educational impact of an international guest lecture program on ESG and sustainability ([Chen & Xie, 2022](#)). Specifically, this study seeks to examine how this activity contributes to improving students' understanding of ESG concepts, promoting global academic collaboration, and strengthening sustainability awareness in higher education.

1.1 ESG and Sustainability

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) has become an important framework for promoting sustainable development across various sectors, including business, finance, and education. ESG emphasizes the integration of environmental responsibility, social welfare, and transparent governance into organizational activities. ESG practices are increasingly recognized as essential for improving long-term organizational performance and sustainability ([Candelon, Hasse, & Lajaunie, 2021](#)). Companies and institutions that have integrated ESG principles tend to achieve better risk management and stronger stakeholder trust.

The increasing global concerns regarding climate, environmental degradation, and social inequality have accelerated the adoption of ESG principles. ESG implementation can significantly influence an organization's value and long-term performance ([Adu, Flynn, & Grey, 2023](#)). Furthermore, [Tang \(2023\)](#) found that companies with strong ESG performance generally show better financial and sustainability outcomes than those with weaker ESG practices. Although numerous studies have examined ESG implementation in corporate and financial contexts, relatively little attention has been

paid to the role of ESG education in higher education institutions. Understanding how ESG concepts can be introduced to influence sustainability in business and organizational practices is crucial.

1.2 Sustainability Education in Higher Education

Higher education institutions play an important role in promoting sustainability awareness among their students. Universities are expected to prepare students to understand complex global challenges, including environmental sustainability, social responsibility and ethical governance. According to [S.-P. Lee and Isa \(2023\)](#). Integrating sustainability education into university programmers can significantly improve students' understanding of global sustainability challenges. Similarly, [Rumefi, Ningtyas, and Maulim \(2024\)](#) argue that universities must incorporate sustainability concepts into teaching, research, and community-engagement activities. By integrating sustainability into academic activities, students can develop critical thinking skills and better understand how sustainability affects business and organizational decisions.

In addition, education related to sustainability is essential for preparing future leaders who can contribute to sustainable development. [Ningtyas \(2024\)](#) emphasized that experiential learning activities, including seminars, workshops, and guest lectures, can enhance students' understanding of sustainability topics and encourage them to apply sustainability principles in their professional careers. Despite the growing integration of sustainability topics in higher-education curricula, the effectiveness of specific learning approaches in improving students' ESG awareness remains an important area for further investigation.

1.3 International Academic Collaboration and Guest Lecture

International academic collaboration has become an important strategy for improving higher education quality. Through international collaboration, universities can exchange knowledge, promote cultural understanding, and strengthen their global academic networks. [Aris \(2021\)](#) explains that the internationalization of higher education aims to integrate international and intercultural dimensions into teaching, research, and academic services. Previous studies have indicated that academic interactions involving international experts can broaden students' perspectives and improve the quality of their learning experiences. Academic interactions involving international experts can broaden student perspectives and improve the quality of learning. [Ali, Rahim, Yahya, and Kamarudin \(2022\)](#) highlight that international academic engagement, such as seminars and guest lectures, plays a crucial role in developing students' global competencies. These activities allow students to understand global challenges and learn from international experiences related to sustainability ([Yan et al., 2022](#); [Yorke, Donkor, & Appiagyei, 2023](#)). However, despite the widespread implementation of international guest lectures in universities, research on their role in supporting ESG education and sustainability awareness among university students is limited.

1.4 ESG Awareness among University Students

Awareness of ESG among university students is becoming increasingly important, as students represent the future workforce and decision-makers in various sectors. However, several studies have indicated that students' ESG literacy remains relatively limited. [Ningtyas \(2024\)](#) explains that sustainability education is necessary to prepare students for responsible decision-making in future professional environments. In addition, [Syarif \(2025\)](#) indicates that students exposed to sustainability discussions and academic activities related to ESG demonstrate a higher level of awareness of environmental and social issues. Educational programs that incorporate sustainability topics can significantly contribute to developing responsible and ethically aware graduates. Nevertheless, further research is needed to understand how specific educational activities, such as international guest lectures, enhance students' awareness and understanding of ESG concepts in higher education settings.

1.5 Research GAP

Although previous studies have highlighted the importance of sustainability education and ESG awareness in higher education, most research has focused on integrating ESG into formal curricula or institutional policies ([Pinheiro, Panza, Berhorst, Toaldo, & Segatto, 2024](#); [Rassiah, Nasir, Subramaniam, & Saleeth, 2024](#)). Few studies have explored the role of international guest lectures as

an educational approach to enhance ESG awareness among university students. Moreover, research examining academic collaboration between universities in Southeast Asia, particularly between Indonesia and Malaysia, in promoting ESG literacy remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore how an international guest lecture organized through collaboration between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan, Indonesia, and Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia, can contribute to improving students' understanding of ESG and sustainability issues. This study addresses the following research question: How can international guest lecture activities contribute to improving university students' awareness and understanding of ESG and sustainability issues?

2. Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to describe the implementation of an international guest lecture and analyze its contribution to improving students' understanding of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and sustainability issues (Ningtyas, 2024). A descriptive approach was used because the study aimed to explain and document an academic activity systematically and factually without conducting statistical hypothesis testing. The international guest lecture was organized through an academic collaboration between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business in Pasuruan, Indonesia, and the Management and Science University (MSU) in Malaysia. The activity aimed to provide students with a broader understanding of ESG concepts, sustainability practices, and global challenges related to environmental responsibility, social issues, and corporate governance in modern organizations. Data collected from students' reflections and discussions were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method allowed the researcher to identify, categorize, and interpret recurring themes related to students' understanding of ESG and sustainability issues.

The participants of this study were undergraduate students who attended an international guest lecture organized through a collaboration between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan and Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia. The participants were selected using a purposive sampling approach as they were directly involved in the learning activity being examined. Data collection in this study was conducted using several techniques, including activity observation, documentation, and academic reflection notes during the guest lecture implementation. Observations were conducted to examine the learning process, interaction between the speaker and participants, and student responses to the presented materials. Documentation, such as presentation materials, event reports, and activity photographs, was also used to support the descriptive analysis of the program implementation.

In addition, this study employed a literature review approach to support the analysis of ESG concepts, sustainability education, and international academic collaboration. The literature used in this study was obtained from academic journals, research reports, and scholarly publications relevant to ESG and sustainability initiatives in higher education. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques, in which the observation and documentation were interpreted to describe how the international guest lecture contributed to enhancing students' awareness and understanding of ESG and sustainability issues. The findings were then discussed by linking the observed outcomes with existing theories and previous studies on sustainability education and higher education internationalization. Through this methodological approach, this study aims to provide a comprehensive description of the implementation of international guest lectures and their role in promoting ESG literacy among university students. The descriptive approach also enables other higher education institutions to replicate similar academic activities under comparable conditions to promote sustainability awareness in academic environments.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Implementation of the International Guest Lecture on ESG

The international guest lecture was conducted as part of an academic collaboration between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan, Indonesia, and the Management and Science University (MSU) Malaysia. In this activity, the presentation was delivered by a lecture from Yadika Institute of

Technology and Business, Pasuruan, who discussed the topic of ESG and its relevance to sustainability practices in modern organizations. The lecture aimed to introduce students to ESG principles, including environmental responsibility, social impact, and corporate governance in business. The session also highlighted the importance of sustainability in organizational decision-making and the growing global demand for responsible business practices.

The participants of this activity were undergraduate students from the Faculty of Business, Management, and Accounting, particularly those enrolled in the study programs of Investment Management and Accounting. The lecture introduced the concept of ESG and explained its growing importance in business decision-making, corporate governance, financial investment, and sustainability in organizational management. The presenter also discussed how ESG principles are increasingly being applied to investment decisions, corporate reporting, and technological innovation in the business environment. Students were encouraged to understand the relationship between sustainability practices and the long-term organizational performance. Students' participation during the international guest lecture is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Student participant during the international guest lecture

Activity Category	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Attended the lecture	82	100
Actively asked questions	21	26
Participated in a discussion	35	43
Provide feedback after sessions	38	46

Table 1 shows that all registered students attended the lecture sessions, indicating a strong interest in ESG-related topics. Approximately 26% of the students actively asked questions during the session, while 43% participated in discussions with the presenter. In addition, 46% of students provided feedback after the lecture, demonstrating their engagement and curiosity regarding sustainability and responsible business practices. Further observations indicate differences in the level of student engagement. Students who actively asked questions tended to demonstrate a stronger interest in the practical application of ESG principles, particularly in areas related to investment strategies and corporate governance. Meanwhile, students who participated in discussions often focused on broader sustainability challenges, such as environmental responsibility and the social impact of business operations. This variation suggests that students engage with ESG topics from different perspectives depending on their academic interests and prior exposure to sustainability-related subjects.

3.2 *Students' Understanding of ESG Concepts*

The results indicate that students gained a better understanding of ESG concepts and their relevance to business and management education. Students showed interest in how ESG can influence investment strategies, corporate accountability and sustainable business operations. Students' perceptions of the guest lecture's usefulness are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Student's perception of the ESG guest lecture

Response Category	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Very useful	37	45
Useful	33	40
Moderately useful	9	11
Less useful	3	4

Table 2 indicates that most students perceived the guest lecture as beneficial for improving their understanding of ESG and sustainability issues. Approximately 45% of the participants stated that the lecture was very useful, while 40% perceived it as useful. Only a small percentage of students reported that the lecture was moderately useful or less useful than the other methods. These findings suggest that guest lectures serve as an effective educational approach for introducing ESG concepts in higher education. The high percentage of positive responses indicates that students recognized the relevance

of sustainability-related knowledge to their academic and future professional development. Students who perceived the lecture as “very useful” generally expressed interest in understanding how ESG principles can influence real-world business practices, including corporate reporting, investment, decision-making, and risk management. These findings are consistent with those of previous studies, emphasizing the importance of sustainability education in higher education institutions. According to [Zahid, Saleem, and Maqsood \(2023\)](#), integrating sustainability-related topics into university learning activities enhances students’ awareness of global environmental and social challenges. Similarly, [Shin, Moon, and Kang \(2023\)](#) argued that sustainability education helps students develop responsible decision-making skills in business and management contexts.

3.3 Implication for Business and Management Education

The results of this study highlight the importance of integrating ESG topics into business and management education. As future professionals in fields such as investment management, accounting, and business computing, students must understand how sustainability principles influence business operations and strategic decision-making. International academic collaboration activities, such as guest lectures, can serve as an effective platform for introducing global sustainability perspectives to students. [Rassiah et al. \(2024\)](#) explain that international academic engagement can broaden students’ knowledge and improve their global competencies. The findings of this study indicate that exposure to ESG discussions through academic activities can contribute to developing sustainability-oriented thinking among students. This is particularly important as businesses increasingly prioritize sustainable practices and responsible governance. By introducing ESG concepts through international academic collaboration, universities can help prepare students to negotiate complex sustainability challenges in global business settings.

3.4 Role of International Academic Collaboration

International academic collaboration plays an important role in improving the quality of higher education and expanding students’ global perspectives. In this study, the collaboration between the Yadika Institut of Technology and Business Pasuruan, Indonesia, and Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia, provides an opportunity for students to engage in international academic interaction while discussing contemporary issues related to ESG. Through this collaboration, students were exposed to knowledge exchanges between institutions from different countries. Although the lecture was delivered by a lecturer from the Yadika Institut of Technology and Business Pasuruan, the involvement of MSU Malaysia as a collaborating institution strengthened the international dimension of the academic activity. This collaboration allowed students to experience a learning environment that incorporates global perspectives on sustainability and responsible business practices.

International collaboration in higher education is widely recognized as a strategy for enhancing academic quality and global engagement. According to [Ismail, Anridho, ISA, RAHMAN, and Ismail \(2022\)](#), internationalization in higher education enables institutions to integrate international and intellectual dimensions into teaching, research, and academic partnerships to foster knowledge exchange and broaden students’ understanding of global issues. For students in the Faculty of Business, Management, and Accounting, particularly those studying Investment Management, Accountancy, Business Computing, and Airline Services Management, exposure to international collaboration is especially important. Global industries increasingly require professionals who understand cross-border business practices, international regulations and sustainability challenges. Therefore, academic activities involving international partners can help prepare students to meet the demands of the global workforce.

Furthermore, international guest lectures provide opportunities for students to learn about global trends in sustainability and corporate governance ([Octavio et al., 2025](#)). As ESG practices become increasingly important in business and investment decision-making, students must develop a broader understanding of how sustainability principles are implemented in different countries and industries. Overall, the collaboration between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan and MSU Malaysia demonstrates how international academic partnerships can support sustainability education and enhance

students' knowledge of ESF concepts within a global context. The perceived benefits of international academic collaboration for students participating in guest lectures are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Benefit of international academic collaboration for students

Benefit Category	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
A broader understanding of ESG and sustainability issues	40	49
Exposure to international academic perspectives	21	26
Increased motivation to learn global business practices	13	16
Improved awareness of global sustainability challenges	8	9

Table 3 shows that nearly half of the students (49%) reported gaining a broader understanding of ESG and sustainability issues through the international guest lecture session. These findings indicate that international academic collaboration can enhance students' awareness of global sustainability challenges and provide exposure to international perspectives on ESG implementation. Such academic activities may also encourage students to develop a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability practices in different countries and industries. Additionally, 26% of students stated that the activity provided exposure to international academic perspectives, while 16% felt more motivated to learn about global business practices. A smaller proportion of students (9%) reported an increased awareness of global sustainability challenges. These findings indicate that international academic collaboration can significantly improve students' understanding of global sustainability issues. According to [Yuliana and Wedari \(2023\)](#), internationalization in higher education enables institutions to integrate international perspectives into teaching and learning processes. Similarly, [Yustina, Dewi, Mahmudah, and Andreanantenaina \(2024\)](#) emphasized that international academic collaboration strengthens knowledge exchange and enhances students' global competencies.

For students in the Faculty of Business, Management, and Accounting, particularly those studying Investment Management, Accountancy, Business Computing, and Airline Services Management, international exposure is increasingly important. Global industries require individuals who understand the international business environment, sustainability challenges, and responsible governance practices. Therefore, international guest lectures and collaborative academic activities can serve as effective platforms for promoting sustainability education while simultaneously preparing students to face the demands of the global workforce.



Figure 1. Implementation of the international Guest Lecture on ESG between Yadika Institute of Technology and Business, Pasuruan, and MSU Malaysia

Figure 1 shows the implementation of the international guest lecture organized through collaboration between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan and MSU, Malaysia. The activity involved students from the Faculty of Business, Management, and Accounting, including those from

the study programs of Investment Management, Accountancy, Business Computing, and Airline Services Management. During the session, a presenter from the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan delivered material related to ESG and sustainability in modern business practices. The activity provided students with an opportunity to engage in international academic interactions and gain broader insights into sustainability and responsible business management. Provide a logical and scientific analysis of the study's findings—present pieces of evidence to support your analysis by citing the work of earlier researchers or existing theories.

Table 4. Relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction

Predictor	Unstd Coefficients Std. Error	Std Coefficients Beta(β)	T	Sig-value
(Constant)	0.767		11.575	.000
Reliability	0.201	0.693	14.844	.000

4. Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

This study describes the implementation of an international guest lecture on ESG organized through academic collaboration between the Yadika Institute of Technology and Business Pasuruan, Indonesia, and Management and Science University (MSU), Malaysia. The findings indicate that the activity successfully enhanced students' understanding of ESG concepts and sustainability issues in modern business practices. The results showed that students actively participated in the lecture and discussion sessions, demonstrating a high level of interest in sustainability topics. The activity also provided students with broader insights into the role of ESG in business decision-making, corporate governance and responsible investment practices. In addition, the collaboration between the two institutions created opportunities for international academic engagement, contributing to the development of students' global perspectives. Overall, the international guest lecture served as an effective educational platform for introducing the ESG concept to students in the Faculty of Business, Management, and Accounting, particularly those enrolled in the Investment Management, Accounting, Business Computing, and Airline Services Management study programs. The activity also demonstrated the importance of integrating sustainability education into higher learning environments.

The findings of this study have practical implications for higher education institutions seeking to integrate ESG and sustainability topics into learning activities. International guest lectures can serve as a flexible and cost-effective approach to enriching students' learning experiences without requiring significant curriculum restructuring. By leveraging academic collaborations, universities can expose students to global perspectives on sustainability and responsible business practices. Furthermore, the results of this study may apply to other universities and regions, particularly in developing countries, where ESG education is still evolving. Institutions can adopt similar collaborative approaches to enhance students' awareness of sustainability issues and prepare them for global professional environments in the future. This suggests that international academic collaboration can play a strategic role in strengthening sustainability education in different higher education contexts.

4.2 Research Limitations

This study had several limitations. First, the study used a descriptive approach based on the observation and documentation of a single international guest lecture activity. This may limit the generalizability of our findings. Second, the number of participants involved in the activity was relatively limited to students from one institution, which may not fully represent the perspectives of students from other universities or academic backgrounds. Another limitation is that this study primarily relied on descriptive analysis rather than quantitative measurements of learning outcomes. Consequently, the study focused more on describing student participation and perceptions rather than measuring the long-term impact of the activity on students' knowledge and attitudes toward ESG and sustainability. Therefore, future research should involve a larger and more diverse sample of participants from multiple institutions and apply mixed methods or quantitative approaches to measure the effectiveness of ESG-

related education activities more comprehensively. Longitudinal studies are also needed to examine the long-term impact of such activities on students' knowledge, attitudes, and professional competencies.

4.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several suggestions for future research can be proposed. First, future studies could involve a larger number of participants from multiple universities to obtain a broader perspective on the effectiveness of international guest lectures in promoting ESG awareness among students. Second, future research could apply a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods to measure the impact of sustainability education activities more comprehensively. For example, surveys or pre- and post-test assessments can be used to evaluate changes in students' knowledge and attitudes toward ESG concepts. Finally, future studies should explore other forms of international academic collaboration, such as joint seminars, international workshops, or collaborative research projects related to sustainability and responsible business practices. Such initiatives could further strengthen sustainability education and enhance global academic engagement in higher-education institutions.

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