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## **Non-Financial Disclosure Practices and Financial Reporting Quality of Listed Conglomerates in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The main objective of this study was to examine the effect of non-financial disclosures on financial reporting quality of conglomerates listed on Nigerian Exchange Group from 2015 to 2024. Non-financial disclosure was proxied by corporate governance disclosure, environmental performance disclosure and corporate mission and strategy disclosures while financial reporting quality was proxied by *an index based on the IASB qualitative characteristics*. The research design adopted for this study was *ex-post facto as the data used were secondary*. The population and sample size of the study *comprised six listed conglomerates*, thus making use of census because the population was not too large. The method of data analysis employed was ordinary least squares (OLS) regression and the statistical package employed was Stata version 17. The findings revealed that corporate governance disclosure has a significant positive effect on financial reporting quality; environmental performance disclosure *showed a negative effect that was not statistically significant*; corporate strategy and mission disclosure *had a significant positive effect* on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria. Based on these findings, it was concluded that adequate disclosure of non-financial information adds value to the firms by enhancing *investors' confidence* and improving the financial reporting quality. *Therefore, we recommended that listed conglomerates in Nigeria should clearly communicate their corporate strategies and mission statements* in annual reports as they were found to improve financial reporting quality.

**Keywords:** Non-financial disclosures, financial reporting quality, corporate governance disclosure, environmental disclosure, corporate mission and strategies.

### **Introduction**

The global business environment has witnessed a growing emphasis on non-financial disclosures, particularly those relating to sustainability, environmental practices, corporate mission and strategies, governance systems, community engagement, and ethical business conduct. These disclosures provide stakeholders with additional insights beyond traditional financial metrics, thereby improving transparency and accountability (Al-Homaidi et al., 2024). Stakeholders such as investors, regulators, lenders, and the public increasingly demand information that reflects not only a firm's financial performance but also its compliance with environmental and social responsibilities, risk management structures, and governance integrity. According to Dagunduro et al. (2024), despite the issuance of guidelines by regulatory agencies such as the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and sector-specific regulators, the practice of non-financial disclosures among many corporate

entities remains inconsistent, selective, and in some cases, opaque. Many firms either disclose minimal sustainability information or provide disclosures that lack depth, credibility, and verifiability (Nobanee & Ellili, 2022). This raises concerns about the quality of financial reporting, especially since non-financial information complements financial data in enhancing the overall credibility of corporate reports.

Corporate governance weaknesses, environmental controversies, and recurrent regulatory sanctions in the Nigerian corporate sector further complicate the situation. For instance, the public outcry in 2020–2022 over sanctions by the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), revealed that some firms either underreported or failed to disclose material environmental risks in their annual reports (Mahmudah et al., 2023). Similarly, whistle-blower allegations in certain conglomerates about unethical labour practices and weak governance structures have brought to light the gap between actual practices and what firms publicly disclose. These occurrences raise questions about whether Nigerian conglomerates provide transparent, complete, and reliable non-financial information that enhances the quality of financial reporting.

According to Etukenyin et al. (2025), financial reporting quality refers to the accuracy, reliability, transparency and relevance of financial information presented by a company in its financial statements. High financial reporting quality ensures that the financial information provided to stakeholders is trustworthy, consistent and informative for decision-making purposes. Emenyi and Okpo (2023) noted that when financial statements are of high quality, they accurately reflect a company's financial position, performance, and cash flows. Reliable financial reporting helps in assessing a company's profitability, solvency, and overall financial health. Among the essential parameters that affect financial reporting quality are corporate governance disclosures, environmental performance disclosures and corporate strategy and mission disclosures. Corporate governance disclosures refer to the transparency and communication of how a company is governed and managed to its shareholders. Corporate governance encompasses the processes, principles, and values that guide the management and oversight of companies, ensuring transparency, accountability, and sustainability, while creating value for stakeholders over the long term (Malaysian Code of Corporate Governance, 2012). Environmental performance disclosure on the other hand is the practice of companies providing information about their environmental impacts, activities, policies, and strategies in their public disclosures, such as annual reports, sustainability reports, and other communications (Ohaka & Obi, 2021). Corporate strategy and mission disclosure refers to the communication of information related to a company's overall strategic direction, goals, objectives, and values (Tayles et al., 2022; Adams, 2020). When non-financial disclosures reflect the company's commitment to sustainability and responsible business practices, it can signal to investors and analysts that the company is focused on long-term value creation, potentially improving the perceived quality of financial reporting. Companies that disclose their approaches to identifying and mitigating environmental and social risks may be better prepared to address potential financial risks.

Despite the increased regulatory emphasis on transparency and accountability, financial reporting quality among Nigerian conglomerates continues to face persistent challenges. Although non-financial disclosures are expected to enhance the completeness and credibility of corporate reports, empirical observations suggest that many firms in Nigeria still provide inadequate or selective non-financial information (Nurhe et al., 2024; Syder et al., 2020). This undermines stakeholders' ability to make informed decisions and raises concerns about whether financial statements truly reflect economic reality. In recent years, the FRCN and SEC have sanctioned several large Nigerian companies, including subsidiaries of major conglomerates, for issues relating to misstated accounts, governance lapses, non-compliance with

reporting guidelines, and failure to disclose material risks (Etukenyin et al., 2025; Dagunduro et al., 2024; Adedapo & Olawale, 2019). Public controversy surrounding the financial misstatements and governance failures in some conglomerate-linked entities revealed gaps in their environmental and social disclosures, which, if properly reported, could have highlighted underlying operational and compliance risks before they escalated. This demonstrates the extent to which insufficient non-financial disclosure can compromise financial reporting quality.

Furthermore, Nigeria's business environment is characterised by weak enforcement mechanisms, low monitoring capacity, and corporate cultures that prioritise financial performance over sustainability and governance transparency. These challenges create opportunities for **earnings manipulation, concealment of environmental liabilities, and selective disclosure of social and governance issues**, ultimately reducing the reliability and relevance of financial reports (Nurhe, 2023).

## **2.0 Theoretical framework and review of related literature**

### **2.1 Theoretical framework**

The major theory supporting this study is signaling theory which was propounded by Mark Spence in 1973. The theory posits that companies can use voluntary disclosures to send signals to the market about their financial health, future prospects, and commitment to stakeholders. By disclosing non-mandatory information, companies can communicate their confidence in their performance and long-term viability, potentially influencing investors' perceptions and decisions. Thus, these disclosures send a positive signal to the market that the firm is committed to sustainable and responsible practices and has nothing to hide, thereby, increasing investors trust and confidence (Nobanee & Ellili, 2022). Another major theory that support nonfinancial information disclosures is Stakeholder theory propounded by Edward Freeman in 1984. The theory states that companies that engage in non-mandatory information disclosures demonstrate their awareness of and responsiveness to the diverse needs and concerns of stakeholders which includes shareholders, employees, customers, communities, and the environment. According to the stakeholder theory, for an organization to increase its overall performance, its management should focus on stakeholder issues rather than just shareholders (Syder et al., 2020). Legitimacy theory as propounded by Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) also provided theoretical foundation for this study. Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) define social legitimacy as the degree to which an organisation conforms to the prevailing social norms and values. This theory posits that companies must maintain legitimacy by conforming to societal norms, values, and expectations. Disclosure of non-mandatory information that highlights a company's contributions to society, environmental stewardship, and ethical conduct can enhance its legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders and the public.

### **2.2 Corporate governance disclosure and financial reporting quality**

Corporate governance disclosure involves the reporting of policies, structures, and practices that ensure a company is managed and directed in the best interests of its stakeholders. Effective corporate governance practices, when disclosed, show that the company has mechanisms in place to oversee management, mitigate conflicts of interest, and ensure ethical behavior. This leads to greater accountability, reducing the likelihood of financial misstatements or fraudulent reporting. Chalaki et al. (2021) noted that corporate governance disclosures, particularly around audit committees and board oversight, indicate strong internal controls and checks on financial reporting. This reduces the likelihood of errors or intentional manipulation, contributing to higher financial reporting quality. Transparent disclosure of corporate

governance practices reassures investors that the company is being managed with their best interests in mind. This can enhance the credibility of the company's financial reports and reduce the perceived risk of financial manipulation or mismanagement. Nurhe (2023) found a significant relationship between corporate governance practice disclosures and financial reporting quality of listed consumer goods companies in Nigeria. However, Nobanee and Ellili (2022) found a negative relationship between corporate governance disclosure and financial reporting quality. Thus, this study hypothesized that;

$H_1$ : Corporate governance disclosures have no significant effect on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria.

### **2.3 Environmental performance disclosure and financial reporting quality**

Environmental performance disclosure plays a significant role in enhancing financial reporting quality by providing a more comprehensive and transparent view of a company's operations, risks, and opportunities. By disclosing their environmental impacts, policies, and performance, companies demonstrate transparency to stakeholders (investors, creditors, customers, regulators, and the public). This fosters trust and accountability, as stakeholders can better assess the company's commitment to sustainability and its potential liabilities or opportunities related to environmental issues. This transparency can also reassure consumers that the company takes its responsibilities seriously, potentially enhancing brand reputation and customer loyalty. Environmental risks, such as regulatory fines, litigation, reputational damage, and physical risks from climate change, can have substantial financial implications. Disclosures of such environmental risks allow investors and other stakeholders to better identify and evaluate these risks. Companies that proactively disclose their environmental performance often have better risk management systems in place, which can lead to reduced financial risks in the long run. For investors, environmental performance data can be crucial in making informed investment decisions, especially for those pursuing socially responsible investing (SRI) strategies. It allows them to assess a company's long-term sustainability and resilience. Emenyi and Okpo (2023) and Al-Waeli et al. (2021) found that have no significant influence on the quality of financial reports among the manufacturing firms. However, Mahmudah et al. (2023) found a negative relationship between environmental disclosures and financial reporting quality. Thus, this study hypothesized that;

$H_2$ : Environmental performance disclosures have no significant effect on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria.

### **2.4 Corporate strategy and mission disclosure and financial reporting quality**

Corporate governance disclosure refers to the information that a firm provides about the structures, processes, and mechanisms through which it is directed and controlled. It reflects how management is monitored, how decisions are made, and how the interests of shareholders and stakeholders are protected. Transparent governance disclosures allow shareholders and stakeholders to understand the governance structure and this reduces information gaps between managers (insiders) and investors. In other words, strong governance disclosure limits managerial opportunism and leads to more credible financial reports. Clear governance information signals the quality of the firm's management and accountability framework. Investors often seek companies with clear and well-communicated missions and strategies as they perceive them as indicators of a company's direction and commitment to creating value. Adams (2020) found that corporate strategies and mission disclosure positively influence investor confidence, indirectly contributing to improved financial reporting quality. Effective strategic mission disclosure can signal a company's awareness of potential risks and its proactive approach to addressing them. Dagunduro et al. (2024) found

a positive association between the clarity and consistency of corporate mission disclosure and long-term financial performance, suggesting a link with financial reporting quality. Okpo and Emenyi (2023) found that disclosure of information on corporate strategies significantly influences the behaviour of investors in the capital market. On the other hand, Carmo and Ribeiro (2022) found that the disclosure of corporate strategy and mission statement does not have any significant influence on financial reporting quality of Portuguese companies. Thus, this study hypothesized that;

$H_03$ : Corporate strategies and mission disclosures have no significant effect on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria.

## 1.0 Methodology

This study adopted **ex-post-facto** research design. The design was suitable for this study because *the study relied on historical secondary data*. The population of the study comprised **six conglomerates** listed on the Nigerian Exchange Group as of December 31, 2024. Since the population of the study was not too large, a *census approach was used*. The data for financial reporting quality was measured using *the IASB Conceptual Framework qualitative-characteristics model as was done by Etukeren et al. (2025)* A disclosure checklist devised according to this model **contains five sections** with information relating to the qualitative characteristics of financial reports as given by the IFRS conceptual framework. *Each major component of the qualitative-characteristics model was given a weight range of 1-5* and the weighted average scores for each component was obtained as was done by Adedapo and Olawale (2019). The IASB score index was **computed as a ratio** of aggregate actual scores to expected scores. Also, a checklist pattern in line with GRI disclosure requirements was used **to derive data for non-financial** disclosures. The checklist was developed in three sections with a total of fifteen disclosure items which comprised corporate governance disclosures -five items, environmental disclosures five items, **corporate mission and strategy disclosures** - five disclosure items. Each reporting item on the checklist was assigned a value of '1' if disclosed and '0' if not disclosed. The score or disclosure index for these parameters was the ratio of actual disclosure to the expected disclosure. Data were **analysed** using **pooled OLS regression** technique and the statistical package used was **Stata 17**.

## Model specification

The econometric model used in this study was adapted from the study of Al-Homaidi et al. (2024) and modified to fit this study as presented below;

$$FIRQ_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_3 CGOD_{it} + \beta_4 ENPD_{it} + \beta_5 COSD_{it} + \epsilon_{it}$$

Where:

$FIRQ$	=	Financial reporting quality
$CGOD$	=	Corporate governance disclosures
$ENPD$	=	Environmental performance disclosure
$\beta_0$	=	Model intercept
$\beta_1-\beta_3$	=	Coefficient to be estimated in the regression analysis
$it$	=	Cross section of listed conglomerates with time variant
$\epsilon_{it}$	=	Stochastic error term

## 4.0 Analysis and discussion

**Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of the effect of nonfinancial disclosures on financial reporting quality**

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
firq	60	3.533	.518	2.4	4.6
cgod	60	.533	.21	.2	1
enpd	60	.471	.257	0	1
cosd	60	.617	.17	.4	1

**Source: Author's computation (2025)**

From the table above, it was observed that financial reporting quality (firq) across all components had the highest score of 4.6. This shows that one or more firms' annual report(s) met almost all the quality requirements of the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). The minimum score was 2.4 which was almost half of the total score (5), indicating average financial reporting quality for such firm(s). On average, the financial reporting quality score in the industry was 3.533. This had a standard deviation of 0.518 indicates a low level of variation, meaning that the financial reporting or annual report preparation of firms in the sector were indifferent or similar, as the data points were not too widespread. For corporate governance disclosure (cgod), it was observed that the minimum score was 0.2, which was 1 out of 5 disclosure items checked. The highest score observed for this variable was 1 which is 5 out of 5 items disclosed by one or more firms. The average disclosure score was 0.533, indicating that firms in the sector disclose 50% of issues concerning corporate governance in their annual reports, with a standard deviation of 0.21 indicating a low level of variation in the corporate governance disclosures data. For environmental performance disclosure (enpd), it was observed was 0.471, implying that on average firms disclose below 50% of environmental performance as required by Global Reporting Initiative. Corporate strategy and mission information disclosure (cosd), had a mean score of 0.617 indicating that on the average, the firms disclosed 62% of the information regarding corporate strategy as required by GRI.

## 4.1 Normality test

**Table 4.2 Shapiro Wilk W test for normal data**

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
firq	60	0.987	0.706	-0.750	0.773
cgod	60	0.985	0.806	-0.465	0.679
enpd	60	0.985	0.804	-0.469	0.681
cosd	60	0.966	1.853	1.330	0.092

**Source: Author's computation (2025)**

Table 4.2 shows the normality test for each variable in the study. From the result, it was observed that all of the variables followed a normal distribution. In detail, it was observed that the dependent proxy; financial reporting quality (firq) followed a normal curve marked by its Prob>z value of 0.773 which was greater than 0.05 level of significance.. Acceptance of null hypothesis was the case for corporate governance disclosures (cgod) with Prob>z value of 0.679>0.05 level of significance. As such, it did follow a normal curve. Environmental performance disclosure (enpd) scores equally followed a normal curve (Prob>z value of 0.681). Finally, corporate strategy and mission disclosure (cosd) followed a normal curve (Prob>z value of 0.092).The majority of the Prob>z values were greater than 0.05 significance level. This suggested that the majority of the independent variables were normally distributed, thus meeting the normality assumption required for parametric tests.

## 4.2. Correlations

**Table 4.3 Spearman's rank correlation coefficients**

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) firq	1.000			
(2) cgod	0.019	1.000		
(3) enpd	-0.040	-0.002	1.000	
(4) cosd	0.159	-0.110	0.006	1.000

**Source: Author's computation (2025)**

Table 4.3 shows coefficients for the spearman correlation. From the output, it was observed that each of the variables had perfect correlation with themselves with 1.000 as correlation coefficient. Corporate governance disclosure (cgod) exhibited negligible positive association (0.019) with financial reporting quality implying that corporate governance disclosures have no association with financial reporting quality in the sampled firms. Environmental performance disclosure (enpd), exhibited -0.040, indicating a very weak negative correlation with financial reporting quality. Finally, corporate strategy and mission disclosure (cosd) exhibited a weak positive (0.6) correlation with financial reporting quality, implying that the higher the disclosure score, the higher the financial reporting quality. In summary, these results indicate the absence of multicollinearity since all the associations are seen to be weak.

**Table 4.4 Regression Results**

	(1) OLS firq	(2) Random Effects Model firq
Cgod	0.526** (0.015)	0.338 (0.291)
Enpd	-0.098 (0.709)	-0.098 (0.708)
Cosd	0.543** (0.044)	0.555 (0.158)
Constant	2.837*** (0.000)	2.837*** (0.000)
$r^2$	0.333	0.112
N	60.000	60.000
F/W	12.182	6.83
P	0.002	0.234
Hettest	0.02(0.889)	
Vif	1.03	
lagrange		0.10(0.927)

*p*-values in parentheses

\*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

**Source: Author's computation (2025)**

The result obtained from the multivariate regression analyses for the joint effect of all the proxies of non-financial information disclosures on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates is presented in table 4.4 above. The pooled OLS regression model shows an F-statistic of 12.182 with p-value of 0.002 indicating that overall, the OLS model is fit for statistical inference and also that overall, the relationship between non-financial information disclosures and financial reporting quality of the sampled firms is statistically significant. The model gave an R-squared value of 0.333 which means that 33.3% of the changes in financial reporting quality can be explained by the proxies of non-financial information disclosures in the model. However, the unexplained part (66.7%) is captured in the error term.

### 4.3 Checks for regression assumptions and other diagnostics

#### **Homoscedasticity**

The results presented in table 4.4, indicated that the assumption of homoscedasticity in the OLS regression model was not violated, as evidenced by the p-value from the heteroscedasticity test (Hetttest = 0.02, p-value = 0.889<0.05). Therefore, the researcher went on with the analysis.

**Multicollinearity:** The regression model assumes the absence of multicollinearity between the independent variables. This can be detected by observing the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) which is 1.03 in table 4.4, and it is safe to say that there was no multicollinearity evident in the dataset.

**Lagrange Multiplier LM test:** This is carried out to test the suitability of either the random-effect GLS or pooled OLS in testing analyzing the data set. The null hypothesis is that there are no random effects; thus, the variation across entities is zero, and OLS is sufficient; and is to be accepted or rejected in line with the probability value (greater than 0.05) or rejected (less than 0.05). The result presented in table 4.4 above shows a statistic of 0.10 with a corresponding p-value of 0.927; indicating the acceptance of null hypothesis. This implies that the pooled OLS was sufficient. So, the researcher proceeded with the pooled OLS estimates for policy recommendations.

### 4.4 Discussions

Results from the regression model in table 4.4 showed that corporate governance disclosure (cogd) with coefficient and p-value of 0.526 and 0.015 respectively, has a significant positive effect on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria. This means that increase in corporate governance disclosures causes increase in financial reporting quality. This implies that greater transparency in corporate governance practices contributes meaningfully to improving how reliable and credible financial reports are. This is in line with the *a priori* expectation for this study. Also, effective corporate governance practices, when disclosed, show that the company has mechanisms in place to oversee management, mitigate conflicts of interest, and ensure ethical behaviour (Chalaki et al., 2021). This finding aligns with the work of Nurhe (2023) who found a significant relationship between corporate governance practice disclosures and financial reporting quality of listed consumer goods companies in Nigeria. However, Nobanee and Ellili (2022) found a negative relationship between corporate governance disclosure and financial reporting quality, and this was contrary to this study's finding.

Results from the regression model showed that environmental performance disclosure (enpd) with coefficient and p-value of -0.098 and 0.709 respectively, has a statistically non-significant negative effect on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria. The negative coefficient entails in the first place, a movement in the opposite direction or an inverse relationship that could exist subtly. A possible explanation is that environmental disclosures in the conglomerates may not be detailed or standardized enough to influence stakeholder perceptions of financial reporting. The finding here was not in line with the prior expectation. This finding is in line with the studies of Emenyi and Okpo (2023) and

Al-Waeli et al. (2021) who found that environmental disclosures have no significant influence on the quality of financial reports among the manufacturing firms. However, Mahmudah et al. (2023) found a negative relationship between environmental disclosures and financial reporting quality, this was contrary to the study's finding.

Results from the regression model showed that corporate strategy and mission disclosures (cosd) with coefficient and p-value of 0.543 and 0.044 respectively, has a significant positive effect on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria implying that increase in corporate strategy and mission disclosures causes increase in financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria. This was because the p-value was statistically significant at the 5% level. One explanation is that when companies clearly articulate their mission and strategic objectives, it signals direction, transparency and accountability to stakeholders. This kind of clarity can reinforce the integrity of financial reporting by aligning financial disclosures with the firm's stated purpose and vision (Adams, 2020). This finding supports the work of Dagunduro et al (2024) who found a positive association between the clarity and consistency of corporate mission disclosure and long-term financial performance, suggesting a link with financial reporting quality. On the contrary anyways, Carmo and Ribeiro (2022) found that the disclosure of corporate strategy and mission statement does not have any significant influence on financial reporting quality of Portuguese companies.

### 5.1 Conclusion and recommendations

This study looked at the effect of non-financial information disclosure; specifically, human capital disclosure, risk management disclosure, corporate governance disclosure, environmental performance disclosure and corporate strategy and mission disclosure on financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria. The study found that while corporate governance and corporate strategy and mission disclosures significantly influenced financial reporting quality positively, environmental performance. As such, the study concluded that non-financial information disclosures are significant determinants of financial reporting quality of listed conglomerates in Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that environmental performance disclosures should be revisited and enhanced to reflect measurable and sector-relevant environmental activities, as their current form may not be impactful enough to influence financial reporting quality. Firms' top management should continue to develop and clearly communicate their corporate strategies and mission statements in annual reports as they were found to improve reporting quality.

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