

An analysis of corporate environmental communication on the Asian Mining's corporate websites

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the company's environmental communication through the corporate's website using samples from the Asian mining industry. Websites are a communication medium that must be used by companies to convey information and their environmental commitments to stakeholders because they are relatively cost-effective and timely. We applied content analysis to each of the websites of Asian mining companies for 2023. The unit of analysis of this study is all the websites of mining companies in Asia including the homepage to the coders clicked on each link. All menus on the company's website are clicked and opened to ensure that all the information needed has been gathered to answer this research question. The results show that most companies communicate their environmental responsibilities on websites, such as general environmental considerations and statements. A total of 168 mining companies (83.17 percent) use websites as a medium of communication for their environment. Some entities go a step further by prominently displaying environmental information on their homepages, dedicating more pages to it, and even creating a special menu for environmental communication. This research has practical and social implications. For practical implications, the research framework presented herein offers a practical tool for organizations to evaluate and enhance their environmental information communication practices in alignment with prevailing standards in the Asian mining industry. For social implications, the findings of this study can strengthen investors' trust on the company by accessing the company website.

Keywords

Web-based corporate, Environmental communication, Website content analysis, Corporate environmental responsibility, Online communication

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Introduction

One of the industries that has a direct impact on the environment is the mining industry [1]. In recent years, the community and various other stakeholders have tended to oppose mining because it has a negative impact on the environment [2]. This is also caused by mining companies that are not responsible for the negative impact [3]. Companies that care about the environment are those who can measure and assess their sustainability performance and to demonstrate continuous improvement in the long term.

Companies can demonstrate their responsibility to the environment through environmental communication. Environmental communication can help companies to manage their relationships with stakeholders. Environmental communication is an important component of a business's corporate communication process [4]. Companies are required to convey information about the company's environment to stakeholders [5] because the environment is one of the main criteria in today's business world [6]. Companies often disclose environmental information to their stakeholders to provide evidence that they are responsible for their activities and the resulting impact on the environment [7].

Environmental communication to stakeholders can be conveyed through a website known as online environmental communication [8,9]. The benefit that can be obtained through website communication is its timely dimension [10–12]. This study uses the term Online Environmental Communication (OEC) to describe the company's communication through a website about environmental information to their stakeholders.

The study aims to investigate the company's environmental communication through the corporate's website using samples from the Asian mining industry. Websites are a communication medium that must be used by companies to convey information and their environmental commitments to stakeholders because they are relatively cost-effective and timely. Websites can also be used as a means of communication for companies to shape their image and reputation. Previous studies have not examined the websites of mining companies in Asia. Therefore, this study tries to fill the gap by examining the websites of mining companies in Asia using the content analysis method. Specifically, the questions of this research are:

RQ1. Do mining companies in Asia use websites as a medium of communication for their environment?

Method

Mining companies in Asia were used as a sample in this study. There are 261 mining companies listed in the capital markets of each country in Asia. We only use companies that have a website and can be accessed as a sample. The final sample of the study amounted to 202 mining companies.

This research is a qualitative descriptive research. We applied content analysis to each of the websites of Asian mining companies for 2023. The unit of analysis of this study is all the websites of mining companies in Asia including the homepage to the coders clicked on each link. All menus on the company's website are clicked and opened to ensure that all the information needed has been gathered to answer this research question.

This research follows the conceptualization of Moreno & Capriotti (2009), Coders evaluate the organization and presentation of content on websites using types of information such as: achievements, awards, contact us, reports, fact sheets, FAQs, news, overviews, images, podcasts, press releases, RSS feeds, speeches, sustainability reports, videos, or others).

Results and Discussion

We analysed the entire website to ensure all the information needed had been gathered to answer this research question. This study uses 7 environmental indicators to measure what environmental problems are priorities for mining companies in Asia. A total of 168 mining companies (83.17 percent) use websites as a medium of communication for their environment (see Table 1).

Table 1. Environmental communication through the website

Indicators	n	%
Environmental activities	168	83.17%
Water and energy conservation	97	48.02%
Air pollution prevention	94	46.53%
Waste reduction and recycling	81	40.10%
Land management protection and enhancement	99	49.01%
Greenhouse campaigns	37	18.32%
Animal welfare	26	12.87%

In particular, the topic that mining companies communicate the most through their websites is land management protection and enhancement (n=99, 49.01 percent). This number shows that almost 50 percent of the mining companies sampled communicate related to land management, protection and enhancement. The next topics that mining companies communicate the most through their websites are water and energy conservation (n=97, 48.02 percent), air pollution prevention (n=94, 46.53 percent), and waste reduction and recycling (n=81, 40.10 percent). This shows that the communication of mining companies through the website leads to environmental responsibility, especially about water, energy, air pollution, and waste.

In addition to the issues often communicated above, mining companies in Asia also communicate greenhouse campaigns and animal welfare through websites. However, greenhouse campaigns (n=37, 18.32 percent) and animal welfare (n=26, 12.87 percent) still receive less attention from mining companies in Asia. Mining companies are expected to improve their communication about greenhouse campaigns and animal welfare through their websites as it is important about the environment. These findings

may be due to the fact that companies are still learning about web-based environmental communication [1].

The results show that most companies communicate their environmental responsibilities on websites, such as environmental activities. Some entities go a step further by prominently displaying environmental information on their homepages, dedicating more pages to it, and even creating a special menu for environmental communication.

Mining companies are aware that they are under public scrutiny because of their impact on society [14]. These findings support the opinion of [15,16] that websites have the potential to communicate corporate environmental responsibility.

Conclusion

This research follows the conceptualization of [13], Coders evaluate the organization and presentation of content on websites using types of information such as: achievements, awards, contact us, reports, fact sheets, FAQs, news, overviews, images, podcasts, press releases, RSS feeds, speeches, sustainability reports, videos, or others). Although most mining companies in Asia provide information on their environmental activities, less than 50 percent communicate more specific environmental issues, such as land management protection and enhancement, water and energy conservation, air pollution prevention, and waste reduction and recycling. As for the topic of greenhouse campaigns and animal welfare, the least (less than a fifth of the sample) was communicated through the website. These findings may be due to the fact that companies are still learning about web-based environmental communication [1].

This research has practical and social implications. For practical implications, the research framework presented herein offers a practical tool for organizations to evaluate and enhance their environmental information communication practices in alignment with prevailing standards in the Asian mining industry. For social implications, the findings of this study can strengthen investors' trust on the company by accessing the company website.

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