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A Conceptual Model of Economic Development through Sustainable Corporate Finance Practices: A Theoretical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The study develops a conceptual model explaining how sustainable corporate finance practices can contribute to economic development. Corporate finance has traditionally focused on capital allocation, financing decisions, risk management, and firm value maximization. However, increasing sustainability concerns have expanded the role of corporate finance beyond short-term profitability toward long-term economic, social, and environmental value creation. The study argues that firms can support broader development outcomes when they integrate sustainability into financial planning, investment decisions, risk management, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) based financing, and governance practices. The proposed model identifies sustainable corporate finance practices as a key driver of business stability, investment efficiency, innovation capacity, employment generation, resource productivity, and financial market confidence. These mechanisms can contribute to economic development by supporting sustainable growth, industrial development, income generation, economic resilience, and responsible resource utilization. The model also recognizes the importance of moderating conditions such as government policy, corporate governance quality, institutional support, financial market development, regulatory environment, and economic stability. By linking corporate finance theory with sustainable development thinking, this article provides a theoretical explanation of how firm-level financial decisions can influence national and regional development outcomes. The study contributes to existing literature by integrating green finance, ESG practices, responsible investment, and economic development into one conceptual framework. It also offers practical implications for firms, policymakers, and investors seeking to align financial decisions with sustainable economic progress. Future empirical studies may test the proposed model across different industries, economies, and institutional environments.

Keywords: Sustainable Corporate Finance; Economic Development; ESG Financing; Responsible Investment; Conceptual Model

1. **Introduction**

Sustainability is a serious concern in the business and finance spheres today. In earlier days, the finance of the corporation was mainly viewed as a shareholder wealth-oriented function with investment decisions, capital structure decisions, and profit maximization. But with the evolution of business practices, this vision has grown. Businesses don't just have to keep up with the cost considerations; they also need to pay attention to environmental stewardship, social value, ethical governance, and long-term economic sustainability. The shift has sparked a re-evaluation of how companies, investors, and financial institutions allocate finance and the broader impact of financial decisions. This growing focus on climate risk is also impacting corporate finance. Environmental and climate change risks are gradually being recognized as having long-term implications for investors' financial stability, investment performance, and firm value (Krueger et al., 2020). It has paved the way for sustainable finance, which brings environmental, social, and governance criteria to financial decision-making. Sustainable investing is now considered a financial strategy that can shape how the market behaves, its expected returns, and long-term capital deployment (Pástor et al. 2021). Here, the financial side of the corporation is not restricted to short-term profitability. Today's companies face the need to develop innovative financial models to address resilience, responsible investment, efficient resource utilization, and sustainable creation of value. Through responsible investment decisions, firms can find a way to take into account sustainability-related decisions and objectives, thereby developing a wider financial framework that incorporates sustainability risk and social impact. Thus, sustainable corporate finance practices have the potential to be important links between firm-level financial decisions and overall economic development outcomes.

While sustainability has become an important aspect in business and finance, many companies are heavily invested in short-term financial gains. This restrictive perspective can result in inadequate investment planning, waste of resources, suboptimal risk management, and less impact on long-term economic development. Businesses that focus on short-term gains instead of long-term profitability might overlook environmental hazards, social issues, and governance gaps that can impact their overall operations. Uncertainty is one of the challenges in making sustainable finance decisions. For instance, the numerous layers of rating systems and the absence of a common sustainability measurement can complicate the assessment of the true economic value of sustainability initiatives by firms and investors (Avramov et al., 2022). This can lead to uncertainties and less trust in sustainability-focused investment approaches within the corporate world. Meanwhile, some companies could be exposed to increased financial risk, reputational damage, and loss of investor confidence (Bolton & Kacperczyk, 2021). Another issue is that in the face of economic downturns, sustainability measures implemented by the companies don't necessarily shield them from future problems if they lack robust internal capacities and long-term strategy. In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, effectiveness in the execution of the three pillars of ESG appears to be insufficient to sustain the life of the organization without other organizational attributes such as organizational strength and intangible assets (Demers et al., 2021). This illustrates the value of increased theoretical knowledge of the potential for sustainable corporate finance flows to help the firm and, more generally, for economic development.

The study aims to create a theoretical conceptual model that explains the impact of sustainable corporate finance practices in the process of economic development. The study stresses the connection between a firm's financial decisions and the development impact of the firm (business stability, efficient allocation of investments, innovation, job creation, productive use of resources, economic resilience). It outlines a conceptual model in which sustainable corporate finance can play a role in sustainable business and economic development in the long term. The study could be useful for the corporate managers as it has highlighted the importance of sensible allocation of capital, sustainable investment choices, ethical risk management, and financial transparency in corporate governance. Some companies may be more resilient when the crisis hits if they have more sustainable and socially responsible practices in place, and these practices could help them increase their long-term value creation capacity (Bae et al., 2021). Financial institutions and investors may also benefit from the study, as their relations with a company and its financing possibilities can be affected by the corporate ESG profile, and their confidence can be influenced by said profile. (Houston & Shan, 2022) The study will enable the policy makers to understand the role of the firm in the national and regional development in the context of the finance available for the firm. Finance for companies can be responsible, and it can help to create responsible investment, resource efficiency, employment, innovation, and economic resilience.

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

1.To examine the theoretical relationship between sustainable corporate finance and economic development

2.To identify key sustainable finance practices that support long-term business and economic growth

3.To propose a conceptual model linking corporate financial decisions with economic development outcomes

4.To explain the implications of the model for firms, policymakers, investors, and developing economies

2. Literature Review

Corporate finance involves managing finances to fulfil corporate goals and generate long-term value for the company. It involves the activities of capital budgeting, financing decisions, dividend policy, working capital management, risk management, and firm valuation. In the past, a corporate finance perspective was mostly concerned with maximizing profits and shareholder wealth. In today's corporate finance, however, sustainability, quality of governance, environmental responsibility, and long-term economic effects are becoming an integral part of it. The principles of ‘green bond financing' illustrate how environmental objectives and long-term value creation can be enabled through corporate financing decisions. Likewise, green bond issuance can help shareholders to reflect the responsible investment and sustainable financial management (Tang & Zhang, 2020). Sustainable corporate finance combines financial sustainability with environmental, social, and governance aspects. It's about creating value over time, not for short-term gains. This approach is one that firms take into consideration how decisions on investment, financing, risk management, reporting, and governance impact shareholders, employees, communities, the environment, and the broader economy.

During a market shock, environmental and social stocks were found to be resilient in the COVID-19 crisis, suggesting this may be true of sustainability-related characteristics (Albuquerque et al., 2020). Improved accountability and sustainability performance also come from the participation of the shareholders in ESG issues. Investors' confidence in the company can be improved by its performance on the ESG criteria during crises (Broadstock et al., 2021), and the level of the company's ESG performance can impact the debt financing costs and conditions (Houqe et al., 2020). Economic development is more comprehensive than economic growth. Growth is typically defined by rising income and GDP, while development also involves employment, productivity, innovation, infrastructure, income improvement, financial stability, environmental quality, and sustainable use of resources. Finance is an integral part of modern economies and influences development outcomes through redirecting funds to productive and sustainable activities. Green finance can help to achieve high-quality economic development and reduce environmental pollution and energy consumption (Li et al., 2022). It can also facilitate the low-carbon economic transition by promoting cleaner technologies and sustainable production systems. Moreover, green finance can also enhance economic development and environmental quality, demonstrating that the development process should consider growth and resource utilization responsibility at the same time. Corporate finance plays a role in economic development as decisions that are made at the firm level can impact investments, employment, innovation, productivity, industrial development, tax revenues, and financial market development.

Efficient capital allocation helps firms invest in productive assets, grow, and create jobs. Sustainable corporate finance has the potential to further strengthen this relationship by fostering investment in projects that generate financial and social value. A connection with supply chain management (SCM) can help overcome financing constraints and enhance the ESG performance of companies, particularly with the implementation of green financing policies. Green innovation, as well, can be another dimension of sustainable development as a part of ESG performance (Lian et al., 2023). Likewise, digital finance can facilitate corporate green innovation through, for example, enhancing corporate funding access and facilitating environmentally responsible investment (Liu et al., 2022). Sustainable finance practices are practices in which firms embed sustainability into financial decision-making. These include capital budgeting for sustainable growth, responsible investment, green financing, financial planning based on ESG criteria, ethical risk management, long-term capital allocation, transparent financial reporting, and stakeholder orientation in planning. Green bonds are one of the largest sustainable finance tools as they enable companies to obtain capital for environmental good projects. Given the pricing of corporate green bonds, investors could be willing to pay a premium for the environmental features of financial instruments (Agliardi & Agliardi, 2021). Additionally, the time of issuance, issuer type, and credibility play a role in green bond pricing (Fatica et al., 2021). Green bond issuance may offer financial benefits by attracting investors interested in sustainable approaches to finance (Gianfrate & Peri, 2019). The price of financial products may be affected by the perceived greenness of the products (Hyun et al., 2020). National climate commitments and sustainability policies affect the market growth of green bonds. ESG performance can also lower the debt cost (Arora & Sharma, 2022). Existing literature shows that sustainable finance, ESG performance, green bonds, climate risk, and green innovation are important for firms and economies. Most studies, however, are isolated studies addressing specific topics like ESG ratings, investors' behavior, green bond pricing, cost of capital, and country-level green finance. One of the uncertainties that still exists is related to the differences between the ESG rating systems, which may rate the same firm differently. While green bond research helps to illuminate the market pricing, it cannot fully demonstrate that green bonds help to drive development via firm-level decisions, innovation, job creation, and resource productivity (Fatica et al., 2021). Likewise, the studies on green finance at the country level tend to be macroeconomic studies rather than financial mechanism studies of corporations. In light of this, this study aims to propose a conceptual model correlating sustainable corporate finance with economic development via business stability, investment efficiency, innovation, employment, resource productivity, and confidence in the financial market.

3. Theoretical Foundation

3.1 Stakeholder Theory

The concept of stakeholder theory is an important foundation for the understanding of sustainable corporate finance; it implies that companies should not only cater to the shareholders but also take care of their employees, customers, communities, governments, and the environment. Sustainable corporate finance is considered from the context of this study as a financial approach that is stakeholder-oriented with investment, financing, risk management, and reporting decisions aimed at generating value for the firm and society. Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives can motivate companies to increase their accountability, transparency, and sustainability practices through shareholder engagement (Barko et al., 2022). Likewise, the importance of corporate social responsibility can be heightened in a crisis, as there is a possibility of building more trust and resilience among stakeholders if the companies are responsible.

3.2 Resource-Based View

The resource-based view shows how sustainable financial practices can be transformed to become strategic capabilities that can enhance long-term competitiveness. In this respect, firms with strong ESG systems, inclusive governance, responsible capital usage, and risk management frameworks that incorporate sustainability aspects can generate valuable resources within the company that it is challenging for rivals to replicate. These skills can be beneficial for reputation, investor confidence, crisis management, and the firm's value in the long run. The evidence suggests that intangible assets were important in firms' ability to be resilient during the COVID-19 crisis. Similarly, when it comes to times of financial crisis, the performance of ESG may render the firms more stable and lead to an increase in investor confidence in the markets (Broadstock et al., 2021). In this context, sustainable corporate finance is a resource that can help to support the performance of the company and economic development in general.

3.3 Sustainable Development Theory

Sustainable development theory relates corporate financial choices and actions to overall economic, social, and environmental impacts. It proposes that economic development should not be measured solely in the growth of financial returns but also in regard to environmental quality, social welfare, innovation, and responsible resource use. In this study, sustainable corporate finance is regarded as a tool by which corporations can play a development role in financing cleaner technologies, fostering green innovation, enhancing productivity, and facilitating efficient resource allocation. The high-quality economic development, environmental pollution, and energy consumption can be affected by green finance. Green innovation as a component of corporate ESG performance can also be a means of sustainable development. Moreover, green finance can play a positive role in economic development and environmental improvement, demonstrating that finance can facilitate development when it is channeled to sustainable activities.

3.4 Agency Theory

The conflicts that can occur between managers, shareholders, and other stakeholders in the pursuit of personal interests rather than long-term organizational value are explained by agency theory. Transparent financial governance is significant in sustainable corporate finance as it may help decrease information asymmetry, enhance shareholder and stakeholder satisfaction, and ensure accountability for the administration in corporate decisions. Large shareholders and institutional investors have the power to improve the environmental responsibility of companies by watching for company behavior and calling for lower carbon emissions (Azar et al. 2021). There may also be pressure on firms to adopt better ESG practices and ESG governance quality due to shareholder engagement.

3.5 Institutional Theory

Institutional theory is the theory that aims to understand the effect of rules, expectations, public policies, sentiments, and investor pressures on firms. Regulatory, market, institutional, and societal forces can also drive the adoption of sustainable finance practice by firms. Linkages between green finance policies and supply chain management and institutional support can alleviate financing constraints and enhance corporate ESG performance (Gao et al., 2024). National climate pledges and sustainability-related policy frameworks are also found to affect the development of green bond markets. Climate risk is gradually becoming part of financial decision-making by institutional investors, thus providing incentives for companies to incorporate sustainability in corporate finance. Table 1 shows the theoretical background of the study. It demonstrates that sustainable corporate finance is not only about the profitability of the company, but also about the value of its stakeholders, the capabilities of the company, responsible governance, sustainable development, and the supportive role of institutions.

Table 1. Theoretical Foundation of the Study

Theory	**Core Explanation**	**Application to Sustainable Corporate Finance**	**Relevance to Economic Development**
Stakeholder Theory	Firms should consider the interests of shareholders, employees, customers, communities, government, and the environment.	Sustainable corporate finance encourages investment, financing, risk management, and reporting decisions that create value for both firms and wider stakeholders.	Stakeholder-oriented financial decisions can improve accountability, transparency, trust, and social value creation.
Resource-Based View	Firms gain long-term competitiveness by developing valuable, rare, and difficult-to-imitate internal capabilities.	ESG systems, transparent governance, responsible capital allocation, and sustainability-based risk management can become strategic firm capabilities.	These capabilities can improve reputation, investor confidence, resilience, and long-term firm performance, supporting wider economic stability.

Sustainable Development Theory	Economic progress should include environmental quality, social welfare, innovation, and responsible resource use, not only financial growth.	Sustainable corporate finance directs capital toward cleaner technologies, green innovation, productivity improvement, and efficient resource allocation.	Finance can contribute to sustainable economic growth, environmental improvement, pollution reduction, and responsible development.
Agency Theory	Conflicts may arise when managers pursue personal interests instead of long-term shareholder and stakeholder value.	Transparent financial governance can reduce information asymmetry, improve accountability, and align managerial decisions with long-term sustainability goals.	Strong monitoring and governance can improve responsible corporate behavior, reduce risk, and support sustainable financial decision-making.
Institutional Theory	Firms are influenced by regulations, market expectations, government policies, investor pressure, and social norms.	Regulations, green finance policies, institutional pressure, and climate commitments can encourage firms to adopt sustainable finance practices.	Supportive institutional and regulatory environments can reduce financing constraints, improve ESG performance, and promote green financial market development.

4. Corporate Finance and Economic Development

These decisions made by companies have the potential to affect company outcomes, as well as overall economic and social outcomes, through their effects on investment productivity, innovation, enterprise resilience, employment creation, and responsible investment in resources. In this context, sustainable corporate finance is considered a financial orientation that is manifested at the level of the company, combining the financial dimension with the environmental dimension, social value, ethical governance, and long-term economic stability. The core of the framework is sustainable corporate financing practices. Some of them are responsible for capital allocation, sustainable investments, long-term financial planning, ethical risk management, financing based on environmental, social, and governance principles, and financial governance transparency. The corporate green bond is one such example of how financing decisions can be aligned with the objectives of environmental protection and help in the long-term creation of corporate value (Flammer, 2021). Likewise, responsible investing offers a financial framework to incorporate ESG matters into risk-return considerations (Pedersen et al., 2021).

ESG performance can also enhance the financing terms, which include reducing the cost of debt, making sustainability relatable to corporate financial planning, and access to capital (Arora & Sharma, 2022). The framework also identifies some firm-level and market-level pathways through which sustainable corporate finance is related to economic development. One of these mechanisms is business stability – a business that incorporates sustainability into its financial decisions may be more stable when financial crises hit. Results from the COVID-19 crisis reveal that environmental and social stocks were resilient in periods of market disruption, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance also assisted firm stability in the crisis (Broadstock et al., 2021). Capacity for innovation is also a key mechanism, as sustainable finance can shift funding into green innovation, cleaner technologies, and responsible production systems. Digital finance is also known to boost the green innovation of companies by enhancing the availability of financial resources. They can also influence their corporate ESG profiles, and hence their banking relationships, and sustainability might increase financial market confidence and access to external funding. In this context, economic development is viewed as a multidimensional process and not merely a measure of economic growth. It's about sustainable growth, job creation, productivity, industrial development, income generation, economic resilience, and responsible use of resources. As mentioned by Li et al. (2022), green finance can help achieve high-quality economic development, which includes aspects like energy consumption, pollution reduction, and sustainable investment. It could also have a supportive role in the low-carbon economic transition by redirecting the investment funds into cleaner and more productive economic activities.

In addition, green finance can advance environmental quality, and the other benefit is its contribution to economic development, which confirms that green finance should go hand in hand with economic development, which is focused on financial development and environmental responsibility. It also acknowledges that the external environment affects the linkage between sustainable corporate finance and economic development. The effectiveness of sustainable corporate finance practices could be reinforced or undermined by government policy, financial market development, corporate governance quality, institutional support, economic stability, and regulatory environment. Implementing supportive green finance policies can alleviate financing constraints and enhance the performance of ESG measures. Finally, national climate pledges and sustainability policies can have an impact on the development of green financial markets. Further, environmental and governance pressures of institutions have the potential to influence institutional environmental actions and carbon-related decisions (Azar et al., 2021). So, a supportive institutional, regulatory, and governance framework is more conducive to sustainable corporate finance and to economic development.

5. Pathways from Sustainable Corporate Finance to Economic Development

Companies can begin to use sustainable approaches to finance, like responsible capital allocation, financing based on the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) framework, ethical risk management, sustainable investment decisions, and transparent financial governance. These practices have an impact on the ways that companies acquire, distribute, and administer funds. Second, these financial practices create firm-specific effects such as increased business stability, more efficient use of investments, increased innovation capacity, enhanced employment potential, increased resource productivity, and increased financial market confidence. For instance, a green bond issued by a corporation can enable the company to allocate funds to green projects and benefit from long-term value creation. Additionally, green bond issuance can enhance shareholders' welfare by conveying responsible corporate conduct and boosting investors' trust. Further, sustainable development can be promoted through green innovation and cleaner production systems, where ESG-related practices play a supporting role (Lian et al., 2023), and by facilitating access to resources for companies to engage in green innovation through digital finance (Liu et al., 2022). Thirdly, these are the outcomes of the firm that lead to overall economic development. Responsible investment, ethical risk management, enhanced innovation, and efficient use of resources can help foster productivity growth, job creation, industrial development, economic resilience, and sustainable resource use. Green finance has been linked to both economic growth and environmental quality, and it is possible to allocate green financial resources to sustainable activities, which can support economic growth. However, the strength of this relationship depends on the policy conditions, governance qualities, institutional pressures, and financial market conditions.

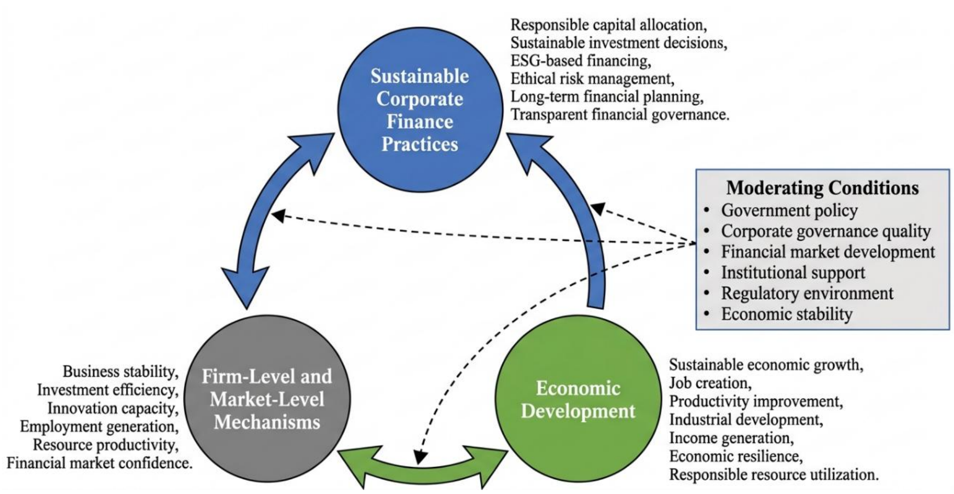

Figure 1. Circular Framework Linking Sustainable Corporate Finance Practices with Economic Development

The circular relationship between sustainable corporate finance practices, mechanisms at the level of the firm, and economic development is illustrated in Figure 1. The framework illustrates the positive impact that a sustainable finance practice framework, including responsible allocation of capital, sustainable investment decisions, financing based on environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles, ethical risk management, long-term financial planning and transparent financial governance, can have on the stability of the business, efficient investment utilisation, the ability to make innovations, job creation, productive use of productive resources and confidence in financial markets. These mechanisms help improve economic development by fostering sustainable economic growth, job creation, productivity, industry development, income generation, economic resilience, and responsible use of resources.

6. Theoretical Relationships and Propositions

By fostering sustainable financial planning, capital funds allocation, and risk management, sustainable corporate finance practices can contribute to improving business stability. Companies that have sustainability-based financial practices have a higher probability of gaining trust from stakeholders, enhancing governance quality, and mitigating external shocks. The COVID-19 market crisis is a testament to the performance of environmental and social stocks during financial crises (Albuquerque et al., 2020). Likewise, ESG performance contributed to the stability of the business during crisis situations in China (Broadstock et al., 2021), and CSR helped build stakeholder confidence in times of uncertainty. From this consideration, the following proposition is put forward:

Proposition 1: Sustainable corporate finance practices enhance long-term business stability.

One effective way in which sustainable corporate finance can facilitate productive economic activity is the responsible allocation of capital. This helps to optimise the use of financial resources by directing them towards financially viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially positive projects, which in turn helps create value over the long-term and optimises investment decisions. Corporate green bonds are an example of how to finance environmental projects and promote corporate value. An example of this is provided by corporate green bonds, which are a strategy for financing environmental projects while promoting corporate value (Flammer, 2021). Moreover, the issuance of green bonds could also bring some benefits for investors: it means that the company is promoting sustainable investment (Tang & Zhang, 2020). Besides, green bonds can help to reach new investors with a sustainability mindset and offer financial benefits to the issuing companies (Gianfrate & Peri, 2019). Hence, the following proposition is made:

Proposition 2: Responsible capital allocation improves investment efficiency and supports productive economic activity.

Businesses are increasingly at risk of financial consequences of climate change, carbon exposure, governance, and social responsibility, making ethical risk management indispensable for the sustainable financing of the company. Failure to address these risks can lead to greater financial fragility, a lack of investor confidence, and diminished long-term resilience. The carbon risk has emerged as an issue for investors and firm valuation (Bolton & Kacperczyk, 2021). Firms and investors can also be exposed to significant financial risks due to climate-related tail risk (Ilhan et al., 2021). Institutional investors' increasing focus on climate risk adds to the evidence that climate is a key component of corporate finance decision-making. Hence, the following proposition is offered:

Proposition 3: Ethical risk management strengthens firm resilience and contributes to economic stability.

Directing investments towards more sustainable technologies, resource efficiency, and sustainable production systems can stimulate innovation, job creation, and productivity growth. Such investments can have positive effects on the performance of the firms and wider economic and environmental outcomes. Digital finance can be used to boost the access of companies to finance, thus supporting green innovation. Another facet of corporate ESG performance that can help advance sustainable development is green innovation. In addition, green finance can help achieve high-quality economic growth, affecting energy consumption, pollution reduction, and sustainable industrial transformation.

Proposition 4: Sustainable investment decisions encourage innovation, employment generation, and productivity growth.

The quality of governance and policy support are closely linked, and both play important roles in the contribution of sustainable corporate finance to economic development. Firms that are well-governed, have engaged shareholders, are well-regulated, and have strong institutional pressure can achieve better outcomes from sustainable finance practices. Engaging shareholders can enhance ESG performance and accountability (Barko et al., 2022). The implementation of green financial policies can alleviate financing pressures and enhance the ESG performance of companies. Climate commitments and sustainability policies at the national level can also facilitate the development of green financial markets and push companies to engage in sustainable finance.

Proposition 5: Effective corporate governance and supportive government policy strengthen the relationship between sustainable corporate finance and economic development.

Effective sustainable corporate finance requires firm-level financial decisions, as well as external governance and policy context. However, their role in economic development could be constrained in the absence of robust regulation, weak corporate governance, inadequate institutional support, and less developed financial markets, even after adopting responsible capital allocation, financing based on ESG principles and ethical risk management, and sustainable investment principles. Robust governance structures enhance transparency, accountability, and trust among stakeholders, and enabling public policy creates incentives for companies to engage in sustainable projects. Corporate governance is a crucial factor in this, as it ensures that decisions about the company's finances are not made at the expense of the short-term interests of the company but for the long-term good of the organisation and the shareholders. Shareholder engagement can help drive better environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance by leveraging pressure on companies to become more responsible with their environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) practices. From the policy side, green finance policies can lessen financing obstacles and enhance corporate ESG performance, providing companies with the capital for sustainable investment and innovation (Gao et al., 2024). Likewise, national climate commitments or sustainability policies can facilitate the development of green financial markets and promote sustainable finance practices by companies (Tolliver et al., 2020). Good governance and supportive government policy as enabling conditions thus help to enhance the role of sustainable corporate finance on economic development. The theoretical relations and propositions are shown in Table 1

Table 1. Theoretical Relationships and Propositions

Proposition	**Sustainable Corporate Finance Dimension**	**Theoretical Relationship**	**Supporting Mechanism**	**Supporting References**
Proposition 1: Sustainable corporate finance practices enhance long-term business stability.	Sustainable financial planning, ESG integration, and responsible risk management	Sustainability-oriented financial practices strengthen long-term business stability.	Firms that integrate sustainability into financial decisions can improve stakeholder trust, governance quality, and resilience against external shocks.	Albuquerque et al. (2020); Broadstock et al. (2021); Bae et al. (2021)
Proposition 2: Responsible capital allocation improves investment efficiency and supports productive economic activity.	Responsible capital allocation and green financing	Efficient allocation of capital toward sustainable projects improves investment quality and productive economic activity.	Capital directed toward financially viable, environmentally responsible, and socially beneficial projects can support long-term value creation and sustainable	Flammer (2021); Tang & Zhang (2020); Gianfrate & Peri (2019)

			investment outcomes.	
Proposition 3: Ethical risk management strengthens firm resilience and contributes to economic stability.	Ethical risk management and climate-risk consideration	Managing environmental, climate, governance, and social risks improves firm resilience and supports economic stability.	Firms that address carbon risk, climate-related financial exposure, and sustainability risks can reduce vulnerability and improve investor confidence.	Bolton & Kacperczyk (2021); Ilhan et al. (2021); Krueger et al. (2020)
Proposition 4: Sustainable investment decisions encourage innovation, employment generation, and productivity growth.	Sustainable investment and green innovation financing	Investment in cleaner technologies and sustainable production systems supports innovation, employment, and productivity.	Sustainable investment can improve access to finance for green innovation, promote resource efficiency, and support high-quality economic development.	Liu et al. (2022); Lian et al. (2023); Li et al. (2022)

Proposition 5: Effective corporate governance and supportive government policy strengthen the relationship between sustainable corporate finance and economic development.	Governance quality, policy support, and institutional environment	Governance and policy conditions moderate the relationship between sustainable corporate finance and economic development.	Strong governance improves transparency and accountability, while green finance policies and national climate commitments reduce financing barriers and encourage sustainable investment.	Barko et al. (2022); Gao et al. (2024); Tolliver et al. (2020)

7. Discussion

The conceptual framework suggests how sustainable corporate finance can relate the financial transactions of the firm to the economic development more broadly. Traditionally, corporate finance has been concerned with capital allocation, financing decisions, risk management, and capital value, but the addition of sustainability brings these to a more comprehensive role, aiming to create economic, social, and environmental value over a longer time horizon. Responsible investing demonstrates that ESG factors could be integrated into financial decision-making, all while taking into account the risk and return goals. Similarly, sustainable investing impacts market dynamics and capital allocation by changing the investor's perception of long-term risk and returns. In the macro level, green finance has been linked with economic development and environmental quality, suggesting that the financial market can be a driver of development if it is used to finance sustainable activities. Theoretically, the framework is contributing by linking the models of corporate finance with sustainable development; how the firm-level financial decisions influence the national or regional development through stability of the firm, efficient usage of investment, innovation, employment generation, and use of the resource in a sustainable way. Sustainable finance principles can have a positive effect on the stability, reputation, investment quality, and long-term profitability of companies. Companies can gain greater resilience to external shocks and stakeholder influence by taking sustainability into account when deciding on capital expenditures, financing, and risk management. In the case of a crisis, it is possible that CSR-oriented companies may achieve more trust from the stakeholders, hence building organizational resiliency. The firm's intangible assets, such as reputation, governance quality, knowledge, and sustainability capacity, can also enhance firm performance in uncertain periods. Furthermore, companies with higher ESG scores might experience positive changes in their banking relations and greater access to financing (Houston & Shan, 2022). Sustainable corporate finance is therefore not just a compliance activity but a way of improving the competitiveness, financial credibility, and value creation in the long term. This framework also applies to the policymakers. Public policy can support sustainable corporate finance by regulating, incentivizing, implementing green investment policies, establishing sustainability disclosure requirements, and mandating financial transparency. Supportive green finance policies can effectively alleviate financing constraints and boost corporate ESG performance. Green finance also has the potential to contribute to the transition of economic systems towards low-carbon production by promoting sustainable industrial changes and cleaner production systems. The development of green financial markets and the incentive of companies to use sustainable finance concepts can also be further facilitated by national climate commitments and sustainable finance policies (Tolliver et al., 2020).

In developing economies, companies could be constrained by access to funds, weak institutional frameworks, and the need to accommodate growth and environmental issues, all of which make these policy measures particularly relevant. The framework emphasizes the need for sustainability-related financial metrics for investors to identify companies that can contribute to long-term economic value. ESG quality, exposure to climate risk, governance transparency, innovation capacity, and long-term resilience are just a few of the factors investors ought to take into account alongside profitability. ESG rating uncertainty is, however, a challenge since different rating systems may rate a similar firm differently (Avramov et al., 2022). Climate risk is also financially relevant, as it can impact firm value, asset pricing, and portfolio performance (Krueger et al., 2020). Green also reveals that sustainable investments can have different dynamics than traditional investments in fluctuating markets (Pástor et al., 2022). Additionally, ESG performance can also affect the cost of capital, highlighting the value of sustainability for investors and corporate managers alike (Wong et al., 2024). However, the study is conceptual in nature and is not tested empirically. The proposed framework should be tested in the future with empirical studies, quantitative and qualitative methods. It can also study how greenwashing, quality of ESG disclosure, corporate governance, and policy support shape sustainable corporate finance outcomes.

8. Conclusion

The study concluded that sustainable corporate finance is not only a way for the growth of a company but an important factor in the economic development as well. The choices that companies make when deciding on their financial matters have an impact on profitability, but also on where to invest, how much risk to take, how well they can innovate, how confident they can make their stakeholders, and how much value they can create over the long term. By implementing responsible capital allocation, sustainable investment decisions, ethical risk management, ESG-based financing, and transparent financial governance, firms can enhance their internal performance and overall development. According to the conceptual model, the Sustainable Corporate Finance Economic Development Framework (SCEF) has a strong impact on the economic development process through different paths such as stability of businesses, efficiency of investments, innovation, job creation, resource productivity, and financial market confidence. The pathways provide insights into the ways in which the financial practices of firms can contribute to sustainable growth, industrial development, income generation, economic resilience, and responsible resource use. It also highlights that governance quality, government policy, institutional support, regulatory conditions, and financial market development can boost or hinder this relationship. The study offers a theoretical analysis explaining how corporate finance can be linked with the Sustainable Development Goals in general. It underscores the importance of financial decisions as tools for long-term economic growth and development, urging action from companies, policymakers, and investors. The proposed model could be tested in the future empirically in various sectors, economies, and institutions.

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