

Integrating Market-Oriented Social Responsibility into the Mining Sector: Enhancing Stakeholder Trust, Brand Equity, and Sustainable Development

Saeid. Iranmanesh¹, Amir. Khanlari^{2*}

¹ PhD Student of Marketing Management, Kish International Campus, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran



² Associate Professor, Faculty of Business Management, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: khanlari@ut.ac.ir

Editor

Azar Kafashpoor
Professor, Department of
Educational Management and
Human Resource Development,
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad,
Mashhad, Iran
kafashpor@um.ac.ir

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Lourdes Atiaja Atiaja
Universidad de las Fuerzas Armadas ESPE, Ecuador.
Email: natiaja@espe.edu.ec
Reviewer 2: Marco Yamba-Yugsi
Unidad Académica de Posgrado, Universidad Católica de Cuenca, Azuay 010101,
Ecuador
Email: marco.yamba@ucacue.edu.ec

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the first paragraph, the introduction of the study's purpose is somewhat vague. The manuscript states: "This paper investigates the impact of market-oriented social responsibility (MOSR) in the mining sector." While this is a clear research focus, the introduction could benefit from a more precise definition of MOSR and how it differs from other forms of CSR. I recommend adding a clearer explanation of MOSR as a construct and its relevance to the mining sector specifically. This will help readers unfamiliar with the concept understand its distinctiveness and importance in the current research.

The context surrounding the mining sector in the introduction is brief and lacks depth. You mention that the mining industry is often under scrutiny, but do not fully explain why. Given that this is a central argument of your paper, I suggest expanding on why MOSR is particularly crucial in the mining sector (e.g., environmental degradation, community relations, etc.). Citing studies that discuss the sector's challenges with CSR could bolster this argument, such as the work by Velte (2020).

The literature review is comprehensive but somewhat generic. For instance, in the paragraph beginning with “Several studies have addressed CSR in various sectors...” (Paragraph 6), I recommend specifying how these studies relate directly to the mining industry. A deeper dive into mining-specific CSR literature, such as works by Jha and Rangarajan (2020) and others focusing on the resource extraction industry, could improve the review’s relevance.

The methodology section lacks sufficient detail regarding the sample size and selection criteria. For instance, in Paragraph 12, you state, “A total of 300 participants were surveyed.” However, the rationale for choosing this sample size is not explained. I recommend including information on how the sample was selected (e.g., random sampling, purposive sampling) and why this size is adequate for the statistical analyses performed. Also, more information on the demographic profile of the sample would strengthen this section.

You mention that the survey was designed to capture participants' perceptions of MOSR in the mining sector. It would be useful to clarify how the questionnaire items were developed. For instance, were these items adapted from previous literature or designed specifically for this study? If adapted, I suggest citing the original studies to show the robustness of your instrument. Furthermore, how was validity ensured in the design process?

It would be useful to mention whether any control variables were included in the analysis. For example, factors like company size, geographical location, or industry reputation could influence the relationship between MOSR and brand equity. If these were controlled for, the manuscript should explain how and why. This would strengthen the robustness of your findings.

In your discussion of stakeholder trust as a mediator, the role of this variable is not fully explained. While you state that trust mediates the relationship between MOSR and brand equity, further elaboration on why trust is the most critical mediator is needed. Studies like those by Fatma et al. (2015) provide a more in-depth exploration of how trust impacts stakeholder behavior. Incorporating these insights could enrich the analysis.

The discussion lacks a comparative analysis of your findings with those from other industries or geographical contexts. For instance, how does MOSR in the mining sector compare to that in industries like oil, gas, or manufacturing? Comparing your results with studies such as those by Jha and Rangarajan (2020) or Velte (2020) could reveal whether the effects of MOSR on brand equity are industry-specific or universal across resource-extraction sectors.

The limitations section mentions that the sample was limited to stakeholders familiar with the mining sector. This is an important point, but the impact of this limitation could be discussed further. How might this affect the generalizability of your results? Could biases related to familiarity with mining operations have influenced participants' responses? Providing a more thorough analysis of this limitation would strengthen this section.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In Paragraph 9, you mention “stakeholder theory” as the theoretical basis for your research. While the use of stakeholder theory is appropriate, I would encourage you to expand on the application of this theory in the mining sector. How do mining companies specifically manage stakeholder interests related to environmental sustainability and community impact? Including more detailed examples or case studies could enrich the theoretical grounding of your argument.

The hypotheses are clearly stated, but the relationship between MOSR and brand equity could be explained in greater detail. For example, it would be beneficial to add a sentence or two explaining why you hypothesize that the environmental and economic dimensions of MOSR have a stronger effect on brand equity than the social dimension. This could be supported by referencing studies like Boudlaie et al. (2021) that explore how environmental and economic factors impact corporate reputation.

In the data analysis section, you mention the use of structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the hypotheses. However, there is no mention of how model fit was assessed. I recommend including fit indices such as the Comparative Fit Index (CFI),

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), or Chi-square values to justify the validity of your SEM results. Additionally, did you perform any reliability tests (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) to ensure the internal consistency of the scales used?

While you provide a structural model for the relationship between MOSR, stakeholder trust, and brand equity, the figure lacks a legend or detailed explanation. In Paragraph 17, you refer to this model, but it would be helpful to include a more in-depth description of each construct in the model. What specific indicators are used to measure "trust" and "brand equity"? How were these operationalized? Clearer definitions of each construct would help readers understand the model's components.

The results are presented clearly, but there is insufficient discussion about the effect sizes. For example, you report that "MOSR positively influences stakeholder trust and brand equity," but the statistical significance (p-values) and effect sizes (e.g., path coefficients in SEM) are not mentioned. Including these details would provide a clearer understanding of the strength and magnitude of the relationships.

In the section on future research, you suggest that longitudinal studies could further investigate the impact of MOSR on brand equity. This is a valid suggestion, but it would be beneficial to provide specific recommendations on how these studies could be designed. For example, could future research examine how MOSR strategies evolve over time and whether these changes are reflected in long-term stakeholder perceptions? Including such specific ideas would make this section more actionable.

In Paragraph 34, you mention the role of sustainability reporting in enhancing brand equity. While this is an important point, you could deepen the discussion by referencing recent studies on sustainability reporting frameworks (e.g., GRI, SASB). How does sustainability reporting specifically impact consumer trust in the mining sector? This would strengthen your argument and show alignment with contemporary academic and practical discussions on sustainability reporting in business.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.