

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **Sustainability Reporting Based on GRI Indicators**

**Md. Al Amin<sup>1</sup> Md. Razaul Islam<sup>2</sup> Md. Abdul Halim<sup>3\*#</sup>**

1. Department of Accounting, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail, Bangladesh

2. Department of Accounting & Information Systems, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

3. Department of Business Administration, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail, Bangladesh

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**Abstract:** Every company wants to make a profit in the short run but doesn't think about the long run. The environment and human resources are used by the companies but eventually, they will react in a repugnant way. The environment is being polluted every day and it is a threat to human life as well as the world. To assess the impact of activities being done by the companies, a non-governmental organization was established in Boston called Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) in 1997. GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) established a sustainability reporting framework that provides a systematic guideline for the sake of companies to disclose their performance on the environmental, economic, and social degree of sustainability. This study will find out how responsible multinational (listed and non-listed) companies (MNC) in the case of sustainability reporting when they are consistently doing business in the environment of Bangladesh. This study was analyzed based on GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) guidelines towards their reporting on sustainability. A quantitative score from 0 to 3 was given for each of 84 performance indicators (9, 30, and 45 exhibitors for environmental, economic, and social dimensions respectively) of the GRI 3 guidelines based on sustainability reporting. This study reports that tidings on the economic degree are better compared to environmental and social dimensions. Much deviation is reported in environmental and social dimensions, but less deviation is reported in economic dimensions by the selected companies as the sample. Overall, the reporting practices of Nestle Bangladesh Ltd are better than other selected companies.

**Keywords:** Sustainability reporting, GRI, MNC, Performance indicators

### **1. Introduction**

The objective of this study is to check the level of adherence to GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) indicators

that multinational (listed and non-listed) companies in Bangladesh are using in their sustainability reports and what are the differences between listed and non-listed companies and to find out the major problems behind

\*Corresponding Author, and # Co-First Author:

Md. Abdul Halim,

Department of Business Administration, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail, Bangladesh;

Email: [halim.ac.mbstu@gmail.com](mailto:halim.ac.mbstu@gmail.com)

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good sustainability reporting practices in the multinational companies of Bangladesh. Sustainability reporting is prescribed as like financial reporting and Corporate Social Reporting (CSR). Financial reporting refers economic performance of the company whereas Corporate Social Reporting refers social and environmental performance of the company<sup>[1,2]</sup>.

Sustainability is the state of the global system, which includes environmental, social, and economic dimensions where the demand of the present is being fulfilled except sacrificing the competence of upcoming generations to accomplish their peculiar needs<sup>①</sup>. Sustainability is the combination of two words; 'Sustain' and 'Ability' that is Sustainability. The simplest meaning of sustainability is: "the ability to sustain" or, put another way, "the capacity to sustain"<sup>a</sup>. As per the Oxford Dictionary, sustainability means "able to be maintained at a demonstrated rate or level" that is sustainable living. Asheim (1994a) found that upliftment is everlasting if it is non-decreasing the normal level of life. At present, the most serious global issues, such as poverty, climate change, human rights violations, & legal compliance, have also compelled corporations to consider the social & environmental effects of their operations<sup>[3]</sup>. An increasing number of companies and organizations want to make their operations sustainable and contribute to sustainable development. An organization will be able to measure, feel and convey its environmental, economic, and social, and corporate government tradition<sup>[3]</sup>. Reporting on the organization's sustainability performance will give a clear idea of its impacts on the internal and external stakeholders. This reporting may be named as financial reporting, triple-bottom-line reporting (social=people, environment=planet, economic=profit) and corporate social reporting (CSR), etc. As per the definition of GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) "Companies and organizations are being enabled to report sustainable information in a genre such as financial reporting<sup>[3]</sup>. Business like sustainability reporting provides watchable data, with accordant manifestation and prosody"<sup>②</sup>. Many companies are incorporating environmental and social information into their public reports in response to demands from shareholders and stakeholders for more information so that they make better-informed decisions about the company's performance in this area. Morhardt, Baird, and Freeman (2002) have found out eight arguments to interpret why the organizations involve in sustainability reporting practices, that are (i) proactive cost reduction and stricter regulations for the future, (ii)

complacency with environment codes, (iii) a reduction in operational expenses, (iv) the promotion of stakeholder relations, (v) the firm's perceived environmental visibility, (vi) the belief that reporting on such issues can lead to a competitive advantage, (vii) the realization that the company's organizational legitimacy is in jeopardy without active environmental management, and (viii) a sense of social responsibilities of doing business and a desire to follow societal norms<sup>[4]</sup>. The number of organizations reporting on sustainability is increasing all the time. Large corporations have discovered that environmental awareness and sustainable activities result in the triple bottom line (TBL), which includes social, environmental, and financial advantages<sup>[5]</sup>. TBL is commonly used to conceal the company's motives and to consider the demands of all stakeholders, including business partners, workers, consumers, shareholders, governments, local communities, and the general public<sup>[6,7]</sup>.

This study will enrich knowledge about sustainability reporting level, the compliance status, practical situation of sustainability reporting in the multinational company of our country, and the level of disclosure of sustainability reporting prepared by the multinational companies of Bangladesh. The findings of this study may contribute to government, private sector, academia, and civil society.

The remaining sections of this study are as follows: 2. Literature Review, 3. Methodology, 4. Findings of this study, 5. Conclusions and Policy Implication.

## 2. Literature Review

There is a generally acknowledged need for people, organizations, and society to develop techniques for determining the extent to which existing actions are unsustainable<sup>[8]</sup>. The sustainability report is one of these tools<sup>[9]</sup>. This tendency has been examined using two theories: the Legitimacy theory & the Stakeholder theory. The Legitimacy theory states that to maintain organizational functions a company has to behave in a way that is demanded by society<sup>[10]</sup>. The need of legitimizing its actions drives corporations to create sustainability reports since the information contained in the reports serves to improve society's image of the organization<sup>[11]</sup>. According to Cho and Patten, (2007), firms employ this disclosure as a legitimizing technique<sup>[12]</sup>. The grade of the firms is a valuable factor as to how they do business. So, to make a meaningful relationship between the owner and stakeholders it is necessary to alert the values to them. This is the ideology of stakeholder theory<sup>[13]</sup>. Under that scope, Gray, Owen, and Adams, (1996) say that firms exercise the sustainability report to form stakeholders'

① <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK32764/>

views in a positive way which leads to open a way for conducting their business <sup>[14]</sup>. Most of the companies try to voluntarily comply with environmental regulations which make them rewarded in the marketplace. In their empirical data from Swedish enterprises, Konar & Cohen (2001) and Hedberg & Von Malmborg (2003) demonstrated that the corporations produce sustainability reports to determine organizational legitimacy. They were particularly concerned in revealing to their investors their environmental and ethical/social data <sup>[15,16]</sup>. Roca and Searcy (2012) found a wide variety of affairs and segments in the exhibitors disclosed, which they related to the Legitimacy theory, mentioning reporting manners targeting to sustain its legitimacy. It is also identified by them that all TBL exhibitors were disclosed with relatively level recapitulation <sup>[17]</sup>. Adams (2002) also researched the legitimacy issues. The issue of legitimacy was also addressed in the drivers for sustainability reports, which differed for the larger corporations. They would regard it as improving business image, reputation, competitive advantage, and credibility, and some would like to be included in sustainability indices. Despite research pointing to legitimacy as a critical influencing element, the firms in their sample do not face persistent stakeholder and social pressure on their performance, nor do stakeholder expectations for transparency on their performance. Perhaps legitimacy is exclusively associated with the world's top corporations, or it is something that is no longer viewed as achievable via wider expression and sustainability reporting <sup>[18]</sup>. Regardless of what motivates firms to create sustainability reports, and even though they are not required in most countries, these papers are gradually becoming absorbed into the culture of large corporations <sup>[19]</sup>. To maintain the company's culture of sustainability, the capacity to establish a performance assessment system and an information management system that gives information about the balance of financial, environmental, and social information is critical <sup>[20]</sup>. Although there are several international attempts to assess sustainability, few of them take into account environmental, economic, and social factors <sup>[21]</sup>, as is the case of GRI (Global Reporting Initiative). When adopting the GRI framework in their reports, firms from the same economic sectors are more likely to disclose the same metrics. Sherman and DiGuilio (2010) looked at eight major corporations' annual reports from 2008 to 2009. They discovered that even with application level-A, firms do not express the same demonstrator, resulting in a significant level of inconsistency in the demonstrators reported <sup>[22]</sup>. Toppinen, Li, Tuppuru, and Xiong (2012) sought to identify isomorphic processes in mining

businesses between 2005 and 2009, concluding that no similar processes were incurred, although companies followed GRI criteria <sup>[23]</sup>. On a similar approach, H. Y. Ching, Gerab, and Toste (2014) examined the reports of 116 Chinese enterprises from 2002 to 2008 and discovered that the material disclosed diverged with time <sup>[24]</sup>. The studies draw attention to the concerns that, outside of the lowest exposure levels, even Application-Level A firms did not measure the excluded indicators frequently, as advised by the GRI rules. Examining the number and quality of reports obtained from six Brazilian organizations classified as Application-Level A+ <sup>[24,9]</sup>. There was no trace of a sound level of disclosure to determine such an Application Level <sup>[25]</sup>. In addition, according to H. Y. Ching et al. (2014), GRI indicators are incompatible inside enterprises indicating the specific Application Level. The main commonality across these investigations is that none of the firms appear to be following the stated criteria. Companies at Application Level A are anticipated to have a higher level of dedication to the rules, which is not evident in the studied reports <sup>[24]</sup>. Barbosa, Francato, and Barbosa (2019) compared the sustainability company reports on ISE to those on Novo Mercado NM (Brazilian price index of companies with the highest level of corporate governance practices). ISE corporations provide more information in a more appropriate manner than companies listed on Novo Mercado <sup>[26]</sup>. Again, all three TBL components are aiming for the same degree of excellence <sup>[26]</sup>. Morhardt et al. (2002) valued the extent to which corporate environmental reports satisfy the criterion of GRI 2000 recommendations and ISO 14031 achievement evaluation value. They assign 0 to not mentioned; 1 to briefly mentioned; 2 to greater detail, but aspect with chosen facilities; and 3 to companywide relative and absolute metrics that may be compared with other firms. They chose the 1999 annual reports of 40 of the world's major industrial enterprises. Their most surprising conclusion was that the environmental indicators received 3.6% of the total potential points in the Global Reporting Initiative score, while the economic and social indicators received 4.1% <sup>[4]</sup>. With 47, 9 percent, and 44, & 3 percent, respectively, general performance indicators and organizational aspects completed the score <sup>[4]</sup>. On the other hand, Perez and Sanchez (2009) evaluated four mining firms' sustainability reports from 2001 to 2006, and they concentrated on the social element, which was the most reported by those businesses, followed by economic and social aspects <sup>[27]</sup>. Despite the syndrome mentioned above, Moneva, Archel, and Correa (2006) claim that Global Reporting Initiative guidelines are applied in a biased manner, in the sense that

all companies labeled as Global Reporting Initiative do not behave in an accountable manner regarding social equity, human rights, or gas emissions <sup>[28]</sup>. For them, the concept of sustainability as defined by the Global Reporting Initiative methodology has various shortcomings and flaws that lead to seeing it in a simplistic manner confined to the disclosure of a collection of non-integrated indicators about the current year. The accountability for attaining sustainable development for companies has become a matter of considerable public attention <sup>[14,28-31]</sup>. Gray, Kouhy, and Lavers (1995) have recorded a substantive increase in the alignment of corporate reporting in this issue <sup>[32]</sup>. An increasing number of companies are now rowed to reveal various types of sustainability reports ubiquity the world <sup>[31]</sup>. In these aspects, figure 1 and information reported in GRI<sup>®</sup> exhibited that over the last several years, there has been significant growth in the number of corporations reporting publicly their operations against a variety of key sustainability metrics. According to GRI data, over a thousand organizations globally produced sustainability reports based on the G3 Guidelines in 2008. That is, organizations operating in both developing and developed nations are now focusing on GRI sustainability indicators in their reporting media, such as annual reports and stand-alone sustainability reporting. Spain (one hundred twenty-eight reports) has the largest toll in both the developing and developed nations' spheres for sustainability reporting, surpassing the United States (one hundred reports) into the second position. Within the continent, Europe has been rated first (49%) of the reporters known to GRI, followed by Asia (15%) (dominant countries, in this case, are the Republic of Korea, Japan, China, and India). While the adoption rate of sustainability reporting in North America (fourteen percent) and Latin America (twelve percent) (notably Brazil) is not trailing that of Asia, the practices remain quite poor in both Oceania and Africa, with six percent from Oceania and four percent from Africa<sup>③</sup>.

### 3. Methodology

In the study, the research has mainly used secondary data. At first, an interesting area of this study was the Scoring Sustainability report applying the guidelines of GRI 2011 for measuring social environmental, and economic dimensions. But this study didn't find any sustainability report of the renowned companies listed in the DSE (Dhaka Stock Exchange) when it (this study)

was searching their sustainability reports in the DSE library. They are not following GRI guidelines except Grameenphone. So, as a representative of Bangladeshi companies, this study has selected Grameenphone which has a sustainability report based on GRI guidelines. It (this study) has selected other non-listed companies to broaden my research area and to compare the reporting practices of non-listed and listed companies in Bangladesh. It (this study) has taken the sustainability reports of 2019 as the study purpose of the selected companies. The sustainability report of Grameenphone was collected from DSE (Dhaka Stock Exchange) library and other company's reports (sustainable) are received from their respective company website.

#### 3.1 Reason for Selecting These Companies

Business habit blog published the list of top ten multinational companies in Bangladesh such as Chevron (petroleum industry)<sup>④</sup>, Unilever Bangladesh (Fast-moving consumer goods industry)<sup>⑤</sup>, Grameenphone Limited (telecommunication industry)<sup>⑥</sup>, HSBC (Banking Industry), Standard Chartered Bank (Banking Industry), Siemens (Electronics), Ericsson (Telecom service industry), Citi NA (Citi Group, Banking Industry, and British American Tobacco (Cigarette), Nestle Bangladesh<sup>⑦,⑧,⑨</sup> (FMCG). From this population, I have selected only five companies such as Chevron (petroleum industry), Unilever Bangladesh (Fast-moving consumer goods industry), Grameenphone Limited (telecommunication industry), Nestle Bangladesh (FMCG), and British American Tobacco (Cigarette) as my research sample due to a short period. The banking industry is out of this research because assessment of sustainability reporting on CSR of the banking industry has already been done by others. Siemens and Ericsson have provided scattered and insufficient information that is difficult for scoring. For this study, the selected companies have been recognized based on one that has a turnover of at least 100,000 million BDT and the number of employees more than 500 directly & indirectly in Bangladesh. Another reason is that those companies are dominating the lion's share of the market and contributing more tax in our country. Further, these companies published their sustainability reporting based

② [www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)

③ [www.globalreporting.org/GRIReports/GRIReportsList](http://www.globalreporting.org/GRIReports/GRIReportsList)

④ [www.chevron.com/cr](http://www.chevron.com/cr)

⑤ [www.unilever.com/corporate](http://www.unilever.com/corporate)

⑥ [www.grameenphone.com/sites/default/files/investor\\_relations/annual\\_report/Full-Report-2014.pdf](http://www.grameenphone.com/sites/default/files/investor_relations/annual_report/Full-Report-2014.pdf)

⑦ [www.nestle.com/cvs](http://www.nestle.com/cvs)

⑧ [www.nestle.com/asset-liabrary/document/financial](http://www.nestle.com/asset-liabrary/document/financial)

⑨ [www.nestle.com/asset-liabrary/document/creating](http://www.nestle.com/asset-liabrary/document/creating)

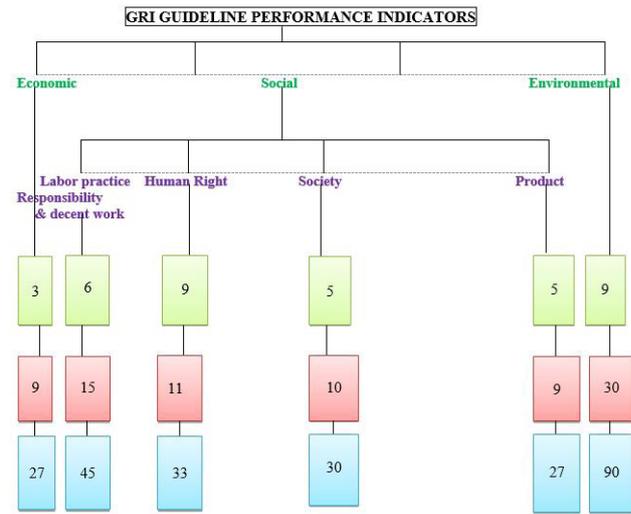
on GRI 3 (Global Reporting Initiative-2011) guidelines<sup>®</sup>. As a result, the study's sample was limited to just five companies.

### 3.2 Analysis of GRI Guideline Performance Indicators

This study has used GRI 3 (Global Reporting Initiative-2011) guideline performance indicators which have 84 indicators under 3 dimensions with different aspects. Three dimensions are namely economic, environmental, and social. Economic dimension has three aspects such as market presence (procedure for local hiring), economic performance (direct economic value generated), and indirect economic impacts (Development and impacts of infrastructures), etc. overall economic dimension has nine (9) indicators. The environmental dimension has nine aspects such as- materials (recycled materials), energy (consumption of direct and indirect energy consumption), water (total water withdrawal by source), biodiversity (habitats protected and restored), emission, waste, and effluent (total direct & indirect greenhouse gas origin by weight), services and products (an initiative to minimize the ecological influence of products and services), compliance (financial value of important fines for the violence of regulation), transport (valuable impacts of transportation products) and last overall (total environmental protection expenditures). The environmental dimension has a total of thirty (30) indicators. Social dimension has four sub-dimensions i.e. \*labor practices & decent work and it has six aspects such as- employment (total workforce), labor relation (collective bargaining agreement), professional safety and health (quantity of accidents and workplace diseases), training & education (average hour of training), multicolor and level benefit (composition of governed bodies by gender), equal benefits for both men and women (weight of principal salary by gender); \*human right and it has nine aspects such as-investment and procurement practices (significant investment agreement), non-discrimination (number of occurrences of deprivation), freedom of collective bargaining & association, prevention of forced and compulsory labor, child labor, indigenous rights , safety practices, assessment, remediation (number of grievances of human rights related); \*society and it has five aspects such as local communities (community engagement), corruption (related to business units ), anti-competitive behavior, public policy, subservience (Financial value of important fines for the violence of regulation);\* product responsibility and it has five

aspects such as- customer safety and health (health and safety influence of products), service and product labeling customer privacy (incidents related to breaches of privacy), marketing communications, compliance. The social dimension has a total of forty-five (45) indicators under 25 different aspects.

In the case of data analysis, this study has used all the 84 indicators with coding EC for the economic dimension, EN for the environmental dimension, and LA, HR, SO, and PR for the social dimension.



**Figure 1.** Symbolic show of guidelines by GRI in 2011 with several different aspects, dimensions, performance dimensions, and highest score in each dimension.

- \*Green color is used for dimensions.
- \* Red color rectangle is the number of the indicator.
- \*Purple color is used for Sub-dimensions.
- \* Blue color rectangle is the maximum score in each dimension.
- \*Olive green color rectangle is the Number of Aspects.

### 3.3 Numerical Pointing Method of Sustainability Reports

The most important work in the study is the scoring of sustainability reports and it is the most difficult task also. A GRI-based report covers major four categories of topics such as (1) strategy and vision, (2) sketch, (3) governance formation, and (4) dimensions of performance. The work of performance indicator is also classified based on three dimensions with different aspects. Three dimensions are- social, economic, and environmental dimensions. The experiment of reports is confined to those three dimensions, which is essential for finding results about the level of adherence to sustainability. A scoring way related to number was given for each one of the 84-performance

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demonstrators (9 for economic, 30 for environmental, and 45 for social demonstrators) of the GRI 2011 guidelines.

Every indicator related to performance was given a point between 0-3 points with a probable highest dimension of 252 (84\*3) points. The study has followed the structure and rationale of the previous scoring system of [4], which transferred GRI 2000 reporting guidelines to a numerical pointing system of 0 to 3. The ingoing of the scoring system is also explained symbolically in Figure 1. Table 1 below will clear about the scoring system:

**Table 1.** Numerical pointing method of Sustainability Reports

Serial	Details	Scoring (0-3)
1.	If any specific indicator was not mentioned.	0
2.	A brief statement about any specific indicator (Gender discrimination is not practiced in our company).	1
3.	Detailed information about any specific indicator but didn't cover more than one year.	2
4.	Detailed information about any specific indicator but covered more than one year or more.	3

Here this study has analyzed all the sustainability reports grounded on the score obtained in the study findings part to know about the disclosure practices of non-listed and listed companies of Bangladesh analysis on sustainability. The achievement here doesn't indicate the original performance of the companies, but it will help us to find a hypothesis found from their sustainability analysis. The analysis based on the number of sustainability reports grounded on a scoring method will favor shareholders, investors, and other stakeholders, directly and indirectly, to decide on their (companies) activities in this area.

#### 4. Findings of This Study

This study has used red font color in tables as

percentage range of respective dimension and aspect. Higher the variation of the range indicates lower the practices of reporting of that dimension and aspect, lower the variety of range indicates higher the practices of reporting of that dimension and aspect.

As earlier mentioned, identifying the level of adherence to the sustainability reporting of multinational companies of Bangladesh was a major aim of this study. The analysis of the study showed that Chevron and GP fully disclosed their economic report, but others have few lacking. The areas of not reporting are important monetary help gained from the government (BATC, Nestle and Unilever), range of proportions of standard entrance level wage by gender comparable to national financial benefit at the important position of activities (BATC and Nestle) and, practices, policy, and the ratio of expense on nationally related suppliers at important positions operation (BATC). Out of 30 dimensions on the environmental, the number of dimensions not reported ranged from five (for Unilever) to eleven (for BATC).

The research of the sustainability reports of the selected sample companies also revealed that reporting based on social and environmental degree was less disclosed than reporting based on their economic dimension. The report of chevron did not offer 25 indicators out of 45 indicators on the social component. The second highest in the case of several indicators not reported is GP (Grameenphone) which is 19. However, Nestle, Unilever, and BAT didn't report the number of indicators is 7, 7, and 8 respectively. The length is 7 to 25 on the social dimension in case of indicators not reporting (Table 2). The investigation discovered that organizations lacked in reporting based on environmental and social dimensions and that they need to enhance their sustainability reporting based on GRI principles. The overall score of selected organizations on three dimensions ranged from 40 to 64 percent, with an average score of 52 percent (Table 3). Nestle received a maximum score of 64 percent, while GP received a minimum score of 40 percent.

**Table 2.** The number of indicators not disclosed in the sampled firms' sustainability reports on various aspects

Dimensions	Total Numbers of Indicators	Number of Indicators not reported				
		NESTLE	UNILEVER	BATC	CHEVRON	GP
Economic	9	2	2	3	0	0
Environmental	30	7	5	11	7	10
Social	45	7	7	8	25	19
Total	84	16	14	22	32	29

**Table 3.** Scores of various companies grounded on performance demonstrators of GRI

Dimension	Corporate				
	NESTLE	UNILEVER	BATC	CHEVRON	GP
Economic [27]	19(70)	17(63)	15(55)	21(78)	20(74)
Environmental [90]	58(64)	60(67)	49(54)	63(70)	37(41)
Social [135]	85(63)	76(56)	80(59)	53(39)	44(33)
Total [252]	162(64)	153(61)	144(57)	137(54)	101(40)

Note\*Value in the first bracket indicates the percentage of total score.\* Value in the third bracket indicates the highest score in each dimension of sustainability. \* Red color is used for the percentage range of respective dimension.

The economic dimension received a score ranging from 55% to 78%, the environmental dimension received a score ranging from 41% to 70%, and the social dimension received a score ranging from 33% to 63%. The least different scores obtained for reporting based on economic degree is 23% as compared to environmental (29%) and social (30%) dimensions. Companies must be more careful in reporting on social and environmental dimensions. Here, Nestle has got the highest score on the social dimension and Chevron has got the highest score for the reporting on environmental dimension. This indicates that these organizations have a high commitment to social & environmental reporting.

#### 4.1 Reporting on Economic Demonstrator

All of the enterprises included reported on all three economic demonstrator views, namely market presence, economic performance, and indirect economic domination that Policy practices, local hiring, and promotion all form the market practice. However, because market presence was not well-reported, it received a poor grade for the majority of enterprises (Table 4).

Low ratings in this area show that companies need to improve their procedures relating to employee welfare and local people’s needs. Economic performance was good whereas Chevron and GP have scored 83% and Nestle and BATC have got score 58%. The range is 58% to 83%

**Table 4.** Scores on economic aspect of various companies grounded on performance demonstrators of GRI

Aspect	Corporate				
	NESTLE	UNILEVER	BATC	CHEVRON	GP
Economic performance [12]	7(58)	8(67)	7(58)	10(83)	10(83)
Market presence [9]	6(67)	6(67)	2(22)	5(55)	4(44)
Indicator economic impact [6]	6(100)	3(50)	6(100)	6(100)	6(100)
Total score [27]	19(70)	17(63)	15(55)	21(78)	20(74)

Note\* Value in the first bracket indicates the percentage of total score. \* Value in the third bracket indicates the highest score in each dimension of sustainability. \* Red color is used for percentage range of respective dimension and aspect.

and variation is low (25%). The economic performance aspect includes operating cost, earning, benefit plan, investment, risk, and opportunities. The lower variant on this perspective indicates all the selected companies are operative in maximizing the profit (economic return). The economic dimension was ranged from 78% to 55% in total in which Chevron has got the highest score (78%) and BATC has got the lowest score (55%). The lowest scoring reason on economic dimension for BATC is low score on market presence (22%) aspect (Table 4). The majority of corporations performed admirably in terms of reporting on the development and impact of infrastructure and investment under the indirect economic impact category. Most of the company’s range of proportion of grade entry-level wage by gender weighed to local minimum wage at momentous locations of activities is not well.

#### 4.2 Reporting Based on Ecological Demonstrators

The ratings achieved by the tested corporations on reporting on the environmental factor ranged from 41 percent for GP to 64 percent for Nestle (Table 5). The majority of corporations considered environmental performance measures such as material, energy, water, and emission. However, the biodiversity component was only briefly mentioned by any of the selected firms.

In the case of material, Nestle, BATC, and Chevron

have a 100% score, but GP and Unilever have got low scores (67%) for reporting briefly just one-year data. Good reporting on the energy aspect by Unilever, Chevron, and GP scored 100% and near a hundred percent; however, BATC and Nestle lagged in an initiative to lessen transcendental energy consumption and energy-saving efficiency improvement. No companies scored 100% on the water aspect because they did not give a proper description of performance indicators like “Water sources significantly affected by the withdrawal of water”. All selected samples scored low on the “Emissions, effluents and waste” aspect which ranged from 40% (GP) to 80% (Chevron) (Table 5). The variation is high in this aspect, and it must be investigated because it is the major variations of the companies. Other issues related to ecologies like product and service, compliances, transport, and overall ecological expenses were briefly discussed by all the sampled companies except Nestle, which reported extensively. Unilever, BATC, and Chevron did not hide the entire environmental cost. Even though the petroleum business is notorious for environmental damage, Chevron received the highest score (70 percent) on the environmental factor.

#### 4.3 Reporting on Social Dimension

The social dimension has four sub-dimensions such as-

**Table 5.** Scores on environmental aspect of various companies grounded on performance demonstrators of GRI

Aspect	corporate				
	NESTLE	UNILEVER	BATC	CHEVRON	GP
Material [6]	6(100)	4(67)	6(100)	6(100)	4(67)
Energy [15]	10(67)	15(100)	9(60)	14(93)	11(73)
Water [9]	6(67)	5(55)	6(67)	6(67)	2(22)
Biodiversity [15]	7(47)	8(53)	7(47)	7(47)	4(27)
Emission, effluent and waste [30]	22(73)	18(60)	15(50)	24(80)	12(40)
Product and services [6]	2(33)	5(83)	2(33)	3(50)	2(33)
Compliance [3]	0(0)	3(100)	2(67)	3(100)	0(0)
Transport [3]	3(100)	2(67)	2(67)	0(0)	1(33)
Overall [3]	2(67)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(33)
Total Score [90]	58(64)	60(67)	49(54)	63(70)	37(41)
Note*Value in the first bracket indicates the percentage of total score * Value in the third bracket indicates the highest score on environmental aspects of sustainability. *Red color is used for the percentage range of respective dimension and aspect.					

(1) labor practices and decent work, (2) human rights, (3) society, and (4) product responsibility. When compared to the economic and environmental dimensions, all of the selected sample firms scored worse on the social component. The social dimension score of the investigated corporations varied greatly, with GP scoring the lowest (33%) and Nestle scoring the highest (63%)(Table 3).

Except for the criterion “Return to work and retention rates after parental leave by gender” linked to the “employment aspect”, all selected firms covered the other variables. In the case of, “labor management\ relationship” aspect whereas GP and BATC scored minimum (17%), and nestle scored maximum (83%) (Table 6). The majority of the companies reported well in the case of professional safety and health practices, but training and education have lacked reporting practices because they described briefly that aspect. Nestle, Unilever, BATC reported on the aspect of variety and level opportunity, but GP and Chevron didn’t report but BATC and GP got score zero on the aspect of equal remuneration for men and women whereas Nestle scored highest.

Under human rights, different aspects such as collective bargaining, child labor, non-discrimination, prevention of forced and compulsory labor, indigenous rights, freedom of association, and remediation were

not reported by Chevron and GP. Nestle, Unilever, and BATC didn’t report freedom of association & collective bargaining, assessment, indigenous rights respectively. But overall reporting practices on human rights, BATC reported well (Table 7).

Companies’ scores on the subject of local communities ranged from 22% for Nestle to 67 percent for BATC and Chevron (Table 8), indicating that reporting procedures on problems connected to local community participation for development are different. However, most of the companies showed strong engagement in their annual reports, sustainability reports, and their respective websites. Corruption and public policy were reported by all companies, but anti-competitive behavior and compliance were not reported by the maximum companies such as Nestle, Chevron, and GP (Table 8) whereas BATC scored 100%.

Nestle and Unilever received the highest scores (100%) in product responsibility for areas such as safety and consumer health, while Chevron and GP had the lowest scores (33%) (Table 9).

Product and service labeling, and market communication aspects were reported by the maximum companies, but Chevron didn’t provide any disclosure on market communication. BATC and Chevron didn’t report on

**Table 6.** Scores on decent work and labor practices performance (social dimension) of different companies based on performance indicators of GRI

Aspect	Corporate				
	NESTLE	UNILEVER	BATC	CHEVRON	GP
Employment[12]	12(100)	6(50)	6(50)	8(67)	5(42)
Labor /management relations[6]	5(83)	4(67)	1(17)	3(50)	1(17)
Occupational health and safety[12]	8(67)	8(67)	5(42)	6(50)	8(67)
Training and education[9]	8(89)	3(33)	4(44)	2(22)	3(33)
Diversity and equal opportunity[3]	3(100)	2(67)	3(100)	0(0)	0(0)
Equal remuneration for women and men[3]	3(100)	1(33)	0(0)	2(67)	0(0)
Note*Value in the first bracket indicates the percentage of total score * Value in the third bracket indicates the highest score on labor practices sub-dimension of sustainability *Red color is used for the percentage range of respective dimension and aspect.					

**Table 7.** Scores on human rights aspect (social dimension) of various companies grounded on performance demonstrators of GRI

Aspect	Corporate				
	NESTLE	UNILEVER	BATC	CHEVRON	GP
Investment and procurement practices [9]	5(55)	2(22)	2(22)	5(55)	4(44)
Non-discrimination [3]	2(67)	2(67)	2(67)	0(0)	0(0)
Freedom of association and collective bargaining [3]	0(0)	2(67)	2(67)	0(0)	0(0)
Child labor [3]	2(67)	2(67)	3(100)	0(0)	0(0)
Forced and compulsory labor [3]	2(67)	2(67)	3(100)	0(0)	0(0)
Security practices [3]	2(67)	1(33)	1(33)	2(67)	1(33)
Indigenous right [3]	1(33)	1(33)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Assessment [3]	2(67)	0(0)	3(100)	2(67)	1(33)
Remediation [3]	1(33)	1(33)	3(100)	0(0)	0(0)

Note\*Value in the first bracket indicates the percentage of total score \* Value in the third bracket indicates the highest score on human rights sub-dimension of sustainability \*Red color is used for the percentage range of respective dimension and aspect

**Table 8.** Score on society aspect (social dimension) of various companies grounded on performance demonstrator of GRI

Aspect	Corporate				
	NESTLE	UNILEVER	BATC	CHEVRON	GP
Local communities [9]	2(22)	4(44)	6(67)	6(67)	3(33)
Corruption [9]	7(78)	8(89)	8(89)	6(67)	3(33)
Public policy [6]	2(33)	5(83)	4(67)	3(50)	2(33)
Anti-competitive behavior [3]	0(0)	2(67)	3(100)	0(0)	0(0)
Compliance [3]	0(0)	2(67)	3(100)	0(0)	0(0)

Note \*Value in the first bracket indicates the percentage of total score \* Value in the third bracket indicates the highest score on society sub-dimension of sustainability \*Red color is used for the percentage range of respective dimension and aspect

customer privacy whereas Nestle, Unilever, and GP scored the same (67%) (Table 9). In the case of compliance aspect, Nestle, Chevron, and GP didn't report fully but Unilever scored the highest (67%) (Table 9).

#### 4.4 Comparison between the Reporting Practices of Non-listed and Listed Companies

This study has selected four non-listed and one listed

company to compare their reporting practices. Here, Nestle, Unilever, BATC, and Chevron are the non-listed companies and GP is the only listed company which is representing the reporting practices of Bangladeshi companies. GP achieved the second-highest position in the case of the number of indicators not reported (29) (Table 2) whereas non-listed company Chevron achieved the first position. Analysis of the companies' sustainability reports

**Table 9.** Score on aspect of product responsibility (social dimension) of various companies grounded on performance demonstrator of GRI

Aspect	Corporate				
	NESTLE	UNILEVER	BATC	CHEVRON	GP
<b>Customer health and safety [6]</b>	<b>6(100)</b>	6(100)	3(50)	2(33)	<b>2(33)</b>
<b>Product and service labeling [9]</b>	7(78)	<b>5(55)</b>	<b>8(89)</b>	6(67)	6(67)
<b>Market communication [6]</b>	3(50)	3(50)	<b>6(100)</b>	<b>0(0)</b>	3(50)
<b>Customer privacy [3]</b>	<b>2(67)</b>	2(67)	0(0)	<b>0(0)</b>	2(67)
<b>Compliance [3]</b>	0(0)	<b>2(67)</b>	1(33)	0(0)	<b>0(0)</b>
Note*Value in the first bracket indicates the percentage of total score * Value in the third bracket indicates the highest score on product responsibility sub-dimension of sustainability.*Red color is used for the percentage range of respective dimension and aspect.					

showed that both non-listed and listed companies varied little (4%) in their reporting on the economic dimension (Table 3). GP, on the other hand, fared worse than the others when it came to reporting on the other two criteria, namely, environmental and social. Nestle, Unilever, BATC, and Chevron scored 64%, 67%, 54%, and 70% environmental dimension respectively, whereas GP scored 41% (Table 3). In the case of the social dimension, Nestle, Unilever, BATC, and Chevron scored 63%, 56%, 59%, and 39% respectively whereas listed company GP scored 32% (Table 3). Responsible leadership, articles of seasoning, and institution of sustainable reporting of non-listed companies could be some problems reasons for a higher score over the listed company. We can infer from this study that the sustainability reporting practices of listed companies of Bangladesh are not good at all. Government, law agencies, and other authorities should emphasize and investigate their sustainability reporting practices keeping our environment and society sustainable.

### 5. Conclusions

Sustainability reporting is being flowed out as a normal contemplation of 21st-century business. It is the symbol of recognition among the business world for a variety of advantages across the globe. But Bangladeshi listed companies are not serious about it. Good reporting helps a company to take competitive advantage branding them as an environmentally and socially responsible company. The effort utilized in the debate to compare sustainability reports flourished on a numerical system developed from several performance indicators to identify prospective

reporting strengths and shortcomings, which would help the selected firms improve their reporting in the relevant area. The analysis of the GP’s sustainability report is not satisfactory in the context of the listing company of Bangladesh. The reporting of the economic dimension was comparatively better than the other two dimensions. However, the score obtained on indicators of social dimension was least in the case of a listed company (GP). Reporting based on environmental dimensions is very easy for the increasing awareness of environmentally and ecofriendly products of both the listed and non-listed companies. It is unobtrusive for both the non-listed and listed companies for improving ecological efficiency in the business as it brings economic benefit for the company in the long run. In the overall analysis, non-listed company Nestle Bangladesh Ltd scored highest on their reporting practices. But listed company GP scored the lowest score on their overall reporting practices which is representing Bangladeshi companies’ reporting practices based on GRI guidelines. Future study that goes beyond the content analysis of standalone sustainability reports is required. It will rely on secondary and primary data to provide precise suggestions to reach the minimal score on each dimension. This will assist the firm to accomplish environmental and social burdens apart from their financial goal. An organization can easily manage their environmental and social impacts if they focus on sustainability. Sustainability also helps in improving operating efficiency and natural resources stewardship. Sustainability also helps in building a sound relationship among various stakeholders. A management consultant

and a distinguished professor found that without measuring anything you cannot manage it. Again, without managing anything you cannot change it [33]. As a result, sustainable reporting has become a vital component for managing a sustainable global economy. We know a sustainable economy is a system that ensures both long-term profitabilities by measuring social justice and environmental care. A devoted report of sustainability is a repercussion of a company's commitment towards its own as well as social interest. And it also helps a company and its stakeholder to point out a comprehensive reference point for reporting. In a sustainable reporting practice, a company's corporate social responsibility practice is also focused.

### **Implication**

Although the results are limited, a wide range of opportunities can be created. Through sustainable reporting practice and implications of it, private companies, public and third-sector organizations can assure and measure their economic, environmental, social, and governance performance and improve their goals and pursued values, and accordingly, develop goal setting and strategies. It will make the management of the organization more sustainable and efficient and will help to manage the change more effectively.

### **Future Direction**

To extend the results of the current analysis, future studies may include other companies and other countries in their sample to further investigate non-financial disclosure determinants.

### **Limitation**

Indeed, one of the limitations of the present study is the limited number of companies included in the sample. Furthermore, an analysis covering more years could shed light on the evolution of non-financial expression in Bangladesh.

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### **Author Contributions**

Md. Abdul Halim prepared the initial writing manuscript, Lead the Author, Idea sharing, Literature

review and conclusion, and policy implication; Md. Razaul Islam writing initial draft writing, Identifying research Gap, writing methodology, data collecting; Md. Al Amin prepared the initial manuscript, introduction, data collecting, and analysis. All authors have given their approval for the final manuscript.

### **Competing Interests or Conflicts of Interest**

On behalf of all Author's the corresponding author Md. Abdul Halim declares that there has no conflict of interest.

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