



How do Green Human Resource Management and Environmental Orientation influence Sustainable Organizational Performance? A Study on RMGs in Bangladesh

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Date of Submission: 10-07-2023

Date of Acceptance: 21-07-2023

Abstract

The study examines the influence of green human resource management (GHRM) on organizational environmental orientation (EO) and sustainable organizational performance (SOP). In addition, this also investigates the direct impact of EO on SOP. We adopted deductive reasoning in a positivist paradigm by using quantitative analytical techniques and structural equation modeling. We selected 294 respondents from RMG industry through a self-administered questionnaire survey in Chattogram, Bangladesh. The outcomes revealed that both GHRM and EO influence SOP. One of the essential contributions of our study is its development of the knowledge related to valuing, generating and measuring GHRM's contributions to developing EO and achieving SOP. It is little known about the significance of GHRM in fostering organizational environmental orientation and sustainable organizational performance.

Keywords: Green human resource management, environmental orientation, sustainable organizational performance.

I. Introduction

The most critical issue in this 21st century is the concern for the environment which has acquired paramount concern and is emphasized more by both academicians and businessmen. The existence of businesses now is in question due to different environmental challenges coming in front of them as a consequence of the adverse impact of their business operations. Some of them that are responsible for generating negative consequences (

climate change, global warming, resources scarcity, ozone layer depletion, and so forth) can be stated as the emission of gases, non-disposable and hazardous wastages, use of natural resources, as well as several eco-unfriendly behaviors demonstrated by them (Brockner et al., 2006). These cause the industrialist to focus more on balancing ecological, financial, and social aspects simultaneously rather than merely concentrating on one to ensure sustainable organizational performance (SOP). They are also facing increasing pressure to revise different organizational policies such as the pressure of incorporating green issues into their human resource management policies. Every organization should have green employees or turn their employees' behavior green to be sustainable organizations (Ren et al., 2018). Hence, the degree to which organizations are applying green human resource management (GHRM) in their work setting is now a growing research agenda. Formulating GHRM policies might not work well without the practice of proper environmental orientation (EO) within the organization. EO can facilitate firms building awareness among employees about environmental issues and thus making successful implementation of GHRM practices (Renwick et al., 2013).

Over the last decades, it is noticed that customers are now very sensitive to environmental issues and greatly consider them while selecting products to purchase. Again, organizations are also experiencing growing public scrutiny of their green efforts in the desire for proactive ecological undertakings and investments in green projects (Saifulina et al., 2020). In response to progressive



environmental demands, organizations are forced to reshuffle their existing thoughts and strategic orientations. EO has been considered as a significant business principle directing the cultivation of a green culture (Nejati et al., 2017). It is often taken into consideration of developing organizations' environmental mission statement and aids firms to improve their competitiveness by minimizing hostile environmental effects. Ecological sustainability can only be achieved by considering the well-being of ecosystems while developing firms' objectives (Mousa & Othman, 2020). This consideration primarily concentrates on reconstructing employees' attitudes and amplifying sustainable behavior (Shafaei et al., 2020). It is conducive to enhancing corporate environmental performance that achieving SOP.

Organizations are now trying to find out a quick solution to mitigate the adverse impacts of their operations cherishing the purpose of utmost success in their business. As a result, considering green issues and raising concern about the natural environment have become crucial elements in organizational decision-making (Pham et al., 2020). GHRM is a new managerial orientation incorporating the 'green' concept in the field of HRM (Podgorodnichenko et al., 2020). Implementing GHRM primarily relies on experienced and delighted employees which increase both human and environmental harmony. Internal environmental orientation that is having a transparent policy statement of ecological concern in all functional areas provides a clear guideline to the employees which can motivate them to practice eco-friendly behaviors. Ecological behavior is a mindset that is required to be instilled into people (Amrutha & Geetha, 2020). In this case, managers can have an influential role in making this statement more presentable to the employees. They can exhibit sustainable leadership (SL) in formulating strategies, motivating human resources, and creating opportunities for them to generate eco-innovative ideas.

Managers that pursue sustainability and encourage eco-initiatives are willing to lead the firms toward green achievements. Leaders' inclination to green practices acts as an important quality that has a great impact on the level to which organizations achieve eco-sustainable operations. Capable of performing eco-sustainable operations are crucial capabilities of the firms that act as a foundation for attaining SOP (Wehrmeyer et al., 2019). Managers who work for creating an eco-

friendly culture by formulating and implementing GHRM policies properly taking both internal and external EO can lead to SOP. Although this is critical to sustainable business achievement, no early research dealt with this issue. In this study, it is explored how SL influence in formulating GHRM policies and EO and thus accelerate SOP that is essential for an organization to survive in this dynamic and extremely volatile business environment.

The research questions in are based on the essence of Institutional theory for environmental orientation, Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) theory for sustainable leadership, and Resource-Based View (RBV) theory for sustainable organizational performance. This study will look for the specific answers to the following research questions:

- a. How does green human resource management influence sustainable organizational performance?
- b. To what extent environmental orientation influence sustainable organizational performance?
- c. Is sustainable leader's support matter for environmental orientation with green policy in the organization?

II. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Literature Review

Green Human Resource Management

GHRM can be defined as converting general human resource activities into a green perspective where recruitment, selection, training and development, compensation and rewards, and recognitions are based on a green manner (Singh et al., 2020b). GHRM posits recruiting those potential candidates who are concerned with natural resource utilization and environmental protection (Chaudhary, 2020). GHRM encourages development and to nurtures the environmentally concerned workforce to make a valuable contribution both in society and organization (Brockner et al., 2006). It is also associated with formulating environmental-friendly HR policies to involve employees in eco-friendly activities in the organization to protect the environment (De Stefano et al., 2018). It has come from the sustainability issues which have been used in a firm's strategy formulation and decision making (Anwar et al., 2020). It is also considered as a part of corporate social responsibility to use organizational resources to ensure ecological balance (Agyabeng-Mensah et al., 2020).



Environmental Orientation

Environmental orientation can be described as the degree to which the organization is concerned to overcome environmental damage or degradation (Hörisch et al., 2017). Environmental orientation is the firm's responsibility toward protecting the environment and helps to develop a green vision to perform each activity in a green manner (Zameer et al., 2020). Therefore, environmental orientation becomes a conducive element in the organizational atmosphere to implement environmentally friendly business activity (Hörisch, 2015). Environmental orientation helps to determine how much an organization has a negative effect on the environment and the actions need to lessen this negative impact (Zhou et al., 2020).

Sustainable Organizational Performance

SOP can be defined as the firm's ability to achieve and to ensure above-average performance in the long run than other rivals through balancing organizational activities with environmental sustainability (Ren et al., 2020). SOP can be evaluated in the fields of economic (financial performance), environmental (protecting environment and its resources), and social (ensuring social welfare inside and outside of the organization) perspectives which can be related to the traditional triple bottom line (TBL) concept (Iqbal et al., 2020a). It also coincides that organizations should ensure economic prosperity without destroying the environment so that future generations can meet their demands (Henao et al., 2019). The SOP states how well an organization should perform eco-friendly activities in order to meet the firm's and shareholders' demands (Pham et al., 2020).

2.2 Hypotheses Development

Green Human Resource Management and Environmental Orientation

GHRM has become a major concern for almost all organizations in an environmentally aware society. Organizations are striving to introduce green aspects in the human resource management area. To stay competitive, firms should recruit green knowledge-based employees so that they can perform well under environmental complexity (Yu et al., 2020). The employer should formulate an HR policy where green values are well appreciated. The performance can be evaluated based on the green contribution to their assigned duties and responsibilities. Therefore, GHRM encourages developing environmental

orientation to protect from environmental degradation or harmfulness (Benevene & Buonomo, 2020). It also acts as a competitive strategy for sustainable performance because customers are showing interest to buy eco-friendly products (Tang et al., 2018). Therefore, GHRM can help the organizations to be environmental oriented and to strive for sustainable organizational performance. Thus, we can hypothesize,
H1: GHRM has a significant impact on EO

Environmental Orientation and Sustainable Organizational Performance

In the case of environmental orientation, organizations should include the environmental regulations and customers' preferences for producing green products. This environmental orientation can lead to minimize the environmental loss and enable employers to cope up with the environmental changes (Vinayan et al., 2012). Environmental orientation encourages employees to take initiatives in order to make effective utilization of natural resources such as energy, stationery, equipment, and electricity to produce green value-based products (Hörisch, 2015). The advanced environmental initiative can lead to sustainable performance in the turbulent business environment. As a consequence, the firm should orient the environmental circumstances from raw materials sources to deliver products for their final customers (Dunlap et al., 2000). In our study, environmental orientation can be linked with institutional theory. This theory suggests that organizations should consider and deal with the constraints and challenges such as using the scarce natural resources by different institutions (Yong et al., 2020). Thus, we can hypothesize,
H2: EO has a significant impact on SOP

Green Human Resource Management and Sustainable Organizational Performance

GHRM can help the organization to achieve sustainable performance by adopting green issues in the organization (Tope, 2014). The SOP includes economic prosperity with the major concern of using environmental resources carefully. Each organization aims to be the market leader in the competitive business world. However, without introducing environmental issues in the business policy, no firm can be successful in the long run because environmental standards have become a prerequisite for all organizations (Toor & Ofori, 2010). SOP can be linked with the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory. This theory explained that competitive advantage relies on a firm's rare,



worthy, and unique resources other than competitors (Zhou et al., 2020). Thus, we can hypothesize,
H3: GHRM has a significant impact on SOP.

Following the understanding of the empiric observations and theoretical underpinnings from the above discussion, the following conceptual framework for the proposed research has been mapped.

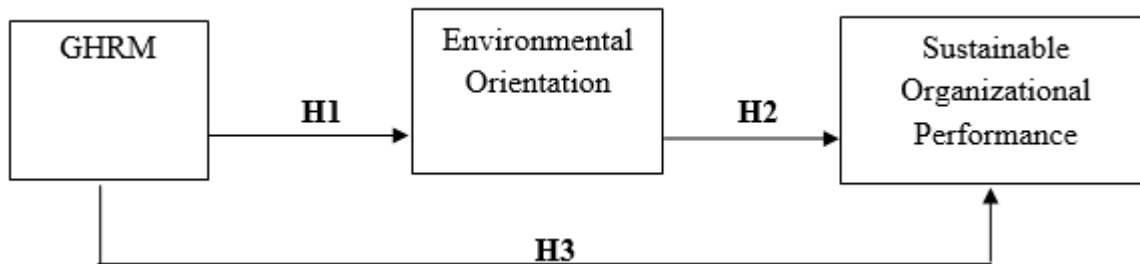


Figure 1: Conceptual research framework

III. Research Methods

Research Design and Data Collection

Ready-made garments (RMG) were chosen for data collection because of their influential significance in the economy of Bangladesh. Nearly two and a half million people are working in this sector directly and indirectly. This study aimed to collect data from Chittagong RMGs. The research questionnaires were sent to the department of the human resource of randomly chosen RMGs listed in BGMEA. Two distinct sets of questionnaires were sent to them one to report the environmental orientation of the firm and another for reporting the state of the human resource management practices of the respective firms.

The deductive reasoning with the self-administered survey was selected for the positive paradigm. During questionnaire delivery, the respondents were well aware that the research associates would visit for every fifteen days intervals to reduce the purpose of bias. The researchers distributed 350 questionnaires with the support of research assistants, however, 294 responses were collected with complete data, where the response rate is 84 percent. Moreover, to test the quality of data, it discloses that replies have no missing values, outlier, and similar bias reposes.

Participant Information

Males hold a more significant portion of the organization than females. The current study provides restrictions on minimum officer-level employees to respond to the questionnaire. The average age of the respondents is 35.40 years and tenure are 6.25 years. 76 percent of employees are male-dominated whereas 24 percent of employees

are female. 86 percent completed a master's degree from different universities in Bangladesh while 14 percent had a graduate degree from different universities. The study finds 129 (87 percent) small and medium enterprises and 19 (13 percent) large enterprises.

Response Bias

Respondents' anonymity was secured in the questionnaire because individual identifications were recorded during the time of data collection. Respondents also were cautioned that all the confidentiality would be kept in private and this would only be used for research and academic usage. Therefore, there is no response bias and social desirability bias. Harman single factor test was used to see that a single factor explains more than 50 percent of the total variance.

Measurement Tools

We pointed out multi-item measurement tools used in a similar setting in prior studies. Green human resource management was measured by items initiated by Jabbour, Santos, and Nagano (2010). Environmental orientation was measured by using the items developed by Banerjee's (2002), while sustainable organizational performance was measured by using the items developed by Akram et al (2018). Brislin's (1970) back translation procedure was used to translate from original version to Bangla in order to get the most accurate response from the residents of Bangladesh. Academic as well as professionals were employed for back-translation activities. This translated version was tested in advance on several executives. Afterward, we redefined the finalization of the questionnaire by taking into



consideration their feedback from the pilot test (Azim et al., 2019). The response was measured five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

Analysis and Model Evaluation

The second-generation structural equation modeling (SEM) was adopted that thoroughly evaluated measurement and structural models (Das et al., 2019; Uddin et al., 2020). SEM was used over regression techniques because of its robustness and exhaustiveness in analyzing and reporting results in a well-mannered. Remarkably, it discloses the strength of the association between independent and dependent variables and shows the predictability of the model. In AMOS 20, SEM estimates both models together. The measurement model shows the results of reliabilities and validities, together with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), where the structural model involves t-statistics, beta-coefficients, R-square, and the goodness of fit index (GFI).

Measurement Model

Measurement model was tested using various criteria. First of all, confirmatory factor analysis used to determine fit index. The estimated result showed in Table 1 where loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) were displayed. In case of composite reliability, we noticed that the minimum score of measure was 0.934, asserting that the minimum threshold limit was satisfied (Hair Jr et al., 2014; Zikmund et al., 2010). The AVE also checked where all the constructs meet the minimum limit of threshold values of 0.50. As minimum AVE (AVE of SOP = 0.74) was higher than 0.50 for any scale, convergent validity was ensured (Hair Jr et al., 2014). Discriminant validity is ensured when construct's AVE square root is greater than its association with other constructs (Hair Jr et al., 2014).

Table 1: Loadings, Reliability, and Validity

	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
GHRM01	0.925	0.965	0.972	0.876
GHRM02	0.938			
GHRM03	0.926			
GHRM04	0.941			
GHRM05	0.948			
EO01	0.882	0.922	0.945	0.81
EO02	0.878			
EO03	0.936			
EO04	0.904			
SOP01	0.819	0.912	0.934	0.74
SOP02	0.879			
SOP03	0.88			
SOP04	0.865			
SOP05	0.855			



Structural Model

We tested structural model and the results showed an excellent fit (GHRM and EO, $\beta = 0.884$, $P = 0.000$; EO and SOP, $\beta = 0.212$, $P = 0.000$; and GHRM and SOP, $\beta = 0.720$, $P = 0.000$) (Hair Jr et al., 2014; Hooper et al., 2008).

Hypothesis Testing

At first, we tested the direct effects of GHRM and EO on SOP (see Table 2). In H1, we proposed that GHRM has a significant impact on EO. The results

were in accordance with proposed hypothesis ($\beta = 0.884$, $P = 0.000$). Thus, H1 is supported. In H2, we posited that EO has a significant impact on SOP. The results showed in Table 2 for this hypothesis also supports this prediction, referring EO significantly influence SOP ($\beta = 0.212$, $P = 0.000$). Accordingly, H2 is also supported. In H3, the results also showed in Table 2 supports this prediction, indicating that GHRM has a significant impact on SOP ($\beta = 0.720$, $P = 0.000$). Thus, H3 is also supported.

Table 2 Path Coefficients

	β	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values
GHRM -> SOP	0.720	0.046	15.695	0.000
EO -> SOP	0.212	0.049	4.379	0.000
GHRM -> EO	0.884	0.017	51.497	0.000

IV. Discussion

This study was done both from empirical and theoretical perspective to identify the influence of GHRM on EO. Empirical evidence based on this study outcomes explain that GHRM supports organizational top authority to set the green concern in their human resource policy or changing the existing policy into green concern to protect the natural environment (Mahmood et al., 2019). Therefore, in line with ability-motivation-opportunity theory, we may state that environmental orientation can be stronger when the firms uses and green policy which will be practiced throughout at all levels (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964). Our first hypothesis stated that GHRM significantly influences EO based on previous research study. The study has demonstrated a high impact of GHRM on EO (GHRM and EO, $\beta = 0.884$, $P = 0.000$). We can conclude that previous research findings also support these results.

In Hypothesis 2, we posit that EO has a significant influence on SOP. Previous studies in line with this have similarity (Robertson and Barling, 2013; Kim et al., 2016; Khan et al., 2019). When firms are committed to protect resources with the concern on environment, it can produce eco-friendly products that can support the firm to achieve sustainable performance than competitors (Jang et al., 2017; Robertson and Carleton, 2018). In addition, environmental orientation also enhances firm's positive image to the environment sensitive people that can lead its competitive advantage.

In hypothesis 3, we stated that GHRM has a significant influence o SOP. This study also has

relevancy with the previous studies (Robertson and Barling, 2013). When the firm turn its general HRM activities into green practices, HR manager tends to recruit personnel who has greater green values. This will help firm to achieve green goals (Khan et al., 2019). Mangers can provide training based on environmental performance issue that need to be addressed to carry out the business activities. As a result, employees can be up to date to perform green activities which can enhance the firm's image to the potential clients to achieve sustainability.

V. Conclusions

Contributions

This study has remarkable contribution to the field of management science. Though there are a lot of studies on HRM and organization studies, there is a lack of study on GHRM. There are no previous studies that show how GHRM and EO influence SOP. This study can change the traditional mindset of top authority to rethink about the company policies for better organizational and environmental performance. It creates awareness among the business owner to think about the social welfare by positioning itself in better place in competitive market. This practices also highlights the image of the company globally on which they can gain and sustain competitive advantage.

The results also signifies that many potential buyers are becoming mire concerned about the environmentally friendly products that's why they can use these results as a tool of guidelines. Environmental orientation also



stimulates employees about their strong commitment to perform the green values. When the organizations feel that it's their responsibility to perform in a green manner in terms of employee recruitment, office layout, use of less or no harmful materials to produce products, they can easily be the market leader for the longer period.

Practical Implications

This article concentrates on HRM's corporate social responsibility, which shape the organizations to turn into green organization to be competitive in the marketplace as well as responsible to the society. We explained that GHRM encourages firm to achieve organizational sustainable performance through implementing the green policy by its employees. Environmental orientation in the organization generates responsible behaviour among all individual to react in a green manner that leads firms to gain competitive advantage. It also changes the employees' mindset to consider the social issues deeply and encourages them to act in accordance. GHRM can also stimulate to form strong environmental orientation which have an enormous impact on organizational sustainable performance. Foreign buyers can be attracted where the ISO 14000 standards are strictly maintained. As top authority in any organization are concerned to apply GHRM practices that have to include these ISO standards. Therefore, it can give the firm an opportunity to uphold positive image to the foreign buyers.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study contains value addition in the field of management and for the partitioners, there are some limitations. Firstly, the sample size was not sufficient to generalize the results of the study. Moreover, data were collected only a single industry namely RMGs in Bangladesh. We also use a single time survey data that indicates cross sectional data. Therefore, prospective researchers can this issue when they will conduct research regarding this. Future researchers can also use longitudinal data to make the results more acceptable. Then, in our study, there is no mediating analysis. Therefore, researchers are suggested to use environmental orientation as a mediator. In addition, they can use a moderating variable as well to the association between two other constructs to investigate whether their relation can be stronger or weaker in the presence of a third variable.

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