

The Role of Green Human Capital as a Mediation Variable Based on Improved Talent Management in Enhancing Green Innovation and Environmental Performance

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Info Articles

Keywords:

Green Human Capital, Talent Management

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of green human capital as a mediating variable in increasing green innovation and environmental performance. The focus of this study was drawn to UMKM with a business oriented on the food industry. 200 UMKM in total were sampled for this study. In a subsequent phase, the researcher contacted the owners of 200 UMKM, and they were given a questionnaire to complete. Green transformational leadership and Green human resource management were the two independent variables that comprise the five variables used in this study and green human capital became mediating factor. Green innovation and environmental performance were two dependent variables. Data analysis in this study used SEM (Structural Equation Modeling). The research findings demonstrate that green transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on green innovation. Green human resource management has a positive and insignificant effect on environmental performance. Green transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on green human capital. Green human resource management has a positive and significant effect on green human capital. Green human capital has a positive and significant effect on green innovation. Green human capital has a positive and significant effect on environmental performance. This study is limited by the fact that it only collected information from specialized culinary UMKM. Therefore, the following study can broaden the subject of study to include other aspects of UMKM outside culinary.

p-ISSN 2550-0368

e-ISSN 2549-0303

INTRODUCTION

Organizational environmental management systems depend on the development and maintenance of their internal competencies and skills (Anwar et al., 2020), with Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (UMKM) displaying significant failures as a result of staff members' poor motivation and lack of organizational abilities needed to handle complex problems connected to environmental sustainability (Yusoff et al., 2020). In recent decades, environmental conservation, and preservation—hereafter referred to as "environment"—has gained importance. Environmental preservation practices have been adopted in almost every industry. Most manufacturing companies seek to eliminate the waste generated in their products' production and disposal processes and ultimately aim to improve company performance (Fayyazi et al., 2015).

Rapid economic growth has resulted in several environmental issues. As a result, businesses and the government are now more conscious than ever of the value of environmental sustainability for both social and economic development (Roscoe et al., 2019). Companies are beginning to use Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) to improve their reputation and accomplish their environmental preservation objectives in response to demands from the government, environmental legislation, and stakeholders (Aykan, 2017). Therefore, GHRM practices are crucial to enhancing environmental protection and giving businesses, especially UMKM, a competitive edge.

Given the significance of GHRM in determining business sustainability, prior researchers have thoroughly examined and built upon its antecedents and outcomes (Gilal et al., 2019). The literature on GHRM has discussed the relationship between GHRM and employee behaviour in a corporate organization (Al-Swidi et al., 2021). For example, Rawashdeh (2018) developed a GHRM initiative and examined its impact on the environmental behaviour of company employees. The researchers discovered that GHRM has a beneficial effect on green behaviour in the workplace and that this green conduct might indirectly increase concern for environmental sustainability among employees. According to Nisar et al. (2021), GHRM positively influences pro-green psychological capital, which promotes pro-green behaviour among employees. Many studies have focused on how GHRM influences employee behaviour (Leszczynska., 2016; Pham et al., 2020). Recent studies increasingly focus on how GHRM affects corporate environmental performance and found positive effects (Haldorai & Garcia, 2022). Pham (2020) discovered, for instance, that GHRM can strengthen green organizational cultures and positively impact environmental protection and sustainable development of businesses. Although researchers have researched the impact of GHRM on organizational outcomes at the individual and corporate levels, how and when GHRM influences green organizational innovation remains to be further explored.

Previous studies examined whether HR or high-performance work practices have a positive effect on environmental innovation (Longoni & Guerci, 2018) and paradox theory was used to analyze how HR affects environmental sustainability (Sobaih et al., 2020). However, the relationship between GHRM and green innovation has yet to be empirically studied sufficiently. This study fills this gap in the literature by analyzing how GHRM influences green innovation using the human resource theory. According to human capital theory, Chen (2008) developed a green human capital construct, which refers to skills, knowledge, wisdom, experience, employee commitment, etc., to protect the environment. Through green training, green compensation and rewards, green pledges, and other methods, GHRM may increase employee skills, motivation, and opportunities. It will strengthen the organization's human capital, which will then have an impact on the development of green products or business processes.

Developing and maintaining internal competencies and abilities are essential to organizational environmental management systems (Elshaer et al., 2021), with UMKM exhibiting severe failures due to a lack of staff motivation and skills. Few organizational skills are required to surmount the complex challenges posed by environmental sustainability issues (Paille & Renwick, 2020). According to Renwick et al. (2013), leadership and HR are involved in creating internal knowledge and skills crucial for UMKM human resource management, although from a different perspective (Chaudhary, 2020). At the same time,

earlier research has demonstrated that organizational culture can increase environmental performance in SMEs (Razab et al., 2015).

This study offers several contributions to the existing research. Researchers start by looking for unstudied green developments in GHRM. Researchers are expanding the field of HRM by offering fresh perspectives and assisting researchers in better comprehending the ideas and their outcomes. Second, previous studies mainly examined the influence of green innovation strategy, market demand and greening of suppliers on green innovation (Ren et al., 2018). However, businesses that adopt organizational policies and practices that might be crucial in this process will better understand the concept of green innovation. As such, this study contributes to the green innovation literature by expanding on its potential antecedents. Third, utilizing the human capital theory, we investigate the significant but understudied mediating role of green human capital in the link between transformational leadership and green innovation. Ultimately, we further investigate the indirect effects of transformational leadership on green innovation and GHRM on environmental performance by examining the role of green human capital as a mediating variable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Green transformational leadership

Transformational leadership promotes better organizational performance, but it is unknown what the mediators between the two dimensions are, which is particularly important to researchers (Masri & Jaaron, 2017). The interest in the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational performance is especially important when companies need to innovate their processes and products to achieve competitive advantage and superior organizational performance. In this study, Green Transformational Leadership (GTFL) is defined as a style of leadership in which the leader's primary objective is to inspire and motivate the followers to achieve the firm's environmental objectives while supporting their developmental needs. GTFL encourages employees to acquire new knowledge (Jabbar & Abid, 2014) and keeps them engaged and involved in activities related to environmentally friendly processes and product innovations that enable companies to present products and/or eco-friendly services to the market and increase their level of environmental protection.

Green human resource management

Human resource management (HRM) systems are evolving from archaic forms of work, such as low employee involvement, to more inclusive and supportive processes in which employees are provided with opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge, and attitudes, according to the current literature (Haddock et al., 2016). Green Human Resources Management (GHRM) refers to HRM practices focusing on environmental and ecological management when environmental management and sustainable resource development are gaining popularity. According to Peerzadah et al. (2018), the company's effect is a result of its environmental strategy and the ethical behaviour of its staff. GHRM is an integral part of the ongoing HRM literature. It focuses on operational environmental management practices, where green HRM acts as a platform that links HRM practices with operational environmental management activities (Ahmad, 2015). Therefore, GHRM reflects a corporate organization's strategic focus on environmental protection and encourages top management to pay attention to organizational processes and practices that encourage people to work in an environmentally friendly way to reduce workplace pollution.

GHRM and Environmental Performance

Based on a review of extensive empirical studies, previous researchers found a significant correlation between an organization's HRM system and organizational performance. For example, HR functions such as selection and compensation have a positive impact on a company's bottom line. According to Zaid and Jaaron (2018), HRM's operational outcomes (such as productivity, service, and innovation) directly and indirectly benefit financial performance. In this study, there are three dimensions of HRM: (1) The role of HR that increases competence, (2) The role of HR that increases motivation, and (3) HR practices that

increase opportunities. Referring to environmental literature, most researchers identify environmental management outcomes as direct environmental performance rather than organizational or company-wide performance. For instance, Judge and Douglas (1998) demonstrate that a company's environmental performance is positively correlated with the degree of integration of its environmental management. A company's environmental performance is "a company's performance in meeting and exceeding society's expectations regarding the natural environment." According to that study, the environmental efficiency of UMKM is determined by how well its environmental measures mitigate harmful environmental effects.

Green transformational leadership and green innovation

Leadership is important in any organization (Siyambalapitiya, 2018), and human capital is the company's greatest resource (Pham et al., 2020; Haldorai et al., 2022). Leadership focuses on understanding, foreseeing, and regulating the interpersonal dynamics of how individuals influence one another in the direction of shared objectives. At the same time, HRM deals with organizational systems and processes to engage employees regularly, usually on a more significant level. As a result, according to studies, HRM and leadership both have a role in directing employees at work, but from a different perspective (Elshaer et al., 2021). The first section of the current literature demonstrates the critical role managers play as a mediating variable in enhancing HRM management best practices to boost employee engagement and productivity (Gilal et al., 2019; Aykan, 2017). Another strand of the existing HRM literature proposes leadership as a moderator between HRM practices and performance variables. Finally, according to the third HRM literature (Roscoe et al., 2019), leadership is essential to the connection between HRM and green innovation. However, because leaders impact HRM practices that affect innovation and environmental performance, researchers think that leadership plays a crucial role as a forerunner, not a facilitator, of the HRM innovation-performance link in UMKM.

Green human capital as a mediator

According to the idea of human capital, Human capital is the total of employee knowledge, skills, and talents that have the potential to produce value as well as key corporate assets that result in long-term competitive advantage (Yusoff et al., 2020). Because the human capital of each company is distinctive, it helps companies develop significant assets and competencies that make them competitive and challenging for other companies to imitate (Lepak and Snell, 1999). When faced with environmental pressures, companies may see opportunities to benefit from environmental improvements and adopt a proactive approach and attitude towards environmental problems (Fayyazi et al., 2020). Chen (2008) uses the concept of "green human capital," which is the culmination of employee knowledge, skills, talents, attitudes, experience, dedication, creativity, etc., connected to environmental awareness and management to establish human capital as a foundation. Therefore, several previous researchers began studying green human capital's origins, such as corporate environmental ethics and corporate social responsibility (Anwar et al., 2020). However, there has yet to be any research up to this point demonstrating a connection between GHRM and green human capital.

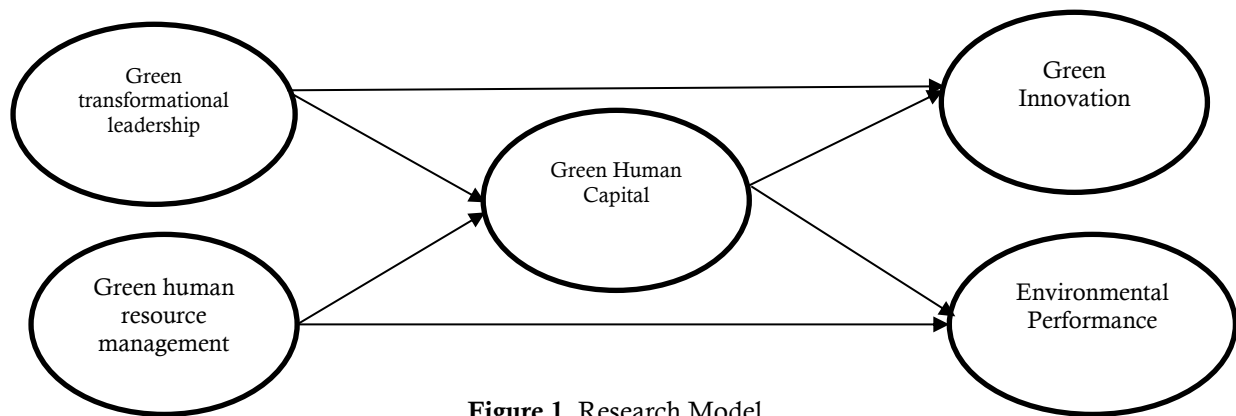


Figure 1. Research Model

Hipotesis

- H1: Green transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on green innovation
- H2: Green human resource management has a positive and significant effect on Environmental Performance
- H3: Green transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on green human capital
- H4: Green human resource management has a positive and significant effect on green human capital
- H5: Green Human Capital has a positive and significant effect on green innovation
- H6: Green Human Capital has a positive and significant effect on Environmental Performance
- H7: Green transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on green innovation through green human capital
- H8: Green human resource management has a positive and significant effect on Environmental Performance through green human capital

METHODS

The focus of this study was drawn to UMKM with a business oriented on the food industry. There were 200 UMKM sampled in total for this study. In a subsequent phase, the researcher contacted the owners of 200 UMKM, and they were given a questionnaire to complete. To confirm that UMKM uses GHRM principles in running their organization, the researcher also asked brief questions concerning UMKM's environmental education or training initiatives. In other words, the researcher only encouraged UMKM to engage in this study survey if they had already begun using green HRM practices. In this study, a UMKM were classified as "green UMKM" if they had received a "green UMKM" certificate and operated a non-green UMKM without green certificates but followed GHRM practices. Of the 200 UMKM, there were 80 luxury UMKM, 50 premium UMKM, 30 premium UMKM, and 40 middle-class UMKM. Half of the 200 UMKM were networks, and the other half were independent UMKM. The number of employees varied from 5 to 30, with an average of 20.

In the third phase, researchers created an online survey using Google Docs, which the participating UMKM used to send universal resource finders to their staff. The last phase involved UMKM workers doing a voluntary survey and utilizing self-management strategies to respond to questions. There were four sections to the online survey. The first section introduced the survey and discussed its purpose, the response procedure, and the respondents' anonymity and confidentiality. The second part contained examination questions on the employee's tenure. The survey automatically excludes respondents with less than one year of work experience. The third section randomly evaluated the scale items in this study, gave each a different closing scale to reduce common method bias, and included the four social desirability questions used in probable diagnoses. The final section of the survey inquired about the respondent's age, gender, education level, occupation, and job duties. This study also controlled the surveys with multiple solutions to improve the validity. The Google Doc system, to prevent respondents from filling out their

ballot boxes, recognizes each respondent's email address and automatically prevents respondents from taking the survey more than once.

The five variables used in this study are two independent variables (green transformational leadership and green human resource management), one mediating variable (green human capital), two dependent variables (green innovation and environmental performance), and one independent variable (green human capital). Data analysis in this study used SEM (Structural Equation Modeling). It was a method of multivariate statistical analysis. Processing SEM data differed from processing data from path analysis or regression. SEM reliance on measurement and structural models made data processing more challenging. In SEM, three activities were going on at once; confirming the instrument's validity and reliability (confirmatory factor analysis), examining the model of how variables relate to one another (path analysis), and finding a good model for prediction (structural model analysis and regression analysis). A complete model consists of a measurement and structural or causal models. While the structural model was a model that described the hypothesized relationships, the measuring model was used to create an assessment of the validity and discriminant validity. Amos program was also utilized to process SEM data more easily.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability and validity

The validity and reliability of all variables are evaluated. At this stage, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extract (AVE) were used to assess the convergent validity of all variables. The CR scores for all constructs were 0.886, 0.973, 0.854 and 0.915, respectively, above the 0.70 benchmarks recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). The AVE values for all constructs were 0.772, 0.852, 0.820 and 0.834, respectively, exceeding the value of 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). According to the findings, all constructs have sufficient convergent validity; Discriminant validity was then evaluated. To meet the discriminant validity requirement, the square root of all AVE variables must be greater than the correlation between each pair of constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). As a result, discriminant validity in this study has been fulfilled.

Hypothesis test

Table 1. Testing for direct effect

Direct Effect	Standardized direct effect	Standard error	t value	Sig. level	Hypothesis testing
GTL→GI	0.752	0.032	6.876	P < 0.000	H1 Accepted
GRM→EP	0.771	0.021	2.456	P < 0.070	H2 Not Accepted
GTL→GHC	0.665	0.023	5.672	P < 0.000	H3 Accepted
GRM→GHC	0.453	0.016	5.263	P < 0.000	H4 Accepted
GHC→GI	0.427	0.087	4.987	P < 0.000	H5 Accepted
GHC→EP	0.54	0.052	4.096	P < 0.000	H6 Accepted

As shown in Table 1, Green transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on green innovation with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Green human resource management has a positive and insignificant effect on environmental performance with a significance value of $0.070 > 0.05$. Green transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on green human capital with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Green human resource management has a positive and significant effect on green human capital with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Green human capital has a positive and significant effect on green innovation, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Green human capital has a positive and significant effect on environmental performance with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$.

Table 2. Testing for the indirect effect

Indirect Effect	Standardized indirect effect	Sig. level	Hypothesis testing
GTL→GHC→GI	0.086	P < 0.002	H7 Accepted
GRM→GHC→EP	0.096	P < 0.004	H8 Accepted

Based on Table 2, green transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on green innovation through green human capital with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Green human resource management has a positive and significant effect on environmental performance through green human capital with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$.

This study examines the mechanisms through which GHRM influences environmental performance. Previous studies mostly focused on how GHRM affects environmental protection or green employee behaviour (Rawashdeh, 2018; Gilal et al., 2019); however, this study investigates whether transformational leadership may predict green innovation and if GHRM can predict environmental performance. Second, based on the human capital theory, researchers examine the effect of green human capital as a mediating variable. Third, the researchers further demonstrate the mediating effect of green human capital on the relationship between green transformational leadership towards green innovation and GHRM towards environmental performance. Lastly, researchers also looked at the indirect impact of GHRM on environmental performance using green human capital as a mediating variable. This study has theoretical and practical implications, limitations, and future directions.

Better operational environmental protection can arise from the use of innovative products and environmentally friendly procedures (Nisar et al., 2021). The result of the study supports the hypothesis that green human capital practices mediate the effect of green transformational leadership on green innovation. It also contributes to previous research (Renwick et al., 2013), where leadership plays an important role in influencing HRM practices and, in turn, predicts green innovation in organizations. Additionally, as demonstrated by the result, green HRM has an indirect effect on the environmental protection of UMKM through green human capital. Overall, the findings of this study provide evidence for both direct and indirect hypotheses, and they have several theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretical implications

This research has made several contributions to HRM theory. First, researchers empirically examine and expand the mechanisms through which GHRM influences the environmental performance of UMKM-based companies. Previous studies have highlighted the dimensions and components of GHRM (Renwick et al., 2013) and their impact on environmental protection (Paille & Renwick, 2020). However, several studies have examined the relationship between GHRM and environmental performance. According to the findings, GHRM positively influences the environmental performance of companies, which means that companies can improve their environmental performance by adopting green HRM practices. The findings support recent research on how GHRM affects environmental performance (Siyambalapitiya & Liu, 2018) and contribute to HRM theory.

Another significant contribution is the finding of different patterns of GHRM impact on HEP in UMKM with green certification compared to those without. This finding is significant since there is no evidence that GHRM improves the HEP of green or non-green UMKM. Because environmental protection and sustainable development management have received much attention from researchers on UMKM, much research has focused on identifying environmental management standards to obtain green or ecological certificates (Chaudhary, 2020). However, previous researchers have paid little attention to what efforts should be made to encourage the environmental ownership of employees of non-green UMKM, who may need more funds to obtain environmental certification of any kind. Further, several previous researchers (Razab et al., 2015; Ren & Jackson, 2018) emphasized the importance of GHRM in UMKM. However, they did not compare the impact of GHRM on the performance of green and non-

green UMKM. As indicated by the result of the study, the effect of GHRM on environmental performance is fully mediated by green human capital in green UMKM and partly mediated by non-green UMKM.

Practical implications

Researchers and practitioners of UMKM are starting to understand that one of the key goals of UMKM is sustainable management, which includes environmental preservation (Peerzadah et al., 2018). UMKM must report greenhouse gas emissions to meet this obligation prior to taking any other operational environmental management steps. UMKM needs to implement proper GHRM because it helps employees to be proud of their organization's role in environmental protection, which not only strengthens employee commitment to their organization but also encourages pro-environmental behaviour. More specifically, UMKM must prioritize GHRM, regardless of whether the UMKM has a green certificate. Besides, this research strongly encourages UMKM senior managers and HRM managers to determine the core environmental values of organizations when formulating their GHRM policies. It is also important for UMKM to hire employees with similar environmental values. Therefore, executives and human resource managers must consider how to recruit and select employees who value environmental protection. Recruitment professionals may lead by example by discussing the environmental values of their company in job advertisements and evaluating candidate values by asking hypothetical questions regarding environmental preservation during interviews. Additionally, HRM professionals should provide their staff members with programs for environmental education and training that will help them comprehend the environmental policies of UMKM in greater detail and raise their understanding of the value of environmental preservation.

Limitations and future research

There are several limitations to this study. However, it can be used for future work. First, the current method influenced the results of this study because the same respondents rated the predictor variable (i.e., GHRM) and the mediating variable (i.e., green human capital). Future studies should collect variables and predictor criteria from several assessors or sources to reduce the possibility of method bias in general; it also needs to consider collecting data from supervisors or co-workers to assess employees' green behaviour. Second, this study gathered information from special culinary UMKM. Thus, the following study can broaden the subject of study to include other aspects of UMKM outside culinary.

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