



White Paper on Social Responsibility and Green Human Resource Management in Organization: The Implications for Moral Identity

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the link between green and socially responsible behaviour and its impact on moral identity. It suggests that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and Social Responsibility positively influence moral identity formation within the workplace, primarily through internalization and symbolization processes and by encouraging moral voices from coworkers. The findings highlight the significance of fostering supportive workplace environments to cultivate morally solid identities. The discussion emphasizes how green and socially responsible behaviour can reinforce moral values in work contexts, offering insights for practitioners and researchers. The study also suggests further exploring how moral identities shaped by other norms may influence green and socially responsible behaviour. Overall, the research sheds light on the complex interplay between green behaviour, social responsibility, and moral identity, emphasizing the role of organizational environments in shaping moral behaviour.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have profound implications for implementing "Green" policies and practices across diverse organizational sectors, including government, semi-governmental, and non-governmental entities. Heightened awareness surrounding corporate social responsibility has elevated the significance of human resources within these organizations (Renwick et al., 2008). Indeed, human resources are increasingly recognized as invaluable assets, particularly within the environmental realm (Jabbour and Santos, 2008). As the bedrock of organizational knowledge and ethos, human resources catalyze further investment and development (Farndale et al., 2017). This burgeoning recognition underscores the pivotal role of human capital in driving sustainability efforts and the imperative for organizations to prioritize investments in their human resources to navigate the evolving landscape of environmental responsibility effectively.

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices and organizational social responsibility play pivotal roles in meeting the multifaceted sustainability requirements encompassing social justice, health, and employee welfare, alongside attaining economic stability and environmental equilibrium. While contemporary discourse has seen a surge in research attention towards GHRM, previous studies (Lee, 2009; Lin and Ho, 2011) have primarily focused on aspects such as awareness, adoption (Yong and Mohd-Yusoff, 2016), and implementation (Chan et al., 2014) of GHRM practices within organizations (Guerci and Carollo, 2016; Dagiliūtė et al., 2018). The literature underscores the criticality of integrating environmental practices seamlessly into organizational functioning (Cherian & Jacob, 2012), aligning environmental goals and strategies synergistically with organizational objectives (Haden, Oyler, & Humphrey, 2009). Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of striking a delicate balance between organizational growth and environmental preservation to foster green behaviour (Murari & Bhandari, 2011) while also promoting the cultivation of a sustainability culture within the organizational framework (Harmon, Fairfield, & Wirtenberg, 2010).

In recent years, numerous scholars have delved into Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), examining its intricacies and implications. GHRM hinges upon distinct patterns of green decision-making and leadership behaviours within organizations (Jackson, Renwick, Jabbour, & Muller-Camen, 2011; Berrone & Gomez-Mejia, 2009; Jabbour, Santos, & Nagano, 2010; Massoud, Daily, & Bishop, 2008). However, despite the advancements in GHRM research, there remains a noticeable gap concerning the moral dimension encompassing green and socially responsible behaviours in the workplace. Hence, this study endeavours to theoretically elucidate the dynamics of green and socially responsible behaviours and their influence on moral identity. Through a comprehensive literature review, researchers aim to pinpoint potential research lacunae and evaluate prevailing trends in the field. This endeavour seeks to shed light on the interplay between organizational practices, individual behaviours, and ethical considerations, thereby advancing our understanding of the broader implications of GHRM initiatives.

2. METHODS

Research conducted through literature studies primarily relies on secondary data. This approach involves investigating and comprehending documents, theoretical frameworks, and pertinent information about the research problem under scrutiny. Data for this study were sourced from international journals, websites, and other pertinent research materials. The gathered data undergoes compilation, review, and assessment, with relevant materials

selected to inform the conclusions of the research topic. This process employs content analysis, entailing a detailed examination of the content and theoretical interpretation stages.

3. Results

A study conducted by (Chen and Wu, 2022) revealed that environmental Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices within the workplace could enhance employees' awareness of green behaviour (referred to as green mindfulness), thereby fostering a culture of green behaviour. These findings underscore the relevance of resource conservation theory to green management, suggesting that GHRM practices and supportive organizational leadership characteristics can synergistically drive green behaviour management processes. Similarly, (Tian and Jiang, 2021) asserted that GHRM practices positively influence employee attitudes, motivation, and behaviour, with employees' perceptions of HRM as significant predictors of their work attitudes and behaviour. This aligns with (Aboramadan's, 2022) elaboration on the impact of GHRM on employees' green behaviour within higher education institutions. Their results indicate that GHRM significantly predicts both role-based and discretionary green behaviours. Furthermore, (Renwick et al., 2013; Yong et al., 2020) further contribute to this discourse by emphasizing from their studies that GHRM practices are an indispensable system for supporting green behaviour management. These practices aim to seamlessly integrate "environmental issues" into the functional modules of human resource management, thereby regulating employee green behaviour at the organizational level.

Thus, it can be affirmed by studies conducted by (Chen and Wu, 2022; Tian and Jiang, 2021; Aboramadan, 2022; Renwick et al., 2013; and Yong et al., 2020) that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices and policies within organizations play a pivotal role in fostering a culture of green behaviour among employees. Implementing GHRM initiatives catalyzes promoting environmentally conscious actions internally and externally, motivating individuals to embrace green behaviours. Moreover, various scholars have highlighted the broader implications of GHRM in instilling a sense of social responsibility within organizations. For instance, the study by Amrutha and Geetha (2020) elucidates this theoretical framework, identifying recent developments and research gaps within the GHRM literature while exploring the future trajectory of green behaviour practices in fulfilling an organization's social sustainability requirements. Using NVivo analysis, the study delineates three primary clusters: GHRM practices, employee engagement in green behaviour within the workplace, and organizational sustainability. This comprehensive approach provides valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics of GHRM and its implications for organizational sustainability.

Further manual analysis has uncovered that social sustainability remains relatively underexplored compared to sustainability's economic and environmental dimensions. Building upon this observation, the author delves into a conceptual exploration of a theoretical model proposing the mediating role of 'employee green behaviour at work' in the relationship between 'GHRM practices' and organizational 'social responsibility,' employing a grounded theory approach. By emphasizing social justice, health, and overall well-being, this study scrutinizes contemporary research in Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) to unveil the considerable potential of core green practices aimed at fostering social sustainability, a facet that has thus far received inadequate attention.

In their study, (Zhao et al., 2021) delve into the influence of social responsibility on green management practices. They argue that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) policies must be deeply integrated within the organizational framework, supported by robust communication channels and unequivocal backing to maximize the social benefits derived from employee green behaviour (Dumont et al., 2017). This necessitates harmonizing diverse

management practices, including formalizing green behaviour programs by implementing policies that underscore the significance of green behaviour performance to employees. Such initiatives aim to institutionalize green behaviour within the organizational system, fostering employee engagement through social responsibility policies (Zhao & Zhou, 2021).

Employee social responsibility plays a pivotal role within organizations, catalyzing the integration of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)-related concerns across various facets of the organization's interactions with external stakeholders (Shen & Zhang, 2019). Attributes of responsibility are intrinsically linked to an organization's CSR objectives and initiatives promoting green behaviour. Within Human Resource Management (HRM), social responsibility endeavours can institutionalize a culture of social responsibility by fostering a supportive environment and offering developmental opportunities for employees through diverse HRM modules, as proposed by (Shen & Benson, 2016). This includes recruiting socially responsible employees and fostering a culture encouraging employee engagement in behaviors consistent with the organization's social responsibilities. This perspective sheds light on how this symbiotic relationship extends the ripple effects of its influence on green management practices and enriches the role of employees in advancing CSR objectives.

Their study (Zhang et al., 2021) posits that social responsibility practices may elicit varied responses within external systems, contingent upon individual contexts, characteristics, or orientations. They draw upon self-regulation theory, which posits that individuals can actively modulate their influence on the external environment, selectively process information, make decisions, and pursue goal-oriented behaviour (VandeWalle et al., 2001). This theory underscores humans' innate capacity for self-regulation, allowing them to adaptively adjust their behaviour through self-evaluative reactions (Bandura, 1991a).

Social responsibility activates employees' moral orientation through a self-regulation process. This mechanism entails exercising personal agency in various social and moral behavioural domains to achieve and enhance competence. Self-regulatory factors are pivotal in shaping an individual's moral judgment, with the moral regulation model highlighting the regulation of moral behaviour through two primary sources of sanctions: social and internal self-sanctions. Internal self-sanctions are crucial in moral behaviour regulation (Bandura, 1991b). Through anticipatory self-sanctions, evaluative self-reactions serve as a mechanism to ensure behavioural alignment with internal standards. Consequently, moral cognition is a significant determinant influencing employees' green behaviour.

According to (Aquino and Reed, 2002), moral identity constitutes a self-concept organized around a set of moral attributes, manifesting as mental representations of how a morally upright individual perceives, feels, and behaves. Within this framework, moral identity emerges as a trait anchored within a social context, whether a collective, an organization or any societal structure. Consequently, individuals assimilate a moral identity into their social self-schema when they endeavour to perceive the world through the lens of ethical attributes associated with these social structures (Reed, 2002). Moreover, (Aquino and Reed, 2002) posit that moral identity should be delineated based on moral attributes to discern diverse moral characteristics. Individuals accord varying degrees of importance to these moral attributes, and their moral identity becomes intertwined with those deemed significant. This conceptualization facilitates the delineation of moral identity and paves the way for developing measurement instruments based on moral attributes. This indicates that an individual's moral identity is not merely a fixed personality trait but is subject to positive or negative influences from contextual, situational, or personal factors (Aquino and Reed, 2002). As emphasized by (Winterich et al., 2013), possessing a high moral identity does not necessarily equate to being inherently moral or possessing elevated moral standards.

Conversely, individuals with a greater internalization of moral identity tend to demonstrate a higher propensity to readily and consistently associate themselves with moral traits than those with lower internalization levels.

According to (Aquino and Reed, 2002), moral identity encompasses internalization and symbolization. Internalization denotes an individual's internal moral disposition, while symbolization represents the outward expression of moral character. Individuals with a high level of internalized moral identity tend to engage in ethical behaviour as it resonates with their subjective moral characteristics. Conversely, moral identity symbolization is driven by the desire for social approval (Winterich et al., 2013) and often involves impression management (Aquino and Reed, 2002). Moral identity significantly influences employee behaviour as it directly impacts self-concept, transcending moral cognition, perception, and even feelings of goodwill (Aquino and Reed, 2002). It serves as a predictor of various social behaviours (Patrick et al., 2018) because employees with a strong moral identity feel compelled to adhere to moral norms aligned with their moral self-schema, driven by a fundamental desire for self-consistency (Aquino et al., 2009). For instance, research indicates that moral identity positively correlates with employees' perceptions of an organization's charitable endeavours (Reed et al., 2007). Moreover, employees with a robust moral identity are more likely to establish connections with ethical brands due to feelings of guilt (Newman and Trump, 2017), opt for green products, and strive for environmentally responsible consumption (Wu and Yang, 2018).

The moral identity theory (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Weaver, 2006) posits that moral identity significantly influences the relationship between employees' behavioural orientation and their trust in management, particularly in organizations where Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) directly benefits employees. This theory underscores the significance of practices, traditions, and activities that exemplify moral standards and virtue ethics (Weaver, 2006). It suggests that individuals' cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioural responses to perceptions of moral behaviour in others or the moral environment align with their internal moral narrative embedded within their self-concept (Rupp et al., 2013; Skarlicki et al., 2008; Weaver, 2006). Moral identity is a guiding framework that shapes individuals' moral cognitions and behaviours, influencing their interactions within organizational settings and their perceptions of management trustworthiness.

Moral identity is a distinct facet focused on one's moral dimensions (Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). The interplay between Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices and social responsibility initiatives can foster employee moral identity by establishing organizational norms and fostering consensus. In turn, employees are likely to exhibit green behaviour as they strive to uphold consistency between their actions and moral identity. By leveraging self-regulatory motivation, social responsibility initiatives can align employees with the organization's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) objectives, providing an enriched theoretical framework that complements research on responsibility management. This symbiotic relationship between GHRM, social responsibility, and employee moral identity underscores organizational behaviour's intricate dynamics and the need for a comprehensive approach to fostering ethical conduct.

Moral awareness arises when an individual recognizes the ethical dimensions inherent in a situation (Reynolds, 2006). According to moral decision theory, moral awareness is a pivotal precursor to ethical decision-making. Without moral awareness, the cognitive processes necessary for engaging in the moral decision-making process remain dormant. Moreover, moral awareness plays a crucial role in shaping moral behaviour (Jones, 1991). The depth of an individual's awareness regarding the moral significance of a given situation correlates with

the diagnostic and ethical relevance of their knowledge (Aquino et al., 2009). Studies have demonstrated that moral awareness significantly influences ethical conduct, with heightened moral awareness correlating with a diminished propensity for negative behaviours (He and Harris, 2014). Individuals with a heightened moral awareness tend to express more negative judgments toward unethical products (Martinez and Jaeger, 2016). Additionally, the extent to which consumers perceive green behaviour consumption as a moral imperative influences their reliance on moral identity in decision-making processes, strengthening the association between moral identity and the intention to purchase green products.

The empirical findings of studies by (Mossholder et al., 2011; Venkatesh et al., 2003) suggest that coworkers tend to form norm groups within organizations. Colleague support, in addition to formal policies, can play a complementary role. Positive support from coworkers can enhance social responsibility initiatives' impact and promote employee green behaviour. Social interactions with coworkers align self-regulation with Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals. Conversely, a lack of support from coworkers can pose a significant obstacle, potentially heightening employees' concerns about ostracism or envy and hindering the development of a moral consensus within the organization.

Furthermore, the actions of coworkers who consistently uphold moral principles can influence their peers and foster a collective commitment to environmental sustainability and social responsibility. (Xiaowen and Zhou, 2016) proposed that moral identity may moderate the relationship between employee orientations in HRM and trust in management, particularly among individuals with higher levels of moral identity. This suggests that employees' moral convictions can strengthen their trust in management practices, highlighting the intricate interplay between moral identity, organizational culture, and employee perceptions of leadership trustworthiness.

Employees with a strong moral identity are inclined to exhibit higher levels of trust, as suggested by (Shen and Zhu, 2011). Given their deeply ingrained moral values and traits, individuals with a robust moral identity tend to be more attuned to practices that prioritize ethical considerations. Conversely, while acknowledging Human Resource Management (HRM) practices to some extent, those with lower levels of moral identity may exhibit reduced sensitivity towards the moral dimension and the ethical efforts undertaken by management.

Supporting this notion, (Rupp et al., 2013) discovered that employees with a heightened moral identity are more responsive to their perceptions of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, often going above and beyond their role to support such endeavours. Organizational initiatives that foster fairness and responsibility among employees have been found to elicit heightened levels of physical, emotional, and cognitive engagement from individuals with solid moral identities (He, Zhu, & Zheng, 2014). Consequently, the implications of moral identity extend to fostering trust among employees at the managerial level. This heightened trust facilitates the smoother implementation of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) policies and social responsibility initiatives, particularly when bolstered by a positive organizational culture and high employee morale.

In the study (by Li & Wang, 2022) that moral identity catalyzes encouraging green behaviour consumption. Moral identity encompasses internalization and symbolization, each exerting distinct influences on the consumption of green behaviour. While prior research predominantly focuses on moral identity internalization, it often overlooks the significance of moral identity symbolization and fails to fully explore the interactions, mechanisms, and boundary conditions between moral identity and policy goal framing. Through their experimental investigation into the combined impact of moral identity internalization and

symbolization, Li & Wang found that both factors can heighten consumers' intentions to purchase green products. Specifically, consumers with a strong internalization of moral identity exhibit a more favourable response to green behaviour goals. This study contributes to the existing literature by shedding light on the intricate relationship between moral identity and green behaviour consumption, offering valuable insights for businesses aiming to enhance the efficacy of green marketing strategies.

Similarly, (Qiongyao & Xingshan's, 2023) study reveals a positive correlation between moral identity as a mediator of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and employees' workplace social responsibility. According to (Ismail and Hilal, 2023), a green moral identity can foster altruistic behaviour by motivating employees with a heightened sense of psychological ownership to prioritize the organization's interests over their own. These findings underscore moral identity's pivotal role in shaping consumer behaviour and employee attitudes towards social responsibility within organizational settings.

4. Conclusion

To conclude, this study delved into the impact of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and social responsibility on employee moral identity. Drawing from the insights gleaned from various literature sources, it becomes evident that GHRM policies and organizational social responsibility initiatives contribute positively to fostering green behaviour among employees within the workplace. Similarly, these policies support employees in exhibiting socially responsible behaviour internally and externally, fostering a conducive environment for positive employee conduct.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that moral identity plays a pivotal role in driving green behaviour and social responsibility, as it influences individuals' self-concept, thoughts, and actions through internalization and symbolization. Several studies suggest that green behaviour and social responsibility are strongly influenced by moral identity, underscoring the importance of integrating these aspects into HRM practices to promote organizational well-being.

While this study sheds light on the positive implications of GHRM and social responsibility for employee moral identity, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations. Specifically, further exploration is warranted regarding the influence of external norms on the internalization and symbolization of moral identity and their subsequent impact on green and socially responsible behaviour. Addressing these limitations through more extensive and nuanced research methodologies can provide deeper insights into the mechanisms underlying employee behaviour in organizational settings.

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