

“Organizational factors fostering employee green behavior in the workplace: Study on the leather industry”

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ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS FOSTERING EMPLOYEE GREEN BEHAVIOR IN THE WORKPLACE: STUDY ON THE LEATHER INDUSTRY

Abstract

This study investigates the influencing factors that foster green employee behavior in the workplace. The objective of this study is to measure the impact of environmental concern, green human resources practices, environmental knowledge, and green organizational culture on green employee behavior at the workplace. As the potential sample, the study only considered working employees of various medium-sized organizations of the leather industry in Bangladesh. The survey questionnaire was developed on Google Forms using a five-point Likert scale. 300 online questionnaires were sent to the respondents, and 215 responses were deemed valid, showing a response rate of 71%. Moreover, a 5% significance level and SPSS software were used to analyze the data regarding the research purpose of this study. Cronbach's alpha (α) and factor loading values were used for the reliability and validity of the variables. OLS regression was used to test the hypotheses. This study results find that employees' concern for the environment, organizational green HRM, necessary information about the environment, green culture, and leadership style are critical for fostering green behavioral outcomes at the workplace. These four factors explained 48.6% of variations on the dependent variable. It is also found that environmental concern ($\beta = 0.274, p < 0.05^{**}$) has the highest impact on employee behavior, and green HR practices ($\beta = 0.145, p < 0.05^{**}$) have the lowest impact on employee behavior.

Keywords

environmental concern, human resources, environmental knowledge, organizational culture, leadership

JEL Classification

M10, M12, J24

INTRODUCTION

Environmental sustainability is a growing concern across sectors. Employee green behavior drives sustainable company practices. Organizations face a critical challenge in promoting eco-friendly employee behavior amidst evolving environmental concerns. Employee green behavior refers to voluntary initiatives by staff members to advance environmental sustainability at work.

It is crucial to comprehend the significance of encouraging green behavior among employees and its possible advantages for the environment and the company. As employees develop and uphold sustainable practices in the workplace, employee green behavior is a crucial component of sustainability (Pan et al., 2022). Staff members are more inclined to embrace sustainable working practices if environmental sustainability is prioritized in their personal life. Green employee conduct is vital for corporate performance as well as the environment (Ansari et al., 2021). Sustainable business strategies can help organizations cut expenses, build their reputations, and recruit and keep talent.

Sustainable measures, such as employing environmentally friendly cleaning supplies, can enhance indoor air quality and lower the risk of respiratory and allergy-related health issues. Businesses must comprehend the variables impacting pro-environmental behavior to encourage employee green behavior.

Bangladesh has recently established itself as one of the Asian region's developing countries (Ahmed et al., 2023), and business industries are the main contributors to this growth. Therefore, encouraging environmentally friendly behaviors at work can help lower greenhouse gas emissions, lessen the impacts of global warming, and build a more durable production in Bangladesh. As employee green aspects are getting attention from an organizational perspective in the Bangladesh context, it is crucial to determine organizational factors of employee green behavior.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Environmental concern refers to the awareness and sensitivity of individuals or societies toward the natural environment, which involves recognizing the finite nature of natural resources and the need to conserve and protect them for future generations (Sabbir et al., 2022; Heo & Muralidharan, 2019). Besides, environmental concern encompasses a range of issues, including climate change, deforestation, pollution, loss of biodiversity, and depletion of natural resources (Chen & Rahaman, 2022). It can be driven by a sense of responsibility for the impact of individual or collective actions on the environment and a desire to reduce negative environmental impacts (Zameer et al., 2020; Shin et al., 2019). Moreover, Zhang and Huang (2019) assert that hotel employees' environmental concerns positively affect their pro-environmental behaviors in the workplace. Environmental considerations can lead to various actions, such as reducing energy consumption, recycling, using environmentally friendly products, and supporting policies and initiatives aimed at protecting the environment, which has been considered a constant subject of interest within consumer and marketing behavior research (Albayrak et al., 2013). Previous studies also found that environmental concern positively and significantly affects green employee behavior in the workplace (Dangelico et al., 2021; Sadiq et al., 2021; Testa et al., 2020).

Green human resource management is regarded as the green environment of employees in an organization which includes the overall consciousness of HRM and its recruitment, selection, training, employee performance appraisal, compensating package that supports maintaining environmental activities, sustainable principles and

initiatives (Anwar et al., 2020; Aboramadan et al., 2022). Besides, green HRM supports the employees' understanding regarding the corporate goals and objectives that assist in creating green behavior and a sustainable workplace among employees (Fawehinm et al., 2020). Therefore, green HRM practices can also promote the green behavior of employees by incorporating environmental considerations into the performance and evaluation process, which can set performance targets related to sustainability, such as increasing the use of renewable energy, reducing energy consumption, and reducing waste. On the other hand, green HRM is essential for every institution that supports green management practice that encompasses the environmental issues and modules of HRM functions at the organizational level (Renwick et al., 2013; Yong et al., 2020). Pham et al. (2019) also support that green HRM practices positively and significantly impact employees' motivations, attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions that help to maintain employees' green behavior in an organization.

Environmental knowledge is defined as the understanding of the natural world and the complex relationships between human activities and the environment that includes environmental knowledgeable issues like air and water pollution, climate change, resource depletion, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and recognizing the impact of human activities on the environment (Bollinger & Smith, 2001; Liu et al., 2020). In addition, environmental knowledge is a term that includes understanding the benefits of sustainability and the importance of adopting eco-friendly practices to reduce negative impacts on the environment that directly impact employees' green behavior in an organization (Zsóka et al., 2013; Hamzah & Tanwir, 2021). On

the one hand, environmental knowledge creates a consciousness of attitudes and behaviors of employees regarding the environment, which play a significant role in promoting green employee behavior. When employees are aware of environmental issues and the impact of their actions on the environment, they are more likely to adopt sustainable practices in their personal and professional lives (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Chan and Hawkins (2010) also support that environmental knowledge has a positive and significant influence on increasing environmental consciousness and the well-being of employees.

Green organizational culture is defined as the culture of shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices within an organization that promotes environmental sustainability and responsibility for increasing the company's green behaviors of employees and ecological strategy (Renwick et al., 2013; Singh et al., 2020; Yeşiltaş et al., 2022). On the other hand, green organizational culture emphasizes the importance of minimizing the negative impact of the organization's activities, eliminating the hazards, and maximizing its positive effects at the workplace (Mohammad Mosadegh Rad, 2006). Furthermore, green organizational culture also emphasizes transparency and accountability, with organizations regularly reporting on their environmental performance and engaging in continuous improvement efforts to minimize their harmful ecological effect on the environment and organizations (Jabbour & de Sousa Jabbour, 2016). Henceforth, green organizational culture supports fulfilling employees' expectations and responsibilities and obtaining spirited promotional advantage over their colleagues through shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices that prioritize the environment in all aspects (Afsar & Umrani, 2020).

Green leadership refers to leaders motivating and promoting environmental sustainability and responsibility within an organization. Green leaders lead by example, create a culture of environmental responsibility, and provide support and resources for employees to demonstrate green behaviors beyond the expected level and adopt green behaviors in all aspects of the organization's operations (Chen & Chang, 2013). Besides, green lead-

ers prioritize sustainability by setting clear goals and objectives that reflect the organization's commitment to environmental responsibility (Jian et al., 2019). Therefore, green leadership refers to leaders performing as environmental role models and influencing the employees' green behavior in an organization by showing their charismatic behavior and encouraging everyone to do their part in protecting the environment (Robertson, 2018). Dumont et al. (2017) also said that green leaders support employees' flexibility and the importance of encouraging employees to have green behaviors in the workplace.

Thus, the literature review has highlighted the interconnected nature of environmental concerns, human resources, environmental knowledge, organizational culture, leadership, and their influence on employee behavior.

2. AIM AND HYPOTHESES

This paper aims to determine and understand the factors of green employee behaviors. This paper identified five antecedents of green employee behaviors using a systematic review process (Figure 1): (i) environmental concern, (ii) green human resources practices, (iii) environmental knowledge, (iv) green organizational culture, and (v) green leadership. This paper produced the following hypotheses after carefully reviewing the literature:

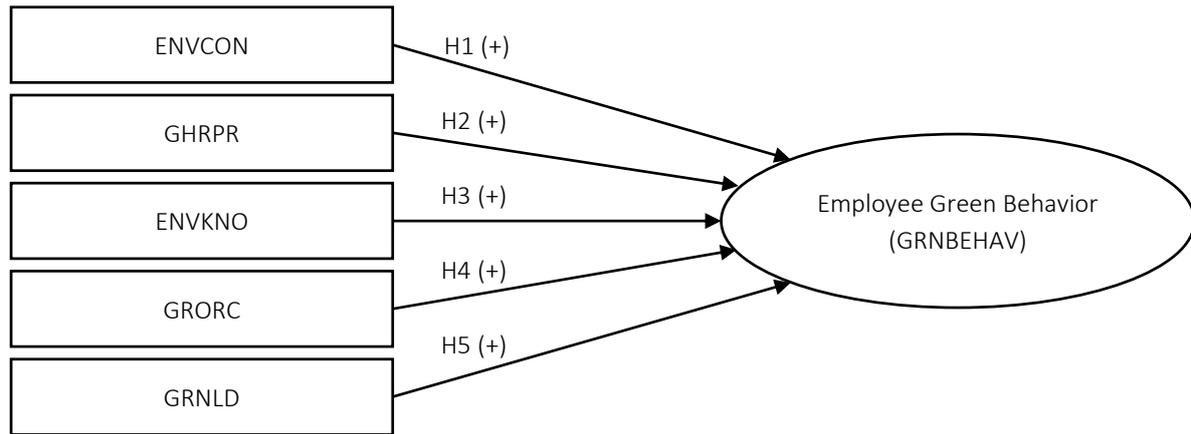
H1: There is a positive association between environmental concern and employee green behaviors.

H2: There is a positive association between green human resources practices and employee green behaviors.

H3: There is a positive association between environmental knowledge and employee green behaviors.

H4: There is a positive association between green organizational culture and employee green behaviors.

H5: There is a positive association between green leadership and employee green behaviors.



Note: ENVCON = environmental concern, GHRPR = green human resources practices, ENVKNO = environmental knowledge, GRORC = green organizational culture, and GRNLD = green leadership.

Figure 1. Study framework

3. METHOD

This study was conducted among the employees of various organizations in Bangladesh. The quantitative survey design was employed to test the hypothesized relationships in this study. The items of the questionnaire were adopted from past research. The questionnaires were designed through Google Forms and later sent to respondents' collected emails; before sending the questionnaire, it was checked by the academics.

The convenience sampling technique was employed to collect the data. A total of 300 questionnaires were sent to emails of the respondents, out of which 250 responses were received from the respondents, whereas 35 were discounted because of uncompleted data. Therefore, the final sample was $n = 215$, and the response rate was 71%. A five-point Likert scale has been used where 1 stands for 'Strongly Disagree' and 5 stands for 'Strongly Agree.' Moreover, this paper used Cronbach's Alpha (α) value of 0.70 or more than 0.70 as the allowable value to measure or justify the variables' reliability.

The study assessed the reliability (Table 1) of ENVCON ($\alpha = 0.846$), GHRPR ($\alpha = 0.762$), ENVKNO ($\alpha = 0.957$), GRORC ($\alpha = 0.745$), and green GRNLD ($\alpha = 0.822$). In terms of data analysis, the SPSS software was used; to evaluate the hypotheses, a 5% significance threshold was used as an indicator in this paper.

Table 1. Reliability and validity analysis

Construct	Items	Loading	Cronbach's (α) value
Environmental concern (ENVCON)	ENVCON1	0.749	0.846
	ENVCON2	0.846	
	ENVCON3	0.638	
	ENVCON4	0.946	
Green Human Resources Practices (GHRPR)	GHRPR1	0.648	0.762
	GHRPR2	0.792	
	GHRPR3	0.583	
Environmental knowledge (ENVKNO)	ENVKNO1	0.947	0.957
	ENVKNO2	0.932	
Organizational culture (GRORC)	GRORC1	0.648	0.745
	GRORC2	0.834	
	GRORC3	0.631	
Green leadership (GRNLD)	GRNLD1	0.817	0.822
	GRNLD2	0.894	
Employee green behaviors (GRNBEHAV)	GRNBEHAV1	0.931	0.624
	GRNBEHAV2	0.830	
	GRNBEHAV3	0.740	
	GRNBEHAV4	0.873	
	GRNBEHAV5	0.771	

Four items that measure environmental concern (ENVCON) were taken from Ahmed et al. (2020). Three items that measure green human resources practices (GHRPR) were taken from Ababneh (2021). Two items measuring environmental knowledge (ENVKNO) were retrieved from Ahmed et al. (2020). Three items that measure organizational culture (GRORC) were taken from Al-Swidi et al. (2021). Two items measuring green leadership (GRNLD) were taken from Al-Swidi et al. (2021). Finally, the dependent variable (employee green behaviors (GRNBEHAV)) was measured by five items

from Kim et al. (2016). Reliability and validity measures are shown in Table 1.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 shows the demographic statistics, including details on the distribution of gender, education level, employment experience, and monthly pay among 215 people.

Table 2. Demographic information

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Job Experience (in years)		
0 to 5	127	59%
6 to 10	56	26%
More than 10	32	15%
Gender		
Male	142	66%
Female	73	34%
Education		
Secondary School Certificate	34	16%
Higher Secondary Certificate	40	19%
Bachelor's Degree	98	46%
Postgraduate Degree	24	11%
Diploma Certificate	19	9%
Monthly Salary (in Bangladeshi taka)		
below 15000	29	13%
15001 to 30000	106	49%
more than 30000	80	37%

Note: ** $n = 215$.

Most of the sample (59%) said they had 0 to 5 years of work experience, indicating that most participants were in their early careers. A moderate amount of experience was suggested by 26% of the sample's participants. Last but not least, 15% of the sample claimed to have more than 10 years of experience, indicating that just a tiny percentage of the sample had substantial professional experience. The sample was predominately male, with 66% identifying as men and 34% as women. A significant fraction of the sample had finished university education, as seen by the highest percentage of respondents (46%) with a Bachelor's degree. In addition, 16% of the sample reported having a Secondary School Certificate, while 19% claimed to have a Higher Secondary Certificate, a secondary-level credential in Bangladesh. This suggests that a sizable fraction of the sample had successfully finished secondary school. A small percentage of the sample (1%) claimed to have a postgraduate degree, suggesting that they had

finished higher education, whereas 9% claimed to have a diploma certificate, a vocational qualification. Finally, most people (49%) in the sample made between 15001 and 30000 Bangladeshi taka monthly, showing that they were primarily middle-class earners. Also, 37% of the sample had a monthly salary of more than 30,000 taka, indicating that a sizeable fraction of the sample had a respectable income. Lastly, 13% of the sample had a monthly payment of less than 15000 taka, suggesting that a tiny percentage had a relatively low income. These demographic statistics give a general overview of the employment experience, gender, education, and monthly salary of 215 people. They indicate that the sample primarily comprised relatively young, educated men with moderate to high-income levels.

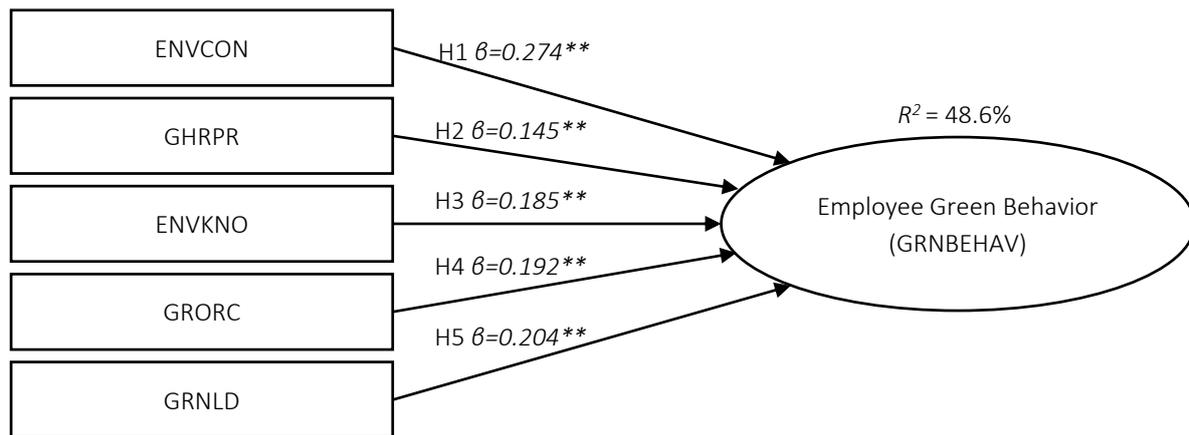
Table 3. Regression coefficient analysis

Variables	β value	t- value	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
ENVCON	0.274	3.004	0.000**	0.745	1.836
GHRPR	0.145	2.045	0.000**	0.936	1.936
ENVKNO	0.185	2.847	0.000**	0.478	1.537
GRORC	0.192	2.901	0.000**	0.843	1.173
GRNLD	0.204	2.946	0.000**	0.735	1.483

Note: $R^2 = 0.486$. Durbin Watson value = 2.089. Dependent variable: Employee green behaviors (GRNBEHAV). * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$ ($n = 215$). ENVCON = environmental concern, GHRPR = green human resources practices, ENVKNO = environmental knowledge, GRORC = green organizational culture, and GRNLD = green leadership.

Five determinants (environmental concern, green human resources practices, environmental knowledge, green organizational culture, and green leadership) considered are accepted at a 5% significance level. Table 3 indicates that $R^2 = 0.555$ or 55.50% determined the variance of these factors.

In terms of regression analysis (Table 3 and Figure 2), hypothesis 1 anticipated a positive relationship between environmental concern and green employee behaviors; it is accepted at a 5% significance level ($\beta = 0.274$, $p < 0.05$). Past studies support this result as environmental concern positively and significantly affects green employee behavior at the workplace (Dangelico et al., 2021; Sadiq et al., 2021; Testa et al., 2020). This result indicates that individuals who demonstrate a greater degree of environmental concern are more inclined to participate in workplace activities that promote environmental sustainability (Kura, 2016). Organizations ought to prioritize improving their



Note: ENVCON = environmental concern, GHRPR = green human resources practices, ENVKNO = environmental knowledge, GRORC = green organizational culture, and GRNLD = green leadership.

Figure 2. Regression results

sustainability endeavors by cultivating a corporate culture that promotes environmental responsibility and actively encourages employee engagement in eco-friendly practices.

Hypothesis 2 predicts a positive and significant association between green human resources practices and green employee behaviors; it is accepted at a 5% significance level ($\beta = 0.145, p < 0.05$). This outcome supports that green HRM is essential for every institution that supports green management practice that encompasses the environmental issues and modules of HRM functions at the organizational level (Renwick et al., 2013; Yong et al., 2020). Therefore, organizations that implement environmentally conscious human resource practices, such as integrating sustainability training, including green initiatives in performance evaluations, and providing incentives for environmentally friendly behaviors, are more likely to observe increased employee engagement in green behaviors (Aboramadan et al., 2022).

Furthermore, hypothesis 3 is accepted at a 5% significance level ($\beta = 0.185, p < 0.05$), which indicates a positive association between environmental knowledge and green employee behaviors. This outcome is related to prior studies. Environmental knowledge has a positive and significant influence on increasing employees' environmental consciousness and well-being (Chan & Hawkins, 2010). The findings indicate that employees with a greater degree of environmental knowledge are more inclined to participate in workplace activi-

ties that promote environmental sustainability (Safari et al., 2020).

Hypothesis 4 represents a positive and significant association between green organizational culture and employee green behaviors, accepted at a 5% significance level ($\beta = 0.192, p < 0.05$). This outcome supports the previous studies as green organizational culture supports fulfilling the employees' expectations and responsibilities and obtaining spirited promotional advantage over their colleagues through shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices that prioritize the environment in all aspects (Afsar & Umrani, 2020). The results indicate that organizations with a robust environmental orientation integrated into their cultural framework are more inclined to observe heightened levels of employee engagement in environmentally sustainable actions (Al-Swidi et al., 2021). An organizational culture that fosters support and inclusivity while also placing value on sustainability and offering resources and incentives for eco-friendly practices has the potential to significantly influence and encourage green behaviors among employees.

Hypothesis 5 is accepted at a 5% significance level ($\beta = 0.204, p < 0.05$), confirming a positive association between green leadership and employee behaviors. The prior studies also support that green leaders support employees' flexibility and importance that encourage employees to green behaviors at the workplace (Dumont et al., 2017). The findings indicate that when leaders exhibit

a high level of dedication to environmental sustainability, it has a favorable impact on employees' attitudes and behaviors pertaining to the environment. Green leaders are crucial in serving as exemplars, cultivating a sense of duty, and motivating employees to actively participate in environmentally conscious actions (A. N. Khan & N. A. Khan, 2022). Leaders should foster an organizational climate that upholds and appreciates environmental stewardship by implementing green initiatives, providing resources, and actively promoting sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to identify five significant predictors of employee green behavior and analyze their impact on green employee behavior in the workplace of the leather industry in Bangladesh. The study applied the regression method to test the hypotheses. The findings demonstrate that environmental concern, green human resources practices, environmental knowledge, green organizational culture, and green leadership are critical factors affecting employee green behavior. The regression coefficient analysis revealed that these factors collectively accounted for 48.6% of enhancing employees' green behavior at the workplace. By embracing these factors, organizations can reduce environmental impact, improve environmental performance, and meet sustainability goals. Also, fostering a sustainability culture can enhance brand reputation, increase employee engagement and motivation, and stimulate innovation. These findings provide valuable insights for organizational management to promote employees' green behavior, contributing to attaining long-term sustainable goals.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Md. Atikur Rahaman.

Data curation: Md. Atikur Rahaman, Rupali Dilip Taru, Debashis Kundu, Issa Ahammad.

Formal analysis: Md. Atikur Rahaman, Debashis Kundu, Joyshree Das, Issa Ahammad.

Funding acquisition: Md. Atikur Rahaman, Rupali Dilip Taru, Joyshree Das.

Investigation: Md. Atikur Rahaman.

Methodology: Rupali Dilip Taru, Debashis Kundu, Joyshree Das, Issa Ahammad.

Project administration: Rupali Dilip Taru, Joyshree Das.

Resources: Md. Atikur Rahaman, Debashis Kundu, Joyshree Das, Issa Ahammad.

Software: Rupali Dilip Taru, Issa Ahammad.

Supervision: Md. Atikur Rahaman, Joyshree Das.

Validation: Md. Atikur Rahaman, Debashis Kundu.

Visualization: Rupali Dilip Taru, Debashis Kundu, Joyshree Das, Issa Ahammad.

Writing – original draft: Md. Atikur Rahaman, Rupali Dilip Taru.

Writing – review & editing: Md. Atikur Rahaman, Rupali Dilip Taru, Debashis Kundu, Joyshree Das, Issa Ahammad.

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