

Sustainable Transformation through Employees' Pro-environmental Behavior: An Empirical Study

Anubinda Mohanty, Bighnesh Dash Mohapatra, & Chandan Kumar Sahoo

This study examined how leadership, organizational culture, and green human resource management (HRM) practices contribute to fostering sustainable behavior. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study collected both quantitative and qualitative data from across diverse industries, focusing on organizations with established sustainability credentials. Statistical analysis and thematic coding reveal significant correlations between OB principles, particularly transformational and ethical leadership styles, sustainability-oriented cultures, and green HRM practices and pro-environmental behavior (PEB) among employees. The results indicate that OB principles play a vital role in aligning organizational operations with sustainability goals.

Anubinda Mohanty (E-mail: anubinda@gmail.com) is an Executive Ph D. Scholar at the School of Management, National Institute of Technology Rourkela & GM, Business Excellence, Rourkela Steel Plant, Odisha, India. **Bighnesh Dash Mohapatra** (E-mail: yesitisbighnesh@gmail.com) is a Research Scholar & **Chandan Kumar Sahoo** is a Professor at the School of Management, National Institute of Technology Rourkela Odisha, India

Introduction

In recent decades, sustainability has evolved from a niche concern to a global imperative, driving fundamental changes in how organizations operate. As environmental, social, and governance (ESG) expectations increase, businesses are under intense pressure to adopt sustainable practices that address climate change, resource scarcity, and social inequality. This shift toward sustainability is not merely a regulatory response; it reflects a growing awareness among stakeholders, including customers, investors, and employees, that businesses must actively contribute to solving societal challenges. As a result, sustainability has become integral to corporate strategy, shaping decisions that affect everything from operations and supply chains to branding and stakeholder engagement. Organizational behavior (OB), traditionally focused on understanding and optimizing workplace dynamics, now plays a

critical role in supporting sustainability. The study of OB explores how individuals and groups within organizations behave and interact, revealing insights into the drivers of motivation, leadership, decision-making, and culture. Given the complexity of embedding sustainability into business practices, OB principles offer valuable frameworks for fostering the behavioral changes required to achieve sustainable development. By examining how leadership styles, organizational culture, human resource management (HRM), and employee engagement intersect with sustainability goals, this paper aims to elucidate the behavioral factors that underpin successful sustainability initiatives. The adoption of OB-driven sustainability practices can enhance brand loyalty, employee satisfaction, and regulatory compliance, positioning organizations as leaders in sustainable development. In this way, the study underscores that sustainability is not only a business obligation but also a strategic opportunity that can yield significant social, environmental, and financial benefits. The study aims to examine how OB principles are applied to support sustainability within organizations. By focusing on leadership, organizational culture, HRM practices, and employee engagement, the study aims to identify specific OB strategies that enable organizations to achieve sustainability goals. The key research objectives are:

1. To analyze the influence of dimensions of organizational behavior (i.e. leadership styles, organizational culture, green HRM and employee engagement) on pro-employment behavior.

2. To identify barriers to integrating sustainability within organizational behavior and explore potential solutions grounded in OB theories.

Literature Review

Literature on organizational behavior (OB) and sustainability is extensive and multidisciplinary, drawing insights from management, psychology, environmental science, and organizational studies. This section provides an in-depth review of existing literature, focusing on the role of OB in supporting sustainability through leadership, organizational culture, green human resource management (HRM), and employee engagement. By synthesizing key theories and empirical studies, the literature review establishes a theoretical foundation for understanding how OB principles can drive sustainable practices within organizations.

Sustainability in the Context of Today's Corporate

The concept of sustainability has evolved over time, shifting from a focus on environmental preservation to a more holistic framework that includes social and economic dimensions. Elkington's (1997) "triple bottom line" approach defines sustainability as the balance between financial performance, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship. According to Dyllick and Muff (2016), sustainable businesses prioritize long-term value creation over short-term profit maximization, emphasizing the interdependence between business success and societal well-being. Several studies highlight the benefits of sustainability for

organizations, including enhanced reputation, customer loyalty, and risk management. For example, research shows that companies committed to sustainability enjoy a competitive advantage in the marketplace, as consumers increasingly prefer brands that align with their environmental and ethical values (Smith et al., 2020). However, adopting sustainability as a strategic priority requires more than operational adjustments; it necessitates a shift in organizational behavior, as sustainability is fundamentally a people-centered endeavor. This recognition underscores the importance of OB principles in facilitating sustainable transformation.

The Role of Leadership in Promoting Sustainability

Leadership is widely regarded as one of the most influential factors in promoting sustainability within organizations. Leaders play a central role in defining organizational values, setting strategic priorities, and modeling behaviors that reflect the company's commitment to sustainability. Transformational leadership, in particular, has been identified as highly effective in fostering sustainable practices. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by articulating a compelling vision for the future, encouraging them to transcend self-interest for the greater good (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Research by Chen and Chang (2013) demonstrates that transformational leaders who prioritize sustainability instill a sense of purpose and environmental responsibility in their teams, leading to increased pro-environ-

mental behavior (PEB) among employees. Transformational leaders use strategies such as individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation to encourage employees to embrace sustainability as a core value. By fostering an emotional commitment to environmental goals, these leaders create a foundation for long-term sustainable behavior. Ethical leadership is another critical style in the context of sustainability. Ethical leaders, characterized by integrity, fairness, and a commitment to stakeholder welfare, influence employees' moral perspectives, making them more likely to engage in sustainable actions (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Ethical leaders create a culture of trust and accountability, which reinforces employees' intrinsic motivation to support environmental initiatives. Maak and Pless (2006) argue that ethical leaders who prioritize sustainability attract employees who share similar values, creating a cohesive and supportive environment for sustainable practices. While transformational and ethical leadership styles are commonly associated with successful sustainability efforts, research also highlights the role of servant leadership and participative leadership. Servant leaders prioritize the needs of their team members, including fostering an environment that supports sustainability. Participative leaders, who involve employees in decision-making processes, promote a sense of ownership and empowerment, which is conducive to sustainability (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013). By engaging employees in sustainability-related decisions, participative leaders enable a shared commitment to environmental goals. Organi-

zations led by sustainability-focused leaders are better equipped to adapt to environmental and market changes (Bansal et al., 2018). The hypothesis that emerged is as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Leadership will positively affect the pro-environment behavior.

Organizational Culture & Sustainable Behavior

Organizational culture, such as shared values, beliefs, and norms that shape behavior, significantly influences the success of sustainability initiatives. Schein (2010) defines organizational culture as the “invisible force” that guides decision-making and behavior within a company. When sustainability is embedded in the organizational culture, employees are more likely to adopt pro-environmental behaviors and align their actions with the company’s environmental goals. A sustainability-oriented culture provides a sense of purpose, unity, and responsibility that motivates employees to engage in eco-friendly practices. Lozano (2018) emphasizes that companies with a strong culture of sustainability integrate environmental responsibility into all aspects of their operations, from resource management to product design. This integration is evident in companies like Patagonia, where sustainability is a core cultural value that shapes every level of the organization. Patagonia’s commitment to environmental activism, transparency, and ethical sourcing serves as a model of how a culture centered on sustainability can drive both employee engagement and customer loyalty (Haigh & Hoffman,

The concept of a “green” organizational culture is gaining traction as organizations seek to foster pro-environmental behavior.

2014). The concept of a “green” organizational culture is gaining traction as organizations seek to foster pro-environmental behavior. A green culture promotes values such as environmental stewardship, ethical responsibility, and social accountability, encouraging employees to support green initiatives. Norton et al. (2015) find that employees in organizations with a green culture experience a sense of psychological ownership over environmental goals, leading to greater engagement in sustainability efforts. Moreover, a sustainability-oriented culture often attracts employees who are already environmentally conscious, reinforcing the organization’s commitment to green practices. However, building a sustainability-oriented culture presents challenges. Cultural change is a gradual process, and transforming existing values and norms to prioritize sustainability requires consistent leadership, clear communication, and alignment of policies with environmental goals. As Shrivastava (1995) notes, organizational inertia can hinder the adoption of sustainable practices, especially in companies with established routines that may be at odds with environmental objectives. Overcoming these challenges requires a strategic approach that leverages OB principles to align organizational culture with sustainability. Organizations with sustainability-integrated cultures are better equipped to navigate disruptions and

challenges (Bansal & DesJardine, 2014). The derived hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 2: Organizational culture will positively affect the pro-environment behavior.

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM)

Green HRM is a growing field that explores how HR practices can support sustainability by promoting environmentally friendly behaviors within the workforce. Green HRM encompasses various practices, including green recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and reward systems, all of which aim to embed sustainability into the employee experience. Renwick et al. (2013) define green HRM as the alignment of HR functions with the organization's environmental objectives, creating a workforce that is both motivated and equipped to contribute to sustainability. Green recruitment involves hiring candidates who value sustainability, reducing resistance to eco-friendly practices, and fostering a cohesive culture around environmental goals. Kim et al. (2019) stated that employees who join organizations with green recruitment practices are more likely to embrace the organization's sustainability initiatives, as they already share an alignment with environmental values. Training programs focused on environmental awareness and pro-environmental behavior are another essential component of green HRM. These programs equip employees with the knowledge and skills needed to support sustainability goals, enhancing their engagement in green practices. Jackson

et al. (2011) argue that green training and development are vital for cultivating a sustainability-oriented mindset, as they provide employees with a clear understanding of how their roles contribute to environmental objectives. Performance appraisal and reward systems that recognize sustainable behaviors reinforce the importance of environmental goals within the organization. For example, organizations that include sustainability metrics in their performance evaluations encourage employees to prioritize resource conservation, waste reduction, and other eco-friendly practices. This approach aligns with findings by Robertson and Barling (2013), who suggest that reward systems incentivize employees to support green initiatives by providing tangible recognition for their contributions. Green HRM practices encourage the development of a sustainability-oriented organizational culture (Daily et al., 2009). It aligns HR practices with environmental strategies, creating synergy among departments (Pinzone et al., 2016). It also empowers employees to take ownership of sustainability initiatives, driving collective action (Jabbour & Santos, 2008). The emerged hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 3: Green Human Resource Management will positively affect the pro-environment behavior.

Employee Engagement

Engaged employees are more likely to adopt and sustain pro-environmental behavior (PEB), leading to higher operational efficiency in the organization. PEB refers to individual actions that contrib-

Engaged employees are more likely to adopt and sustain pro-environmental behavior (PEB), leading to higher operational efficiency in the organization.

ute to environmental goals, such as conserving resources, reducing waste, and supporting organizational green policies (Steg & Vlek, 2009). Engaged employees who feel a sense of ownership over sustainability initiatives are more motivated to participate in eco-friendly practices, which contributes to the organization's overall environmental performance. Robertson and Barling (2013) identify several factors that influence PEB, including intrinsic motivation, environmental values, and social norms. Intrinsically motivated employees who engage in sustainable practices out of personal interest or commitment to environmental values tend to be the most consistent supporters of sustainability initiatives. Research shows that when employees perceive sustainability as aligned with their personal values, they are more likely to take proactive steps toward environmental responsibility. Moreover, organizations can enhance employee engagement by providing opportunities for involvement in sustainability initiatives. Programs such as green teams, employee-led sustainability projects, and community involvement encourage employees to take an active role in promoting environmental goals. According to the findings of Norton et al. (2015), employees who participate in sustainability initiatives experience a sense of fulfillment and alignment with the organization's

mission, reinforcing their commitment to PEB.

Challenges in Embedding Sustainability into Organizational Behavior

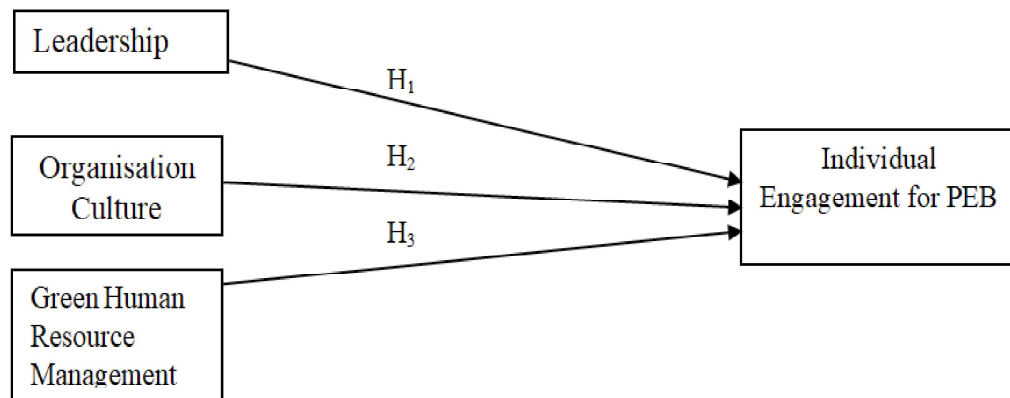
Despite the numerous benefits of integrating sustainability into OB, several challenges persist. Resistance to change is a common barrier, as employees may be reluctant to alter established behaviors and routines that conflict with sustainable goals. This resistance often stems from a lack of familiarity with new methods, perceived inconvenience, or skepticism about the effectiveness of green practices (Shrivastava, 1995). Effective change management strategies, including clear communication and training, are essential for overcoming resistance and fostering acceptance of sustainability initiatives. Financial constraints also present a challenge, especially for smaller organizations with limited resources. While large corporations may have the financial capacity to invest in sustainability initiatives, smaller companies may struggle to allocate sufficient budget for green practices. As noted by Hart (1995), sustainable practices are more accessible to companies with greater resources, highlighting the need for cost-effective sustainability strategies. Lack of awareness and training is another barrier to sustainability. Employees who are unaware of the organization's environmental goals may feel disconnected from sustainability initiatives, leading to disengagement. To address this issue, organizations must improve internal

communication, offer regular sustainability training, and clarify the role of each employee in achieving environmental objectives, leading to higher operational efficiency.

The literature highlights that organizational practices are integral to achieving sustainability within organizations. The

dimensions such as leadership, culture, and green HRM play a unique role in promoting pro-environmental behavior. The above arguments propose the hypothesised model (Table 1) encompassing the independent variables (leadership, culture, and green HRM predicts the dependent variable i.e. employee engagement and pro-environment behavior.

Fig 1. Conceptual framework



However, challenges such as resistance to change, financial limitations, and insufficient awareness underscore the need for strategic approaches that align OB with sustainability goals. By understanding these dynamics, organizations can leverage OB strategies to support sustainable development and enhance organizational resilience.

Research Design

An exploratory research design was adopted, aligning with the study's objective to investigate the relatively new intersection between OB and sustainability. An exploratory approach is suitable for studies aiming to uncover patterns and

generate insights rather than test specific hypotheses. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was collected through a structured survey, providing statistical insights into how OB factors influence sustainable behavior. Qualitative data was gathered through in-depth interviews, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of organizational practices and individual perceptions.

Sample Selection

The sample included organizations from diverse industries, such as manufacturing, technology, retail, and services,

each facing unique sustainability challenges. The organizations were selected based on their publicly available sustainability commitments, such as participation in certifications (e.g., ISO 14001) and sustainability reporting standards (e.g., Global Reporting Initiative). This criterion ensured that the selected organizations were actively engaged in sustainability initiatives and that their OB practices were likely to reflect an intentional focus on environmental goals. Within each organization, participants were chosen from various roles and hierarchical levels, including senior management, middle management, and front-line employees. This stratified sampling approach enabled a holistic view of sustainability, capturing perspectives from both decision-makers and implementers. A total of 200 participants completed the survey, while 15 participants from three organizations took part in in-depth interviews. These organizations were selected for their demonstrated commitment to sustainability, allowing for deeper analysis of best practices and challenges in implementing OB-driven sustainability initiatives.

Data Collection

The quantitative component of the study involved a structured survey designed to assess participants' perceptions of OB practices and their influence on sustainability. The survey covered four main areas: leadership styles, organizational culture, green HRM practices, and pro-environmental behavior (PEB). Each section included statements rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Dis-

agree, 5 = Strongly Agree) to capture the extent of participants' agreement with specific aspects of their organization's approach to sustainability. Demographic questions, such as industry, organizational size, and job role, were included to control for variables that might influence perceptions of OB practices and sustainability. The survey data provided a quantitative measure of the correlation between OB factors and sustainability outcomes, enabling statistical analysis to identify trends and relationships.

To supplement survey data with qualitative insights, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 participants from three organizations known for their sustainability practices. These interviews aimed to explore participants' experiences and perceptions regarding OB practices related to sustainability. Semi-structured interviews allowed for guided discussions that were flexible enough to uncover individual perspectives and organizational nuances. Interview sessions, lasting 45 to 60 minutes, were recorded (with participants' consent) and transcribed for analysis. The qualitative data allowed the study to capture in-depth insights into the dynamics of sustainability within organizations, revealing how OB principles operate in practice and identifying challenges and enablers of sustainable behavior.

Data Analysis

The data analysis phase combined quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of OB's role in fostering sustainability.

Quantitative Exploration

Survey data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics provided an overview of participants' responses, indicating general trends in attitudes toward OB practices and sustainability. Inferential statistics, particularly regression analysis, were used to examine the relationships between specific OB factors such as leadership style, the firm's cultural orientation, green HRM practices, and employees' pro-environmental behavior. Descriptive Statistics such as mean, median, and standard deviation were calculated to summarize survey responses. Regression analysis was used to test the strength and direction of relationships between OB factors (independent variables) and individual engagement for PEB (dependent variable). To enhance the robustness of the analysis, tests for multicollinearity and reliability (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) were conducted. Multi co-linearity tests ensured that the variables were independent, while Cronbach's alpha assessed the internal consistency of survey items, verifying the reliability of the data.

Qualitative Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the interview transcripts, allowing for the identification of recurring themes related to leadership, culture, HRM, and challenges in sustainability. Thematic coding was conducted to categorize responses, with each code corresponding to a specific aspect of OB practices, such as "leadership influence," "cultural support," or "HR practices."

This approach allowed for a systematic exploration of the data, uncovering both common patterns and unique perspectives.

Familiarization: Interview transcripts were reviewed multiple times to gain an overall understanding of the data and identify preliminary themes.

Coding: Key phrases and statements related to OB and sustainability were coded according to specific themes.

Theme Development: Codes were grouped into broader themes, such as "transformational leadership impact," "sustainability culture reinforcement," and "employee engagement in sustainability."

Interpretation: The themes were interpreted in the context of existing literature, providing insights into how OB principles are operationalized within sustainability-focused organizations.

To ensure reliability and minimize researcher bias, two independent researchers coded the data, discussing any discrepancies until consensus was reached. This process enhanced the validity of the findings by incorporating multiple perspectives and reducing the risk of subjective interpretation. Ethical considerations were prioritized to protect participants' rights and ensure data integrity. The study adhered to ethical guidelines by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring that they were fully aware of the study's purpose, the data collection methods, and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality

was maintained by anonymizing participants' responses and referring to organizations by industry rather than name. Additionally, data were stored securely, with access limited to the research team. In conducting interviews, sensitivity was shown to participants' experiences and organizational contexts, particularly when discussing potential challenges and resistance to sustainability. Ethical safeguards were also applied in the survey design, ensuring that questions were respectful, relevant, and unbiased. The ethical measures implemented contributed to the study's credibility and the trustworthiness of its findings.

While this methodology provides a comprehensive approach to studying OB and sustainability, limitations need to be acknowledged. First, the sample may not be fully representative of all industries, as it focuses on organizations with established sustainability practices. This focus could introduce selection bias, as organizations already committed to sustainability may demonstrate more advanced OB practices than those at earlier stages of sustainability adoption. Another limitation is the reliance on self-reported data from surveys and interviews, which are subject to social desirability bias. Participants may have overstated their organization's commitment to sustainability, leading to an overly positive representation of OB practices. Future studies could address this limitation by including objective measures, such as organizational sustainability reports or third-party assessments, to triangulate self-reported data.

Results

By leveraging both quantitative and qualitative techniques, this methodology allows for a thorough examination of the behavioral drivers of sustainability within organizations. This section presents the findings of the study, organized according to the primary research themes: leadership influence, organizational culture, green HRM practices, and employee engagement. Both quantitative survey data and qualitative insights from interviews are analyzed to reveal how organizational practices impact pro-environmental behavior within organizations. By examining each theme in detail, this section provides an understanding of the behavioral factors that drive or hinder sustainable behavior.

Leadership Influence on Pro-environmental Behavior

The results indicate that leadership style significantly impacts the adoption and success of sustainable practices within organizations. Transformational and ethical leadership styles were found to be particularly effective in promoting sustainability. Survey responses and interview data illustrate that employees are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behavior (PEB) when they perceive their leaders as actively committed to sustainability.

Leadership style significantly impacts the adoption and success of sustainable practices within organizations.

In the survey, 72% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “My organization’s leadership actively promotes sustainability as a core value.” Regression analysis showed a positive correlation between leadership and individual engagement for PEB, with a correlation coefficient of 0.561 with p -value < 0.05 . This suggests a strong relationship between leadership attributes and employees’ engagement in pro-environmental behavior. Further analysis indicated that ethical leadership also plays a critical role, as 68% of respondents reported that their leaders prioritize ethical considerations in decision-making processes. This ethical orientation was found to reinforce employees’ moral obligation to support sustainability initiatives, leading to higher levels of PEB.

Interviews provided deeper insights into how leadership influences sustainability. Participants frequently mentioned the role of leaders in modeling sustainable behavior and setting a clear vision for environmental responsibility. One participant from a technology firm explained,

“Our CEO’s emphasis on reducing carbon footprint has inspired all of us to consider how we can contribute to the environment.”

Another interviewee from a manufacturing company noted that their manager’s transparency and passion for sustainability motivated employees to adopt eco-friendly practices. Ethical leadership emerged as a recurring theme, with participants describing leaders who

This finding supports the idea that ethical leadership fosters a culture of trust and accountability,

prioritize fairness, integrity, and stakeholder welfare. One respondent shared, “Our leaders’ commitment to doing what’s right for the environment sets the tone for everyone. It’s not just talk; they genuinely care, and that makes us more committed too.” This finding supports the idea that ethical leadership fosters a culture of trust and accountability, which enhances employees’ engagement in sustainability initiatives.

Organizational Culture on Pro-environmental Behavior

Organizational culture was found to be a critical determinant of employees’ attitudes and behaviors toward sustainability. Survey and interview data indicate that organizations with a strong culture of sustainability are more successful in engaging employees in pro-environmental behavior. A significant portion of respondents (68%) agreed with the statement, “My organization’s culture encourages environmentally friendly practices.” Statistical analysis supported this, showing a positive correlation between a sustainability-oriented culture and PEB. Regression analysis showed a positive correlation between organizational culture and individual engagement for PEB, with a correlation coefficient of 0.534 with p -value < 0.05 . Organizations with a culture that emphasizes environmental responsibility reported higher levels of employee engagement in

sustainability initiatives. In addition, organizations that actively communicated sustainability values through onboarding sessions, training programs, and internal communications showed increased alignment between individual behaviors and organizational goals. Employees in these organizations reported feeling a greater sense of purpose and responsibility toward environmental objectives.

A strong organizational culture provides a foundation for sustainable behavior, fostering an environment.

Interview data highlighted various cultural practices that reinforced sustainability. For example, employees in organizations with a 'green' culture noted that sustainability was embedded in daily routines and practices. One participant mentioned, "Sustainability isn't just a policy here; it's a mindset. From our workspaces to our day-to-day operations, everything is designed to reduce waste and conserve resources." Several participants also noted that a sustainability-oriented culture attracts employees who are already environmentally conscious, creating a reinforcing cycle that strengthens organizational commitment to sustainability. An interviewee from a retail company explained, "People join our organization because they know we value sustainability. This alignment makes it easier for everyone to work toward the same goals." These qualitative insights support the notion that a strong organizational culture provides a foundation for sustainable behavior, fostering an envi-

ronment where employees feel connected to the company's environmental mission. Organizations that prioritize cultural alignment around sustainability enjoy greater cohesion and higher levels of engagement in green practices.

Green Human Resource Management on Sustainable Behavior

Green HRM practices, such as sustainability-oriented recruitment, training, and performance appraisal, emerged as significant contributors to pro-environmental behavior. Survey responses indicate that HRM practices designed to support sustainability are positively received by employees and contribute to a stronger commitment to environmental goals. Sixty-five percent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Our HR practices emphasize sustainability." Regression analysis showed a positive correlation between green HRM and PEB ($r = 0.58, p < 0.05$), indicating that employees are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behavior when HRM policies align with environmental goals. Specifically, green recruitment practices where organizations seek candidates who value sustainability were shown to be effective in fostering a cohesive, sustainability-oriented workforce. Employees recruited through green hiring processes demonstrated higher levels of alignment with the organization's environmental objectives, reducing resistance to sustainability initiatives.

Interviews provided further insights into how green HRM practices influence

employee behavior. Participants noted that sustainability-focused recruitment helped attract employees who were already committed to environmental values, creating a team supportive of sustainability goals. One HR manager shared: “When we hire people who are passionate about the environment, they bring that energy to work every day, and it influences the whole team.” Training programs focused on sustainability were also highlighted as important constituents in promoting PEB. Employees who received training on environmental topics reported feeling more equipped to engage in sus-

tainable behavior. An interviewee from a manufacturing firm noted: “Our organization offers workshops on waste reduction and energy conservation, which makes us more aware of how we can contribute to sustainability at work.”

Performance appraisals that included sustainability metrics further reinforced pro-environmental behavior. One participant rightly mentioned, “Our performance evaluations now include a section on sustainability contributions, which makes us more conscious of how our actions align with the organization’s goals.”

The empirical analysis shows the coefficient of determination (R^2) value 0.793812 implies 79% of the variance in the outcome variable i.e. individual engagement for pro-environmental behavior is explained by the model proposed.

Table 1 Regression Summary

Multiple R	0.331939
R Square	0.7938192
Adjusted R Square	0.77023
Standard error	10.701850

Source: Authors’ Calculations

Table 2 ANNOVA

Source	df	SS	MS	F	SignificanceF
Regression	1	6.958435583	6.958435583	3.616986958	0.058644123
Residual	198	380.9165644	1.923821032		
Total	199	387.875			

Source: Authors’ Calculation

Table 3 Coefficients Table

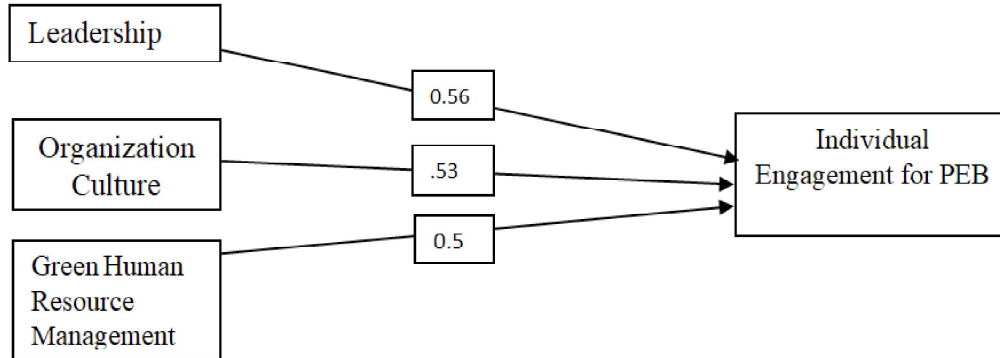
Index	Coefficient	S.E	t Sta.	P Value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Constant	3.297423	0.21903	15.45009	0.004	2.8655	3.729

Source: Authors’ Calculation

Further, the first control variable, industry type, suggests that sectoral differences have no significant impact on pro-environmental behavior. While importantly mid-sized firms have significant

impact on pro-environmental behavior showing the efficacy of small and middle sized firms adopting pro-environmental behavior thereby achieve sustainability compared to larger sized organizations.

Fig 2 Results of the Regression Analysis



Barriers to Integrating Sustainability into Practices

The key challenges that emerged from interviewing the managerial personnel are discussed as follows.

Resistance to Change was a significant barrier, particularly among employees accustomed to established routines that contradicted sustainable practices.

- *Resistance to Change* was a significant barrier, particularly among employees accustomed to established routines that contradicted sustainable practices. Approximately 30% of survey respondents expressed reluctance to adopt new sustainability-oriented behaviors, citing factors such as perceived inconvenience and lack of familiarity with new methods. Interview participants echoed this sentiment, noting that change management strategies are essential for overcoming resistance. A participant from a technology firm shared, “Some people resist sustainable practices because they feel it disrupts their routines. It takes time and communication to show them the benefits. These insights highlight the need for effective change management, including clear communication and training, to reduce resistance and facilitate the adoption of sustainable practices.”
- *Financial Constraints* were another barrier, particularly for smaller organizations with limited resources. Survey responses indicated that while sustainability was valued, budgetary limitations prevented some organizations from fully implementing green initiatives. Interview participants noted that balancing sustainability with financial performance was a challenge, as eco-friendly practices sometimes required upfront investment without immediate returns. A participant from a small manufacturing firm stated, “We would like to do more for the environment, but our budget doesn’t allow for large invest-

ments in sustainability.” This finding aligns with the resource-based view, which suggests that organizations with greater financial capacity are better positioned to adopt sustainable practices (Hart, 1995).

- *Lack of Awareness and Training* on sustainability was also identified as a barrier. Survey responses indicated that employees who were unaware of the organization’s sustainability goals felt less engaged in green initiatives. Interview data revealed that some employees did not fully understand their role in achieving the organization’s environmental objectives, leading to disengagement. One participant noted, “There’s a gap in understanding how each of us can contribute to sustainability. It’s not always clear how our daily tasks impact the environment.” This suggests that organizations need to improve internal communication and provide targeted training to enhance employees’ understanding of their contributions to sustainability.

Conclusion

This study explored the critical role of organizational behavior (OB) in fostering sustainability within modern enterprises. As environmental and social pressures intensify, the need for organizations to integrate sustainable practices into their operations has become paramount. By examining the influence of leadership, organizational culture, green human resource management (HRM) practices, and employee engagement on sustainability, this research highlights the behavioral dimensions essential for driving or-

OB principles, when aligned with sustainability goals, play a transformative role in shaping sustainable behavior within organizations.

ganizational change toward environmental responsibility. The study’s findings reveal that OB principles, when aligned with sustainability goals, play a transformative role in shaping sustainable behavior within organizations. Leadership emerged as a key driver, with transformational and ethical leadership styles fostering a sense of purpose and accountability among employees. These leadership styles encourage employees to transcend self-interest, aligning their actions with the organization’s environmental objectives. A sustainability-oriented organizational culture further supports these efforts by providing a shared framework that encourages pro-environmental behavior.

Limitations & Future Research Directions

The present study has considered three aspects of Organizational Behavior, namely leadership, green HRM practices and organizational culture to empirically demonstrate their impact on pro-environmental behavior. However, other notable aspects, namely resilience and performance management system, have not been considered in this study. Although the study provides valuable insights for practitioners and scholars, there are areas where further research is warranted. Further studies may find out the impact of culture on individual engagement for PEB, particularly in different

cultures prevalent in different parts of the globe. Moreover, the leadership approach to PEB can be studied sector-wise as there may be variations with reference to sectors, e.g., the leadership approach in brick and mortar industries like metal and cement may be different from the leadership approach in the ITEs sector. This paper contributes to both OB and sustainability literature, encapsulating the realities and challenges encountered in the Indian industries towards sustainability.

References

- Avolio, B. J., & Yammarino, F. J. (2013). *Transformational and Charismatic Leadership: The Road Ahead*, 10th anniversary edition. Emerald Group Publishing
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational Leadership* (2nd ed.). Psychology Press.
- Brown, M. E., & Treviño, L. K. (2006). "Ethical Leadership: A Review and Future Directions", *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6): 595-616. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2006.10.004>
- Chen, Y. S., & Chang, C. H. (2013). "The Determinants of Green Product Development Performance: Green Dynamic Capabilities, Green Transformational Leadership, and Green Creativity", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 116(1): 107-119. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1452-x>
- Davis, K., & Jones, G. (2021). "The Integration of Sustainability within Organizational Behavior", *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 42(3): 420-35.
- Dyllick, T., & Muff, K. (2016). "Clarifying the Meaning of Sustainable Business: Introducing a typology from Business-as-usual to True Business Sustainability", *Organization & Environment*, 29(2): 156-74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086026615575176>
- Elkington, J. (1997). *Cannibals with Forks: The Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business*, Capstone.
- Haigh, N., & Hoffman, A. J. (2014). "The New Heretics: Hybrid Organizations and the Challenges They Present to Corporate Sustainability", *Organization & Environment*, 27(3): 223-41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086026614545345>
- Hannan, M. T., & Freeman, J. (1984). "Structural Inertia and Organizational Change" *American Sociological Review*, 49(2): 149-64. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095567>
- Hart, S. L. (1995). "A Natural-resource-based View of the Firm." *Academy of Management Review*, 20 (4): 986-1014. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1995.9512280033>
- Jackson, S. E., Renwick, D. W. S., Jabbour, C. J. C., & Muller-Camen, M. (2011). "State-of-the-Art and Future Directions for Green Human Resource Management: Introduction to the Special Issue", *Zeitschrift für Personal-forschung*, 25(2): 99-116. https://doi.org/10.1688/1862-0000_ZfP_2011_02_Jackson
- Jones, G. (2018). "Leadership and Sustainability: A Framework for Successful Integration", *Management Today*, 45(2): 75-83.
- Kim, A., Kim, Y., Han, K., Jackson, S. E., & Ployhart, R. E. (2019). "Multilevel Influences on Voluntary Workplace Green Behavior: Individual Differences, Leader Behavior, and Coworker Advocacy", *Journal of Management*, 45(5): 1995-2017. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206317730173>
- Lozano, R. (2018). "Sustainable Business Practices: Strategies, Impacts, and Solutions", *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 27(4): 485-504. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.2028>
- Maak, T., & Pless, N. M. (2006). "Responsible Leadership in a Stakeholder Society—A Relational Perspective". *Journal of Business Ethics*, 66(1): 99-115. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-006-9047>

- Miska, C., Stahl, G. K., & Mendenhall, M. E. (2018), "The Implications of Global Leadership for Global Ethics and Corporate Responsibility", *Journal of World Business*, 53(4): 475-92. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2018.03.010>.
- Norton, T. A., Zacher, H., Parker, S. L., & Ashkanasy, N. M. (2015). "Bridging the Gap Between Green Behavioral Intentions and Employee Green Behavior: The Role of Green Psychological Climate" *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 36(7): 1036-50. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2012>.
- Renwick, D. W. S., Redman, T., & Maguire, S. (2013), "Green Human Resource Management: A Review and Research Agenda", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 15(1): 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2011.00328>.
- Robertson, J. L., & Barling, J. (2013), "Greening Organizations Through Leaders' Influence on Employees' Pro-environmental Behaviors.", *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34(2): 176-194. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1820>.
- Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (4th ed.), Jossey-Bass.
- Shrivastava, P. (1995), "The Role of Corporations in Achieving Ecological Sustainability." *Academy of Management Review*, 20(4): 936-60. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1995.9512280026>.
- Smith, P., Jones, M., & Lee, K. (2020), "Sustainable Practices in the Workplace: A Comparative Review". *Journal of Sustainable Business*, 12(1): 45-58.
- Steg, L., & Vlek, C. (2009), "Encouraging Pro-environmental Behavior: An Integrative Review and Research Agenda", *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 29(3): 309-17. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2008.10.004>.

Appendix

Leadership Driving Individual Engagement for PEB

Promote leadership as a core value.
 Encourage employees to adopt eco-friendly practices.
 Ensure ethical and environment-sensitive decisions.
 Clarity of vision for sustainability.

Organizational Culture Driving Individual Engagement for PEB

Encourage environment-friendly practices.
 Embedment in the organization's mission and operations.
 Sense of mutual responsibility toward environmental goals.
 Spread the importance of sustainability throughout the organization.

Green HRM Practices Driving Individual Engagement for PEB

Emphasize sustainability agenda in personnel practices.
 Acquiring of manpower aligning sustainability goals.
 Design sustainability-focused training.
 Employees' sustainability contribution is reflected in performance management.

Employee Engagement & Pro-Environmental Behavior

Actively engaged in environmentally friendly practices at work.
 Conscious about the organization's sustainability goals and role to play.
 Sense of ownership towards sustainability initiatives.
 Provision of insights and feedback mechanism across the organization.
