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THE IMPACT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AT EMPLOYEE LEVEL: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

The core objective of the study is to determine the impact of strategic human resource management on environmental performance. The authors studied the relationship between strategic human resource management, internal environmental concern, organizational citizenship behavior for the environment, and environmental performance. The study made three main contributions. They are it linked EM and HRM in order to better understand how firms are able to achieve environmental performance. It is noted that "the topic of environmental sustainability" is not reflected in the research agendas of most areas of management scholarship. By providing original data, this study helps to fill this gap, it formulated clear and specific relation between the roles played by frontline employees' and environmental performance and identified the influence of managers as one factor to implement the regulations concerned with environmental performance. In the study, it is assured that managers can play an active role. In particular, internal environment orientation was identified as possible moderating variable in the relationship between SHRM and pro-environmental behavior at work. The research is highly significant because of the above reasons and contributed new concept about the clear relationship between human resource management and environmental performance.

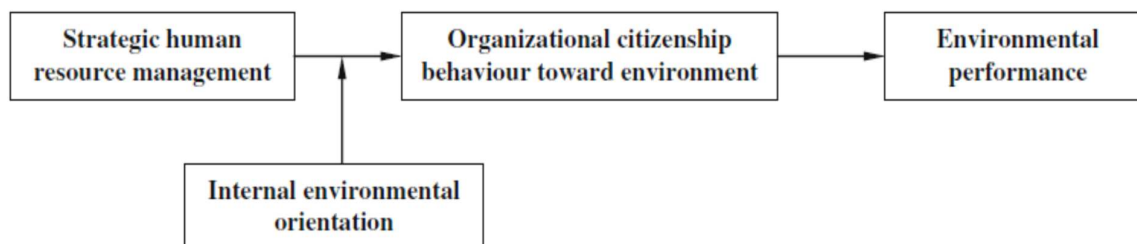
KEYWORDS

human resource management, environmental performance, organizational citizenship behavior and employees.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

It was a research conducted by Pascal Paille', Yang Chen, Olivier Boiral and Jiafei Jin and published on Springer Science Business and Media Dordrecht in 2013. The core objective of the study is to determine the impact of strategic human resource management on environmental performance. The authors studied the relationship between strategic human resource management, internal environmental concern, organizational citizenship behavior for the environment, and environmental performance. The study is experimental by nature and it tried to test the following theoretical model:

FIG. 1



RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Hypotheses are formulated to draw expected relations between SHRM, OCBE, internal environmental orientation and environmental performance. The Study uses mediation and moderation techniques to test the hypotheses. Data are collected through separate questionnaires developed for the TMT members, the CEOs, and frontline workers. Such a multiple-source design is the best approach to reduce systematic measurement errors and common method biases according to the authors. Beside, large field studies were carried out to collect responses from top management team (TMT) members (e.g., HR managers), chief executive officers (CEOs), and frontline workers by extensive interview. These obtained data are valuable to answer the question raised in the objective of the study.

A wide range of methods like case studies, correlation or predictive research were used for examining the relationship between HRM and EM. However, the authors of this research preferred quantitative research and the study used mediation and moderation techniques to test its hypotheses. The validity of the collected data and the methods are properly evaluated by appropriate techniques. The validity and significance of the independent variables are successively evaluated by appropriate software and methods as to the claims of the researchers.

There are several limitations of the study which can be noted for future researchers as claimed by the authors. One limitation is that subjective measures of environmental performance were employed. Although perceptual measures are often used in many literatures, it is possible for discrepancies to exist between subjective measures and the environmental information released by firms. Therefore, research could corroborate the results by employing objective measures of environmental performance. Furthermore, the study is dependent on employees' perspectives, the researchers examined OCBE derived only from SHRM. This does not mean that OCBE is the sole most important mediating factor underlying SHRM—environmental performance process. So, future examination combining strategic process and employee involvement may help to draw a more comprehensive picture of the overall effect of SHRM on environmental performance. Another limitation of the study confessed by the researchers is that it tested the proposed model at only one point in time. They sought for further longitudinal research to explore the process by which SHRM impacts the environmental performance of firms. Finally, the examined institutional environment is unique to China. This may limit the generalization of the conclusions on institutional effects elsewhere in the world.

According to the claims of the authors, the research is ethically conducted in which the collected information and the finding of the study have no intention to cause damage to anyone. With the permission of top management teams, the researchers invited the firm's TMT members, CEOs, and frontline workers to respond to three separate questionnaires. The authors recruited and trained interviewers to conduct onsite interviews because this method is more likely to generate valid information. Participants were informed of the goal of the survey, assured of the confidentiality of their answers, and given some amount of a cash gift. Therefore, it is possible to say the research is conducted ethically.

RESULT OF THE RESEARCH

The core objective of the research is to determine the impact of human resource management on environmental performance. After gathering and analyzing data, the study came up with the following results:

- ❖ SHRM has a significant and positive effect on OCBE. The variable SHRM has a significant and positive effect on environmental performance
- ❖ However, the effect of SHRM is positive but not significant while the effect of OCBE is positive and significant.
- ❖ The authors found that OCBE fully mediates the relationship between SHRM and environmental performance.
- ❖ The effect of internationalization is positive.
- ❖ The variable SHRM has a significant and positive effect on OCBE. Moreover, internal environmental orientation has a positive and significant effect on OCBE.
- ❖ The interaction term between internal environmental orientation and SHRM.
- ❖ This suggests that the positive effect of SHRM on OCBE is more likely to be observed in firms with a high level of internal environmental orientation.
- ❖ Finally, it is possible to conclude that human resource management affects environmental management and performance. Alternatively, it is possible to say environmental performance can affect the effectiveness of human resource management. However, the generalization of the finding and applicability in other countries or situations is in question as stated in the limitation of the research.

OVERALL QUALITY OF THE RESEARCH

There are some strong sides of the research from the overall quality of the research view. For example,

- ❖ The research is written in clear and stylish manner and the presented information is well organized.
- ❖ The information is logically presented and the source of data offer sufficient detail.
- ❖ The authors had clear insight and tried to clear bias and blind spot at each step of the work.

Although the overall quality of the research is found to tilt towards the high quality work, there are some weaknesses of the work as well. For example,

- ❖ As is already mentioned by the authors of the research the research has utilized a method that is not popular in the area that might compromise the quality of the work.
- ❖ The provision of cash for research participants sometimes leads to the acquisition of unreliable data that it will put the ethicality issue of the research in question.
- ❖ The nature of the article with regards to its publication is also not clear. It is not made clear on which volume and which number of Springer it is being published. It is also not clear whether it is a research article published in a peer reviewed journal or not.

Because of the points raised above and many more the overall quality of the article is found to be good which needs further improvements to meet the high level of expectation from the scholars in the field.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Now a day, climatic change is the big agenda in the world. Unless firms develop environmentally responsible activities and committed to protecting natural environment, there is no sustainable development. To date, few empirical works have explicitly addressed the extent to which strategic HRM (SHRM) stimulates frontline employees' friendly environmental behaviors, enabling firms to improve their environmental performance.

The purpose of the research is to examine the link between HRM and EM by highlighting how employees are involved at their own level in helping their companies become greener. Environmental pollution in any country is a serious problem. To deal with such pollution, governments have to implement various legislative regulations. Thus, conducting a study for environmental protection should provide useful knowledge for firms to do better in EM. In so doing, the study made three main contributions:

1. It linked EM and HRM in order to better understand how firms are able to achieve environmental performance. It is noted that "the topic of environmental sustainability" is not reflected in the research agendas of most areas of management scholarship. By providing original data, this study helps to fill this gap.
2. It formulated clear and specific relation between the roles played by frontline employees' and environmental performance.
3. Identified the influence of managers as one factor to implement the regulations concerned with environmental performance. In the study, it is assured that managers can play an active role. In particular, internal environment orientation was identified as possible moderating variable in the relationship between SHRM and pro-environmental behavior at work.

Generally, the research is highly significant because of the above reasons and contributed new concept about the clear relationship between human resource management and environmental performance.

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