

FOSTERING INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR THROUGH GREEN TALENT MANAGEMENT: INVESTIGATING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TALENT DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the significance of the relatively less explored concept of green talent management and its potential influence on employees' innovative work habits through the mediating mechanism of talent development. The study was conducted on the employees of both public and private sector universities. The research employed Partial Least Squares (PLS) structure equation modeling to examine data collected from 450 structured questionnaires, personally administered from the academicians of 5 universities in Punjab, Pakistan. Exploring the mediating role of talent development, the study provided evidence that green management of talent had a significant effect on employees' innovative work behaviour. The primary goal of the study was to contribute at the managerial and theoretical levels, through providing an empirical insight of how talent management could stimulate creative problem-solving among university administrators. This, in turn, would help gain a competitive edge that had been the focal point of discussion in the literature and present research. The current study focused on the ongoing debate among the businesses and managers, which encompass the mechanisms to attract and keep talented workers who would ensure the long-term viability of their companies and give them a distinguished position in the marketplace. However, limited research has been conducted that filled the void in suggesting suitable ways to address these problems. Therefore, the importance of green management of talent and its impact on workers' innovative work behavior was explored in this research. Moreover, the function of talent development programs as intermediaries in academic settings was investigated.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability of organizational performance has attracted the attention of both researchers and

practitioners over the course of past few years. The dominant shift in focus is majorly due to the current

dynamism and prevailing competition which have contributed to characterize the global market environment (Samuel Ogbeibu*, 2021). The importance of resilience is increasingly acknowledged; and with greater awareness of the competitive situation and the requirements of an organization, businesses are laying more emphasis on the attempts to bring up sustainable organizational performance. According to scholars like (Ping1, 2013) and (Opoku, 2019), these activities are not coincidentally performed to ensure long term competitive challenges in various industries but they are undertaken intentionally. Companies and organizations are being compelled to explore a variety of innovative strategies meant to keep them afloat with the changing needs of the customers. This demand has compelled the researchers to explore and propose new ways of encouraging workers to achieve desirable outcomes of performance with particular attention on the importance of human capital and its contribution to performance of organizations (Jeroen De Jong, 2010). The key in the long run viability of the success of an organization relies on the presence of a competent and efficient labour force.

Future will witness a greater need for qualified workers who are available for sustainable positions to be filled (Foster, 2014). The rise of talent-based competition is one way in which globalization and technological advancements have altered our daily lives. For this particular reason, a company's chances of growth in any region of the globe are defined by its capability to assure that the right individuals with the right set of abilities with sustainable presence are engaged in relevant activities. Due to all of these factors, talent management has become the top issue for every firm and the key question in strategic HRM (Elia et al., 2017). Institutions are beginning to see talent as a distinct asset with the potential to provide exceptional results and a lasting competitive edge (Rop, 2015). Talent is the most important asset for every company. Indeed, retaining employees with the necessary skill sets for an adequate amount of time is one of the most critical HR responsibilities (Rathod, 2014 & Jamnagar, 2014). To address these critical issues, traditional idea of management of talent (TM) needs a major reconsideration (Gardas, 2019). Specifically, the notion of green management of talent (green TM) gain importance from the need to align

traditional talent management approaches with the contemporary perspective on environmental sustainability. In order to further organizational green initiatives, the green TM is committed to create green human capital programmes that systematically recruit, develop, retain, and deploy top people. According to Gardas (2019) and Bui (2018), green TM is a relatively new field wherein environmentally conscious business leaders seek out, cultivate, and retain employees that are both environmentally conscious and technically proficient. Organizations can use hard green practices and soft green practices as part of this strategy, which also includes finding, employing, selecting, training, retaining, and distributing employees who can lead environmentally suitable initiatives (Bui, 2018). Along with technical competences, this type of worker is anticipated to display innovative work behaviour (IWB), which will propel long-term organizational development (Malik, 2015; Opoku, 2019). In today's highly competitive and globalized business world, innovation is often cited as a key component to a company's long-term viability and success. Since the 1990s, consistent increase on research on innovation has been observed in literature. In a competitive global market, an organization has a number of avenues to come up with innovative products and services that will be distinguished from the competition. Companies are finding it more difficult to achieve long-term success in today's cutthroat business climate. Organizations strive for ways to achieve a sustainable lead to guarantee the viability of their business. As an alternate path to sustainability, innovation was also accepted for its potential to aid in the creation of strategic tools that management may employ to better structure the company. This has pushed academicians and businesses to seek out latest approaches that could stimulate and incentivize creative actions from their employees and staff (Collings, 2014; Vaiman, 2015). In talent management literature, talent development (TD) is typically seen as a tool to assist highly-potential or high-performing employees, often called A-players. This myopic view of exclusive talent development (ETD) prioritizes spending on less number of individuals instead of the entire workforce, often at the price of the latter. Because of this, employees who don't meet expectations or get a C grade are often ignored or even fired (Ariss, 2014). Still, a more

inclusive approach to talent development is being stressed upon. Tansley (2013) and Bolander (2017) found that investing in the development and expansion of every employee, regardless of their performance level or position in the company, can have a positive impact on inclusive talent development (ITD). More recent trends in human resource management have highlighted inclusive approach, pointing out the value of diverse talent pools and the importance of firms making full use of their human capital. However, due to the complexity and multi-faceted character of TM, a question was raised by the current TD disputes. To address this acute shortage of skilled workers, enhanced training on talent development is inevitable. The primary goal of talent development is improving the potential, abilities, and knowledge of workers possibly expected to showcase their talent. The objective fits in well with the company's Resource-Based View (RBV) and the related concept of the resource as a valuable, rare, inimitable, and organized. An organization's position in the market isn't the only factor that can determine its long-term competitive advantage; RBV conceptualizes that building internal resources and competencies is just as important. Companies that have been successful in acquiring VRIO, according to RBV theory, will reap the benefits of this acquisition in the long run. In this respect, inclusive talent development (ITD) is advisable than other practices since it enables a broader pool of employees to have their potential harnessed, rather than just a few selected (Bellini, 2018; Ambrosius, 2018; Crane, 2019; Kabwe, 2019; Maqueira, 2019; Tatoglu, 2016; Valverde, 2013). Although major effects and solutions of talent management (TM) strategies have been well investigated (Agbaeze, 2016; Aurangzeb and Bhutto, 2016; Ndolo, 2017; Son, 2020; Widodo, 2020), there has been limited research on the specific benefits of environmentally conscious TM initiatives. Until now, there has been little investigation into how much green TM's components, green robust and green soft practices can impact the innovativeness of workers, especially in academic organizations. Such a study would be well-suited to the context provided by academic institutions.

The basic objective of talent development (TD) is to improve the capabilities, potential and competences of workers who are believed to possess talent. It is

rather consistent with the RBV and the associated concept of valuable, rare, inimitable, and organized resources (VRIO) of the company. The fundamental principle of RBV is that competitive advantage as a long-term phenomenon, which is an outcome of building internal resources and competencies and not only positioning in an external environment. Features of the RBV theory suggest that companies capable of developing VRIO resource may receive long-term competitive advantage. In that regard, inclusive talent development (ITD) is one of the most successful strategies which is capable of utilizing the potential of more workers instead of focusing on specific individuals (B. Crane, 2019; C. Kabwe, 2019; J.M. Maqueira, 2019; E. Tatoglu, 2016; M. Valverde, 2013; Ambrosius, 2018).

Though general talent management (TM) practices and its outcomes have been intensively investigated (Agbaeze, 2016; Aurangzeb and Bhutto, 2016; Ndolo, 2017; Son, 2020; Widodo, 2020), limited studies have focused on the actual advantages of green TM practices. The impact of the elements of green TM (green hard and green soft practices) on IWB of employees has not been fully studied particularly in the complex structure of higher educational institutions. Colleges and universities offer a suitable setting for conducting such studies.

The effectiveness of human resource in education institutions relates to the efficiency of the academic and teaching staff such as lecturers since they are producers and consumers of knowledge. Research and academics are crucial and core competencies of faculty members, and the ability to be creative is critical in the performance of an educational institute (Zunair Mahmood, 2020). The human resource, especially the lecturers who contribute immensely to the teaching and research system of a college has a significant role in maximizing the performance of the institutions (Alfawaire, 2021; R. Edward Freeman, 2020; Zunair Mahmood, 2020). In addition, owing to the increased popularity of this instability caused by digitization, there is a great need to investigate the impact of talent development for increasing the connection between green TM and IWB in workers.

The current research will fill these existing gaps in the literature while also providing evidence to educate stakeholders and lawmakers about the need of fostering environmental sustainability through the

utilization of IWB among educational institution staff. Thus, the study will fill in substantial gaps in the literature by investigating the direct and significant relationship between ecological soft and hard methods (TM) and creative work habits (IWB) among university employees. Additionally, it takes into account the function of developing employees (TD) as an intermediary in these interactions. Legislators, school administrators, and HR professionals interested in pursuing green initiatives by fostering employee creativity will all gain from the study, and it will also add to the expanding areas of HRM and environmental sustainability.

Theoretical background and literature review

The purpose of the proposed research is to empirically explore the relationship between green talent management (TM) and the innovative work behaviour (IWB) of employees with the mediating role of talent development. It is based on the framework of VRIO (valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and organized to capture value) (Clarkson, 1995); Silver Coley, 2012); and the premise of the stake-holder theory (Freeman, 2020); (Ogbeibu, 2021b). Firms, in contemporary times, are under an immense pressure to incorporate sustainable practices to sustain their competitiveness in a rapidly changing business world. Management of human capital, particularly, the way organizations employ talent management practices that enhance sustainability of the environment, has become a key issue of interest.

Green TM has also emerged as a way of achieving these two objectives. VRIO framework helps businesses identify and give prominence to internal human capital talents to come up with resources that maintain a competitive advantage asserts Ogbeibu (2021b). The human capital and the creative capability of people are now regarded as the intangible assets which are vital in the success of an organization. Silver Coley (2012) divided the VRIO ingredients into tangible resource and intangible resources. Examples of tangible resources are infrastructure, machinery and property, as opposed to brand equity, company culture, intellectual capital and strategic objectives such as training and development that are examples of intangible resources. The benefits of these intangible resources are also very high because they are

challenging to be re-created by competitors (Dodd, 2016); (Kock, 2015); (Nirino, 2022).

Consequently, enterprises are developing the assets that can give them a sustained competitive advantage when they make investments in staff education and ensure the culture of creativity. Although the exact delineation of the concept and meaning of VRIO continue to be controversial topics (Kock, 2015; I-Chen Lee, 2017), the framework has yielded valuable data in various sectors. Not every company is as successful as others in terms of attracting and retaining talents. This can be attributed to the VRIO paradigm with specific reference to human resource management.

As noted by Samuel Ogbeibu* (2021), green TM and employee outcomes can be discussed to eliminate the knowledge deficit in the perspective of how green-focused personnel approaches can stimulate employee innovation and foster environmental objectives. Two other things that should be done regarding HRM practices are that sustainability needs to be integrated into the HRM practices, such as talent development and retention which will lead to the sustainability of the organization in the long term (Anlesinya, 2019).

Further research is required to examine the potential sources and capacities of an organization to sustain the environment, as Barney (2020) says, and researchers have started to develop their studies to achieve a paradigm shift in organizational thinking. They are substituted with a so-called stakeholder-centered model that considers the interests of multiple stake-holders such as employees, clients, communities, and the environment (Ogbeibu S., 2021c); (Freeman, 2020).

According to the stake-holder theory, corporations are obliged to not only positively affect shareholders but every party affected by their activity. In this broader context, sustainability will be one of the core objectives together with growth and profitability. As Wu (2016) states, stakeholder theory provides a theory of combining more universal social and environmental aims with such organizational strategies as the human resource management.

There is a robust framework, using which, green talent management initiatives can be studied and the framework enables a good blending of VRIO framework with stakeholder theory. The difference between stakeholder theory and VRIO is that the

former seems to focus on the external role of the firm and the importance of balancing several interests, whereas the latter is concerned with internal resources and competitive advantage. As a combination, they endorse the fact that green TM is a competitive benefit and a moral obligation in business world.

Successful implementation of green TM practice will help businesses to improve their reputation, nurture employee loyalty, fulfill their legal mandates, and develop the society. With progressively greater significance, companies have an opportunity to develop a long-run competitive advantage through identification and maintenance of workers who share their passion around innovation and sustainability, which boosts the resilience and adaptability of the organization within an ever-volatile global economic environment. Other empirical studies have revealed that the traditional TM practices influence positively employee job outcomes, including that on performance, devotion, and retention (Khaki, 2017; Riaz, 2018; Mawartob, 2020). Nevertheless, the following issue remains uncertain, i.e., how green TM practices are correlated with the innovative work behavior (IWB) of employees. The green TM could fall into two classifications, green soft TM and green hard TM, claims (Gardas, 2019) each dimension has unique features and impacts against worker outcomes.

Green Soft TM:

Gardas (2019) explained that soft green talent management is the process that foster open communication, employee role in the decision-making and organizational support of worker welfare. It also supports environmental cause that help overall environmental sustainability goals. The work in a green soft TM environment allows employees to be open minded expressing their thoughts and the employees are given every needed resource and support to take part in green activities with full swing (Bui, 2018). Another research explored the innovative activities that can lead to the enhancement of sustainability goals of the business (Berraies, 2020).

Green Hard TM:

Green Hard TM follows a more systematic and market-oriented approach and is more concerned with scrupulous performance management, bureaucratic employment processes, and hierarchical

organizational culture schemes (Oluyemi Theophilus Adeosun, 2020). This strategy aims at making sure that the goals of environmental sustainability are achieved by means of formal systems and well-outlined procedures. When applied in the wrong way, green hard TM has a potential of crushing innovation whilst fostering accountability and continuity in the attainment of environmental objectives. Workers living in highly bureaucratic settings might feel confined and this might not permit them to apply innovative work paradigms.

However, other studies indicate that when designed the right way, green hard TM can facilitate innovation as well, setting environmental targets, linking reward-effort program to sustainability performance, offering employees a defined progression pathway (Samuel Ogbeibu*, 2021).

Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB)

Korzilius (2017) explained that particularly in knowledge-driven economies, the value of innovative work behaviour (IWB) in improving organizational performance is gaining more and more recognition. The study emphasized that an organization's work behaviour is the fundamental requirement of any high-performance firm, particularly in the knowledge-based economic system where intangible assets are crucial for boosting the competitiveness of a business by enabling it to "do more with little" (Crossan, 2010). Fostering innovation across the board helps businesses adjust to change, take advantage of emerging market opportunities, and keep their competitive advantage over the long run. As per Riaz (2018), "innovative behaviour" refers to the deliberate development, sharing, and implementation of new ideas within an organization. Companies are beginning to see employees' inventive behaviour as an intangible asset that may help them stay competitive, regardless of their job title or level of responsibility. Researchers must focus on innovative workplace behaviour (IWB) and the factors that motivate it (Riaz, 2018; Korzilius, 2017). However, the processes that produce innovative behaviour remain mostly unknown, despite the abundance of literature on the topic. Filling this gap is the objective of this research. There has been little investigation into how IWB evolve, particularly as it pertains to environmentally conscious approaches to talent management, despite

the increasing interest in the subject. Leadership style, business atmosphere, and job design have been the primary foci of traditional research on innovation drivers (Jeroen De Jong, 2010). Nevertheless, research on the effects of green TM practices on IWB is crucial in light of the growing significance of environmental sustainability.

With all of its positive and negative features, green TM is probably going to impact employees to think creatively. Green soft TM's emphasis on psychological safety, autonomy, and support may encourage employees to develop creative solutions for long-term problems. Green hard TM may provide a structure that enables employees to concentrate their creative abilities on achieving corporate sustainability objectives by outlining clear environmental performance targets and methodological processes.

Thus, understanding the framework through which green TM influences IWB is critical for both theoretical development and practical application. This leads us to examine the intermediate role of TD.

Talent Development (Mediator)

Green TM practices cultivate a creative workforce but talent development (TD) is the key to unleashing that creativity. Several steps are included in this process with the overarching goal of enhancing employees' skill sets and expanding their knowledge bases so that they may make more meaningful contributions to the organization's goals (Deery, 2015). It is common for TD initiatives to incorporate formal training programs, mentoring, development of leadership, career planning, and opportunities for personal improvement. Companies that invest money into people development for sustainability projects saw an uptick in innovation-indicating behaviors including motivation for workers, involvement, and job satisfaction (Bui, 2018). Environmental management, green technology, and sustainable business practices are three areas where TD programs reflect, providing employees with the tools they need to tackle environmental issues in novel ways. Green TM and IWB can be effectively connected through TD's promotion of a culture of continuous learning. This kind of work environment inspires workers to think creatively, take calculated chances, and use all they've taught on the job. Employees' self-efficacy and confidence in proposing and implementing new ideas

are both boosted by opportunities for continual skill growth (Jeroen De Jong, 2010). While few researches suggest that TM directly fosters innovative activity, other studies suggest that Green TM may actually have the reverse effect, leading to employee turnover intentions (Abdul, 2019; (Barkhuizen, 2017); (Plessis, 2015). (Khaki, 2017); (olaka, 2018); (Riaz, 2018); (Widodo, 2020). Additionally, Samuel Ogbaidu (2021) found that both green soft and hard TM had tremendous benefits on employee outcomes, whereas Abbasi (2013) found that hard TM had substantially detrimental affects on employee outcomes. Belinda Nwosu (2016) argues that green soft TM values like inclusion and employee well-being drive innovative actions because they show rising levels of engagement, dedication, and job happiness.

The effects of green soft and hard TM on the innovative work behaviour (IWB) among employees however are not clearly understood.

So, the study proposed the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a Significant positive impact of GSTM on IWB.

H2: There is a Signiant positive impact of GHTM on IWB

To promote the transfer between green TM and IWB, TD performs the role as a connector, the influence of which is the encouragement of the employees to creatively apply their knowledge and skills. Whereas green soft TM builds a sense of psychological security and independence, green hard TM builds a sense of development structure, which sometimes can restrict or inspire IWB depending on the balance between control and support. Evidence-based findings state that the engagement and remuneration of employees due to TD activities associated with green soft TM optimize employee satisfaction, engagement, and motivation (Bui, 2018; Belinda Nwosu, 2016). These elements play a significant role in the development of IWB since they make the employees feel appreciated and have the choice of experiment and use new ideas. Findings from studies show that without proper developmental procedures, not even the most gifted employees can achieve their maximum IWB potential (Jeroen De Jong, 2010). Talent development helps employees succeed in their careers while also contributing to the company's goals. It also enhances their ability to think creatively and stay engaged in

projects for longer. Through its mediating role, TD exemplifies how green TM—whether soft or hard—can propel IWB. Because TD directly promotes skills, engagement, and confidence, it is possible that green mild and hard TM will have an even stronger effect on IWB. As a result, we proposed the following theories:

H3: There is a positive impact of Green Soft Talent Management (GSTM) on Talent Development.

H4: There is a positive impact of Green Hard Talent Management (GHTM) on Talent Development.

H5: Talent Development (TD) mediates the relationship between GSTM and IWB.

H6: Talent Development (TD) mediates the relationship between GHTM and IWB.

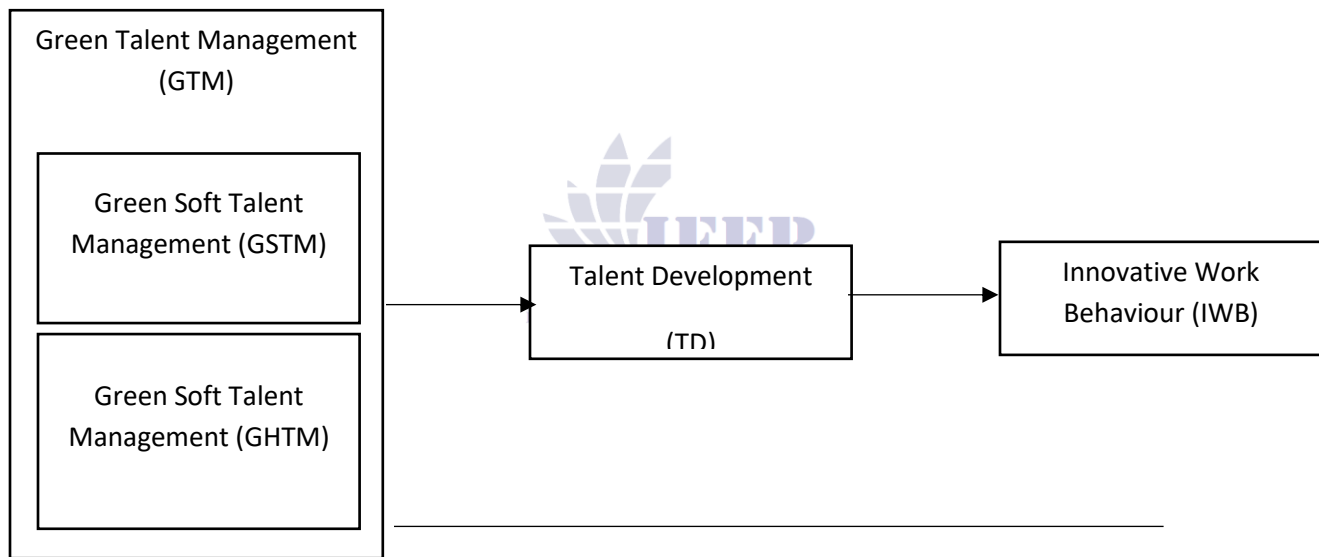


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Research methodology

The study follows a quantitative research design. The population of the study is higher education sector of Punjab. The convenience sampling technique was used to collect the data.

Table No 1. Measurements

Sr #	Construct	Scale	Items
1	Green Soft Talent Management	Samuel Ogbeibu (2021)	07
2	Green Hard Talent Management	Samuel Ogbeibu, (2021)	07
3	Talent Development	Keshk (2018)	12
4	Innovative Work Behaviour	Jeroen De Jong (2010)	10

All the items were measured in 05 point likert scale.

Data collection and sample size:

The academic staff of the higher education institutions of Punjab were the respondents of the study. A sharper method of proportional stratified pattern was used in determining the sample size as stipulated by Krejcie (1970) that is useful in obtaining a suitable and statistically significant sample of respondents. Formal request letter from five respectable colleges of Punjab was send informing the heads about the objective of the study as well as seeking their approval of carrying the data before the questionnaires are conducted.

To fulfill the requirements for doing research in an ethical manner, procedures followed and general ethics were generally accepted. The participants were encouraged to participate but they were also made to realize that the participation was done purely on a voluntary basis and that their answer would remain confidential. 50 the total number of 270 questionnaires initially distributed were also given to the academic staff at each university. Among these 250 were returned surveys which were considered to be suitable to use in the study. The semester of all the participating universities was running between December 2024 to January 2025, during which the data collection procedure took place. In accordance

with the demographic background of respondents, 60 percent of the sample belonged to men and there was a majority in the age match of 30- 39 years. On average, most of them (60%), have five to ten years of work experience in the university sector.

Results and discussions

They were arranged in statistics and the data on the demographics of the respondents was explored using IBM SPSS program. The relationships provided in the conceptual model were tested by using Smart-PLS (version 4.0).

According to the above study results, PLS-SEM is exquisitely appropriate in the study of complex models and outcome forecasting when there is a setting quite similar to the complex dynamics (Adetola, 2021); (Kock, 2015); (Moguluwa, 2021). The other advantage of the application of PLS-SEM is that one can use a smaller sample size given that PLS-SEM does not rely on the fact that data is normally distributed. The second benefit that the PLS-SEM possesses over normal PLS-SEM is the ability to accommodate smaller samples since it does not assume the normality of data.

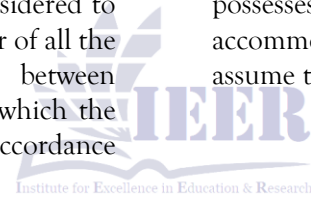


Table No 2:Measurement Model

Construct	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
GSTM	GSTM1	0.721	0.864	0.893	0.587
	GSTM2	0.812			
	GSTM3	0.835			
	GSTM4	0.814			
	GSTM5	0.768			
	GSTM6	0.753			
	GSTM7	0.826			

GHTM	GHTM1	0.811	0.871	0.903	0.615
	GHTM2	0.854			
	GHTM3	0.836			
	GHTM4	0.785			
	GHTM5	0.832			
	GHTM6	0.827			
	GHTM7	0.858			
TD	TD1	0.764	0.892	0.917	0.623
	TD2	0.822			
	TD3	0.816			
	TD4	0.839			
	TD5	0.801			
	TD6	0.788			
	TD7	0.814			
	TD8	0.815			
	TD9	0.856			
	TD10	0.842			
IWB	IWB1	0.762	0.879	0.912	0.642
	IWB2	0.796			
	IWB3	0.788			
	IWB4	0.811			
	IWB5	0.823			
	IWB6	0.838			
	IWB7	0.849			



IWB8	0.861
IWB9	0.875
IWB10	0.887

Table 2 reflects the measures of evaluation of this model. The measuring model was assessed in order to identify the validity and reliability of research constructs. Convergent validity rationale: Convergent validity was justified due to the fact that all the item loadings were stated to be above and beyond 0.70 which meant that every single item was showing a strong relation with the respective construct. The Cronbach alpha values higher than the generally acceptable score of 0.70 (Kock, 2015) demonstrated that the items have proven adequate in the measurement of the constructs and the determination of the internal consistency of the constructs.

The factor results of composite reliability (CR) also indicated that the constructs used were reliable (ranged between 0.893 to 0.918 of all the variables).

The convergent validity was added by the fact that the mean variance extraction (AVE) was above 0.5 of every construct; this indicated that the construct in question had no less than half of the variance at the indicators (Adetola, 2021).

Furthermore, the highest scores of all the complete collinearity variance inflation factor (FVIF) were under 3.5 and this showed that multi-collinearity issue does not exist since the constructs are distinct enough (Kock, 2012). However, overall basing on the findings that we can retrieve on the measurement model we will be able to conclude that the scales constituting the study are valid and reliable and can therefore be qualified to form part of the structural evaluation model.

Table No 3: Discriminant Validity (DV) - Fornell-Larcker Criterion

CONSTRUCT	GSTM	GHTM	TD	IWB
GSTM	0.768			
GHTM	0.513	0.783		
TD	0.543	0.568	0.788	
IWB	0.497	0.523	0.574	0.801

The (Larcker, 1981) was employed as the measure of discriminant validity by determining the relationships of the constructs with the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) of the constructs. Rounded values of square roots of Green Soft Talent

Management (GSTM) and Green Hard HTM, TD or IWB were higher than respective correlation coefficients, another construct, in Table 3. This denotes the establishment of DV in the data.

Table No 4: HTMT RATIO

	GHTM	GSTM	IWB	TD
GHTM				
GSTM	0.22			

IWB	0.21	0.21	
TD	0.20	0.22	0.35

As a result, discriminant validity evidences in Fornell-Larcker are also strong hence ensuring that no two research constructs are the same. Meanwhile, there were also shortcomings of the Fornell-Larcker Criterion that led to the creation of HTMT which was formulated to increase the evaluation of the discriminant of the concept (Jorg Henseler, 2015). It has been seen that all the construct, that is TD, GHTM, GSTM as well as the IWB have the values that are present below the 0.85 measure of HTMT. It implies that the conception are statistically differentiated among themselves along with being conceptually dissimilar. The findings also support the discriminant validity of the model of measurement as all the values of HTMT fall within the acceptable range.

In the present study, VIFs were all within the criterion of 5 (Adetola, 2021; Kock, 2015; Kock and Kock, 2012; Moguluwa, 2021).

The predictive validity was determined by the use of a Stone-Geisser Q2 statistic designed by GEISSER (1974) and (Stone, 1974). This operation is only in the endogenous latent variables those latent variables which are affected by other variables in the model. According to Kock (2015) value of Q 2 greater than 0 illustrates an acceptable predictive relevance. The measurement model of this study is in accordance with this criterion, according to the values of Q2 matched with the stipulated; hence, it upholds the predictive potential of the model.

Table No 5: Structural Model

PATH	PATH COEFFICIENT	P-VALUE	RESULTS
GHTM → IWB	0.456	p <0.001	Supported
GHTM→ TD	0.375	p<0.01	Supported
GSTM→ IWB	0.482	p<0.001	Supported
GSTM→TD	0.341	p<0.05	Supported

TD → IWB	0.419	p<0.02	Supported
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The discussion of the path coefficients of the Table 5 indicates significant relationships between underlying variables and **H1**, **H2**, **H3** and **H4** are significantly supported. On the one hand, GSTM and GHTM positively influence IWB. The effect of GHTM (path coefficient is 0.456) is slightly lower than that of GSTM (path coefficient is 0.482). It indicates that both of these approaches to talent management can be viewed as methods of encouraging creative activity among workers, though the more dynamic and soft (GSTM) approach seems to be more influential. Also, it is evident that Talent Development (TD) plays a big part in promoting IWB because it has a well high path coefficient of 0.482.

This implies that the more efficiency is made on the talent development programs, the more the individuals will tend to be creative. The correlation between TD and GSTM and GHTM is positive, but the correlation between the two is a little stronger toward GHTM (path coefficient of 0.375, compared to 0.341). This means that though the two approaches are useful, the structured talent management strategies, such as GHTM, could be more influential in talent development. All in all, the results depict that though the two forms of talent management are important, one may however observe that talent development is the fundamental stepping stone in the experiments between creative work practices and the talent management techniques. There will be a need to create talent development programs to inculcate a culture of innovation and inventions to increase innovations in businesses. Overall, the model also supports the necessity of the talent development process as one of the mediating factors, the one that is in turn supported by GHTM and the necessity of the green soft and hard talent management in regard to the innovation.

Mediation Result

As far as the mediation is concerned, TD mediates the relationship between GSTM and IWB (GSTM → TD → IWB: B=0.152*; p< 0.00) as well as GHTM and

IWB (GHTM → TD → IWB: B=0.175*; p< 0.00). There exists a partial mediation in the data as the both direct and indirect paths are significant in the results. Therefore, **H5** and **H6** both hypotheses are supported in the study.

Discussion and conclusions

This research study explored the contemporary phenomenon of green talent management in terms of green HR. The study aimed to investigate how green talent practices can lead to sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) and the environmental sustainability goals through the innovative work behavior (IWB) by the employees. The determinants of the employee IWB were the direct factors of the green hard and soft talent management (TM) practices, which supports the notion of how employers can work on the promotion of sustainability and be competitive at the same time. According to the results, green hard TM had an impact that was positive and significant to the IWB of the employees as postulated by previous study conducted by Abdul (2019), Bui (2018), Lee (2017), and Samuel Ogbeibu* (2021). The implication drawn by these past studies indicated that green hard TM can also reduce occurrence of employee turnover that is an important issue to be addressed in human resource practices as Wikstrom (2010) indicated. This study endorsed the already established relation in the literature with significant support to accept the hypothesis drawn.

Further, the soft green TM was hypothesized to impact talent management such that IWB is increased. The results support the relation. Moreover, existing studies proved correlation among green soft TM and decreased turnover intention in employees (Berraies, 2020; Gardas, 2019); and (Samuel Ogbeibu*, 2021). Green soft TM would likely focus on the strengthening of the commitment of employees whereby it will implement open communication and promote the workers in regards to their development and well being through the organization. Also it will create a friendly working

atmosphere that eases innovation and development of tacit knowledge to enable SCA.

In conclusion, this research indicates the inclusion of the green hard and soft talent management strategies to instill the innovative behavior in employees which will help achieve both the goals of environment sustainability and competitive edge. The findings show that green TM has prolonged impact on IWB of the workers. This validates the results of earlier researches by Lee (2017), Bui (2018) and Abdul (2019) which proved that green HR practice can be strongly correlated with various job outcomes such as engagement, satisfaction in work, and intentions to leave. However, this research is of an advancement of the existing literature as it also highlights that how through GTM strategies, innovative behaviour of the employees may be attained, as a major facet in the adaptive competitiveness of the organization in green economy.

It also proved that Talent Development (TD) is one of the significant mediating factors among GTM and IWB. The companies that spend their money on the employee skills development, the learning choice and the skills related to being green are more likely to encounter the innovative behavior among the employees. This finding is in line with the research by Garavan (2012) that establishes the significance of talent development program within an organization where the organization needed innovation, information dissemination and corporate learning.

The talent development would be an effective way of translating the green HR policies to actualize the positive employee level outcomes. In particular, by offering their employees certain developmental programs, especially those that have environmental objectives, businesses can create the environment, where IWB, employee engagement, and the ease to acquire tacit knowledge are fostered (Berraies, 2020); (Gardas, 2019). The findings showed that the investment in the development of the workforce and the link of the personnel strategy to the environmental principles can contribute to the acquisition of more engaged, innovative, and aligned workforce with the aim of sustainability by the businesses.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The current research has both theoretical and practical implications, since it presents model that integrates the concepts of environmental sustainability, innovation and human resource development. It is useful to the HR experts and business leaders who must create a team of creative and thinking-green employees ready to survive the forthcoming challenges in the world.

The paper enhances our understanding on the Green Talent Management (GTM) within the framework on Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) since it determines whether Green hard TM and Green soft TM practices both played a role in supporting Innovative Work Behavior (IWB). It provides a more closer theoretical view of how a company can incorporate its HR practice with its sustainability goals within the environment and utilizing the creativity of its employees towards gaining a sustainable competitive advantage (SCA). It will improve the understanding of the concept of green HR practices because they are observed to be applicable in promoting the development of organizational innovation along with the association to the satisfaction and retention of employees. The change in the green economy has put stress to observe that in the green economy, TM has to integrate the green ideas into its operations so that they can be more flexible and improve environmental performance of the organizations.

Most of the previous research had focused on the direct associations between green HR practice and various employee results; however, in this study it is observed that talent development is an important element to promote innovation. It also suggests that the green-related skills, knowledge and competencies developed in employees help not only in enhancing the creative potential of employees but it also stimulates them to participate in the innovative activities.. The outcome gives a clear picture of how talent development can facilitate creativity at every workplace level with an increase in the meaning of organizational learning, employee engagement, and knowledge sharing.

Another contribution of the study to the theory of human resources involves the fact that the study identifies the means through which the firms can implement the green talent practices when training the employees, fostering innovations, and achieving

the competitive edge within the green economy. By helping us realize that there is a correlation between sustainability objectives and people management, this paper contributes to what we know about how human capital can be built so that it is aligned to the business and environmental requirements.

This research will also be useful to the companies, who aim to generate innovative culture and make an HR strategy a part of the sustainability agenda. The findings suggest the applicability of the use of green talent management to the HR strategies of firms. Corporations should ensure that their TM strategies are in line with creation of a system of innovation that represents sustainable values and also staff recruitment and retention in an attempt to stimulate innovative work behavior (IWB). It was observed that in order to enhance creativity and innovation behavior of the workers, green hard TM (structured procedures) would be equally important as green soft TM (employee dedication and well-being). Therefore, in practice the concept of embracing the creativity of its employees, business entities should strive to maintain a level ground by trying to combine the two as the effort to obtain maximum gains.

The role of talent development (TD) as mediator between the green talent management and innovative behavior is the predominant finding of the research. In the situations when organizations are keen in promoting IWB among their workers, they ought to offer training sessions and experiences of learning that can assist in developing the competence of the staff members in relation to sustainability. Provision of organizational support to the employees will help them acquire the knowledge and skills of solving problems and being innovative by providing professional development. This is in line with the larger objective to promote sustainability in the work place. The HR managers should also be concerned with creating green development programs so that the employees are ready to make the company live up to its promises of sustainability and innovation.

The need to develop a green corporate culture that can assist in innovation and stimulate the same is also emphasized in the research. Business organizations can achieve this by integrating the aspect of sustainability to their values and day to day operations. Organizations could be able to build up the committed work force that would have long term

sustainability orientations due to the enhanced culture of recognizing and rewarding the individuals based on their innovative and sustainable behaviours. The green performance measures, administrative rewarding activities and shared systems that instill creativity on the green projects are feasible.

In addition, the findings show that green talent management is a good strategic model in achieving sustainable competitive advantage (SCA). Aligning their TM strategy with the intentions of the environmental sustainability, companies can stand out in the market.

Besides, in order to resolve the issues of environment, organizations can generate a green workforce that can ensure the competitive performance of the company in a more sustainability-oriented economy. Implementing the findings to the HR process of hiring, training and development, it needs to be taken into consideration by the professionals that it would be more practical to enhance the role of green philosophical theory that can enhance creating a workforce enable to deal with the environmental problems and attain the corporate objectives.

In conclusion, the present study provides an in-depth framework, which links GTM, IWB and TD, and discusses the importance of aligning employee engagement policies with sustainability goals. It widens our theoretical knowledge about how green talent management can support revolutionary improvement in the organizations and sustainability of the environment with impelling means for the HR practitioners striving to establish green innovation and acquire sustainable competitive advantage. According to this paper, long-term sustainable development of the green economy can be potentially done by coming up with workforce that will encourage green sustainability and creativity through vital and holistic procedure of guaranteeing greening of human resource design with integration of the green hard practice and green soft practice.

Limitations and Future Direction

Like all studies, this study has also few limitations. First, the study follow a quantitative research design to investigate the underlying relationships. Further, study may be conducted by using mix-method approach to explore the in-depth other factors which contributes significantly at employee's innovative

work behavior. Second, this was a cross-sectional study. Future studies may be carried out using different time frames for data collection. It will also address the common method bias issue in the analysis and will provide a broader picture.

The study checked the effect of green hard and soft talent management practices significantly impact the innovative work behavior (IWB) through the mediating role of Talent Development (TD). In future studies, the variables of skill generation, knowledge sharing and the environment-oriented development program can be studied to develop creative and proactive thinking in employees in innovative work behavior perspective. The study is based on the data collected from the higher education sectors of Pakistan, in future, other service sectors of Pakistan can also be explored to enhance the generalizability of the study.

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