

Employee Ecological Behavior Through Green Transformational Leadership: The Mediating Role of Green Hrm Practices and Green Organizational Climate: A Systematic Literature Review

Dhea Agusty Ningrum¹, Teguh Satya Wira², Tomy Sun Siagian³, Taufiq Hidayah⁴, Jufrizen⁵, Siti Mujiatun⁶

¹ Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

^{2,4} Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Graha Kirana, Indonesia

³ Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Manajemen Sukma, Indonesia

^{5,6} Universitas Muhammadiyah Asahan, Indonesia

* Correspondence e-mail; dheaagustyningrum@graha-kirana.com

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Abstract

Increasing awareness of sustainability issues encourages organizations to integrate management practices oriented towards environmental conservation. This article aims to analyze the relationship between Green Transformational Leadership, Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), Green Organizational Climate (GOC), and Employee Ecological Behavior (EEB) through a literature review of previous studies. The method used is a literature review by analyzing reputable international scientific articles that discuss green leadership, green HR practices, green organizational climate, and employee ecological behavior. The results of the study indicate that Green Transformational Leadership has a positive influence on increasing Employee Ecological Behavior, both directly and through the mediation of Green Human Resource Management and Green Organizational Climate. GHRM practices can increase employees' abilities, motivation, and opportunities to implement environmentally friendly behavior, while GOC creates a work environment that supports the internalization of sustainable values. The literature synthesis also shows that the successful implementation of ecological behavior does not only depend on the characteristics of the leader, but requires the support of an integrated organizational system.

Keywords

Employee Ecological Behavior, Green Human Resource Management, Green Organizational Climate, Green Transformational Leadership



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INTRODUCTION

Climate change, environmental degradation, and the increasing demand for sustainable development have driven organizations to integrate environmental aspects into their business strategies and management practices. Organizations are no longer solely required to achieve economic performance but also to be responsible for

environmental sustainability through the application of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles. In this context, the success of implementing a sustainability strategy is determined not only by organizational policies but also by the behavior of the individuals working within the organization. One behavior that has received attention in the management literature is Employee Ecological Behavior (EEB), which is the voluntary and formal behavior of employees that supports environmental conservation through efficient resource use, waste reduction, energy savings, and participation in various organizational sustainability programs.

Various studies have shown that employee ecological behavior is influenced by various organizational factors, one of which is leadership. In recent years, the concept of Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) has emerged as a leadership approach that emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and set an example for employees to support the organization's sustainability goals. Unlike conventional transformational leadership, GTL specifically integrates environmental sustainability values into the organization's vision, decision-making processes, and daily work culture. Through environmentally oriented leadership, organizations are expected to build a shared commitment to implementing sustainable business practices.

However, previous research indicates that the relationship between Green Transformational Leadership and Employee Ecological Behavior is not entirely consistent. Some studies found that the influence of green leadership on employee ecological behavior occurs directly, while others indicate that the relationship is influenced by organizational mechanisms, such as Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and Green Organizational Climate (GOC) practices. GHRM practices, including green recruitment, environmental training, sustainability-based performance evaluations, and reward systems for environmentally friendly behavior, are believed to increase employee capability, motivation, and opportunities to participate in sustainability activities. On the other hand, GOC reflects employee perceptions of the organization's commitment to environmental preservation through policies, culture, and work norms that support pro-environmental behavior.

To date, studies on the relationship between GTL, GHRM, GOC, and EEB have been dominated by empirical research in specific sectors and countries. Most studies focus on examining the relationships between variables without synthesizing the various findings. This situation has resulted in a partial understanding of the mechanisms that shape employee ecological behavior. Therefore, a literature review is needed that can integrate the results of previous research to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the role of green leadership in shaping employee

ecological behavior through the support of a sustainability-oriented human resource management system and organizational climate.

Furthermore, the increasing implementation of ESG and the targets for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and Goal 13 (Climate Action), further emphasize the importance of organizations building a culture of sustainability that involves all human resources. From a strategic management perspective, an organization's success in facing environmental challenges depends heavily on the ability of leaders to create work systems that encourage sustainable, environmentally friendly behavior.

Based on this description, this article aims to analyze the relationship between Green Transformational Leadership, Green Human Resource Management, Green Organizational Climate, and Employee Ecological Behavior through a literature review. This article is expected to provide theoretical contributions to enrich the development of the concepts of green leadership and sustainability management, while also providing practical implications for organizations in designing effective strategies to build a work culture oriented toward environmental sustainability.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical literature review design to identify, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize various previous research results related to Green Transformational Leadership (GTL), Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), Green Organizational Climate (GOC), and Employee Ecological Behavior (EEB). Through this literature review, the study aims to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between variables, trends in research results, research gaps, and opportunities for future research development. This study did not involve respondents directly because it used secondary data in the form of scientific documents discussing these variables. Data sources were obtained from various reputable scientific databases, such as Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar, with a focus on articles published in the 2020–2025 period so that the study results reflect the latest research developments. The selected articles are full-text articles, have gone through a peer review process, and have a direct relationship to the research topic. The data collection technique was carried out through a documentation study by searching for scientific articles using keywords such as *Green Transformational Leadership*, *Green Human Resource Management*, *Green Organizational Climate*, *Employee Ecological Behavior*, *Green Leadership*, and *Organizational Sustainability*.

Furthermore, the articles obtained were selected using inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria included articles discussing one or more GTL, GHRM, GOC, and EEB variables, published in reputable national or international journals that have gone through a *peer review* process, available in *full-text* form, and published in the 2020–2025 period. Meanwhile, proceedings, theses, dissertations, books, and articles that had no direct connection to the research topic were excluded from the analysis process. The collected data were then analyzed using the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) which includes three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, researchers select, simplify, and group important information from relevant articles; in the data presentation stage, findings are systematically arranged in the form of descriptive narratives so that the relationship between variables can be fully understood; while in the conclusion drawing stage, researchers interpret and verify the analyzed findings to produce a conceptual synthesis regarding the role of GTL, GHRM, and GOC in shaping Employee Ecological Behavior.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Green Transformational Leadership as the Foundation of a Culture of Sustainability

A synthesis of various studies shows that Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) is a key determinant in building an organizational culture of sustainability. Leaders who adopt green leadership principles are able to integrate environmental values into the organization's vision, inspire employees, and encourage behavioral changes toward more environmentally friendly work practices. GTL serves not only as a decision-making mechanism but also as an instrument for organizational transformation through the formation of values, norms, and commitment to sustainability (Robertson & Barling, 2013).

The Social Learning Theory perspective explains that individual behavior is formed through the process of observing influential figures. In an organizational context, leaders serve as role models whose behavior is observed and imitated by employees. Therefore, when leaders consistently demonstrate concern for the environment, employees tend to internalize these values and implement them in their daily work activities (Bandura, 1986). Thus, Green Transformational Leadership not only increases environmental awareness but also serves as a foundation for the formation of an organizational culture of sustainability.

This finding is consistent with research by Waseem et al. (2025), which states that Green Transformational Leadership has a positive influence on employee

ecological behavior by increasing sustainability practices within the organization. The study also shows that green leadership is the starting point for establishing an organizational system that supports sustainability.

Green Organizational Culture as a Mechanism for Internalizing Sustainability Values

The results of the literature review indicate that Green Transformational Leadership will have a stronger impact when supported by a Green Organizational Culture (GOC). Green organizational culture is a set of values, norms, beliefs, and organizational practices that consistently guide all members of the organization towards environmentally friendly behavior (Schein, 2017).

Green Organizational Culture functions as a mechanism for internalizing sustainability values, so that green behavior is not merely carried out due to formal regulations but becomes part of the organization's work culture. When an organization has a culture that supports sustainability, employees will perceive protecting the environment as a shared responsibility that must be realized in every work activity.

According to Norton et al. (2015), an organizational culture that supports sustainable practices can increase employee engagement in various environmental activities, such as waste reduction, energy efficiency, and responsible resource use. Organizational culture also creates positive social pressure (social norms) that encourage individuals to maintain sustainable green behavior.

The results of research by Waseem et al. (2025) also emphasized that a Green Organizational Climate, reflecting a green organizational culture, acts as a crucial mechanism strengthening the relationship between Green Transformational Leadership and Employee Ecological Behavior.

Employee Green Behavior as an Implementation of a Sustainability Culture

Employee Green Behavior (EGB) is a tangible manifestation of an organization's success in building a culture of sustainability. Employee green behavior reflects individual actions aimed at reducing negative impacts on the environment, both through the implementation of formal duties and voluntary behavior outside of job descriptions (Ones & Dilchert, 2012).

The synthesis of results shows that Employee Green Behavior develops when an organization is able to create a work environment that supports pro-environmental behavior. These behaviors include energy conservation, paper reduction, waste management, material reuse, and active participation in various organizational sustainability programs.

Robertson and Barling (2013) explain that employee green behavior is influenced by a combination of individual and organizational factors. Leaders who are highly committed to environmental issues will increase employees' intrinsic motivation to participate in various sustainability activities. Meanwhile, organizational culture provides normative support so that green behavior becomes part of the work routine.

In addition to providing environmental benefits, Employee Green Behavior also contributes to increasing organizational operational efficiency by reducing energy consumption, optimizing resource use, and reducing operational costs due to reduced production waste (Afsar & Umrani, 2020).

Integration of Green Transformational Leadership, Green Organizational Culture, and Employee Green Behavior in Strengthening a Culture of Sustainability

The conceptual synthesis results indicate that Green Transformational Leadership, Green Organizational Culture, and Employee Green Behavior are three complementary elements in building an organization's Sustainability Culture.

Green Transformational Leadership serves as a driver of change by establishing a vision and commitment to sustainability. Furthermore, Green Organizational Culture internalizes these values into organizational norms, policies, and practices, thus becoming behavioral guidelines for all members of the organization. These embedded values are then realized through Employee Green Behavior, a form of concrete implementation at the individual level.

The integration of these three components results in a culture of sustainability that can increase organizational effectiveness in addressing the challenges of climate change, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) demands, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A strong culture of sustainability also contributes to an organization's reputation, operational efficiency, green innovation, and long-term competitive advantage (Renwick et al., 2013).

Thus, strengthening a culture of sustainability cannot be achieved through organizational policies alone, but requires synergy between green leadership, a supportive organizational culture, and green behaviors demonstrated by all employees. This conceptual model demonstrates that successful sustainability implementation is the result of the interaction between leadership, organizational culture, and individual behavior, which mutually reinforce each other in a sustainable manner.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study of the article "Employee Ecological Behavior through Green Transformational Leadership: The Mediating Role of Green HRM Practices and Green Organizational Climate," it can be concluded that Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) is a crucial factor in enhancing Employee Ecological Behavior (EEB). Green leadership can shape employees' environmentally friendly awareness and behavior through role modeling, inspiration, and leadership commitment to sustainability practices.

Furthermore, the study shows that the relationship between Green Transformational Leadership and Employee Ecological Behavior is not only direct but also strengthened by Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and Green Organizational Climate (GOC) as mediating variables. GHRM practices, such as green recruitment, environmental training, sustainability-based performance appraisals, and green reward systems, can increase employees' ability, motivation, and opportunities to implement green behaviors. Furthermore, a Green Organizational Climate creates a work environment that supports the internalization of sustainable values, so that ecological behavior becomes part of the organizational culture.

Overall, the study confirms that strengthening an organizational culture of sustainability requires the integration of green leadership, an environmentally oriented human resource management system, and an organizational culture that supports sustainability. The synergy of these three aspects is able to build sustainable green employee behavior, improve the organization's environmental performance, and strengthen the company's competitiveness in facing the demands of sustainable development and environmentally responsible business practices.

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