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From green talent management to organizational green image: A sequential mediation model

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Abstract

PURPOSE: This study advances prior research by examining how both the organization and its employees contribute to the development of the organization's green image. **METHODOLOGY:** The present study employed a quantitative approach and conducted a cross-sectional survey in 5-star and 4-star hotels in Oman. In total, 325 of 390 questionnaires were included in the final analysis. The proposed hypotheses were tested using SmartPLS (4.0). **FINDINGS:** Green talent management (GTM) enhances employees' green commitment, which, in turn, promotes their pro-environmental behavior (PEB), thereby strengthening the direct and indirect links between GTM and PEB. Employees' PEB improves the organization's green image (OGI) and also mediates the relationship between GTM and OGI. Employees' green commitment and PEB serve as sequential mediators that explain how GTM translates into a stronger OGI. **IMPLICATIONS:** Organizations can implement practices, such as green training and rewards, to strengthen their green commitment and foster PEB. **ORIGINALITY AND VALUE:** The results of this investigation will provide useful insights into the development of strategies and policies to nurture green talent within organizations.

Keywords: green talent management, green commitment, pro-environmental behavior, green image, sustainability, organization

INTRODUCTION

Achieving environmental sustainability has become a significant concern for organizations seeking to build their image and compete in the global market (Bianchi et al., 2022). For this reason, the concept of a sustainability-driven organization has attracted the attention of scholars and practitioners, given corporations' environmental and societal impacts. Such organizations balance the needs of the social groups, the environment, and the economy (Sun & Hong, 2022). Within organizations, sustainable processes are those that support innovation, sustainability, organizational image, and competitive advantage. However, these elements are effective only when there is a sufficient workforce to manage these processes. Importantly, the global competition for skilled individuals and the need to manage them demand green talent to cultivate environmentally sustainable businesses (Ma et al., 2023).

Green talent management (GTM), or more commonly "green soft talent management," in this paper, refers to a human-centered dimension of Talent Management (TM) that dynamically promotes and is dedicated to the development and retention of green talent. It can be achieved by enhancing individuals' commitment through effective communication, ensuring the inclusion of talent in decision-making processes, providing organizational support for talent well-being, and

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implementing effective leadership practices. These practices inspire environmentally conscious team members to initiate specific ecological initiatives for promoting environmental sustainability (Gardas et al., 2019). In GTM, climate actions are commonly a result of a favorable work environment, within an adhocracy organizational culture, and through the effective provision of relevant resources (Alkhozaim et al., 2024). The positive green organizational image perceived by employees is communicated to customers and other stakeholders through interactions. As stated by Aranganathan (2018), the environmental initiatives of the organizations help them to attract green talent and advance their green image. As organizations seek to be socially responsible, they focus on sustainable initiatives to encourage their personnel to practice pro-environmental behavior (PEB) and commit to environmental sustainability to build their green image (Ali et al., 2023).

An organization's green HR management activities influence employees' PEB and environmental strategies (Elshaer et al., 2021; Ojo et al., 2022). In the last few years, the investigation of TM has gained the attention of scholars (Chaudhary, 2018) with a focus on different sectors and emerging economies, including Turkey (Glaister et al., 2018), Pakistan (Ali et al., 2019), and India (Chaudhary, 2018). However, not much work has been done on the role of GTM in employees' behavior and organizational success (Ogbeibu et al., 2022). Sustainable organizations can build their sustainable image by promoting green initiatives among their employees (Jam & Jamal, 2020). This can be achieved by adopting green practices during the talent hunt process. GTM practices can help new talent become familiar with the organizational green culture and can maintain green values (Aranganathan, 2018).

Importantly, when employees are familiar with and involved in their organizations' green initiatives, they are more committed and more likely to demonstrate PEB in the workplace (Ansari et al., 2021). Additionally, previous research has found the indirect effect of green hiring, green training & development, and green employee empowerment towards PEB by investigating mediating and moderating roles of green commitment (Ansari et al., 2021), corporate environmental strategy, green psychological climate (Mateen et al., 2022), and green self-efficacy (Waqas et al., 2025). Although these studies provide some insight into the role of green HR activities in predicting employees' PEB, the results are directly focused on PEB and thus warrant further empirical investigation. Therefore, the present study examines the employees' green commitment through which organizations' GTM activities translate into employees' PEB and green image. It is observed that people are committed to those activities that they are passionate about as they find such activities internally satisfying (Ali et al., 2023). Therefore, we propose that when organizations hire people involved in green activities and who understand the importance of environmental management, those employees are committed to the organization's green initiatives and, through their performance in PEB at the workplace, seek to build the organization's green image (OGI).

This study offers new insights into environmental management by addressing a key gap in the relationship between an organization's GTM and its green image. To our knowledge, research on this subject is minimal. Existing research has focused primarily on environmental performance (Ahmad et al., 2021) or organizational performance outcomes (Alam & Islam, 2021; Cheng et al., 2021), leaving the mechanism through which employee behaviors contribute to OGI. Understanding this process is particularly timely given the growing importance of OGI to the organization's competitive advantage and long-term survival (Ali et al., 2023). By examining the sequential mediation of employees' green commitment and PEB on GTM and OGI, this study not only advances theoretical knowledge but also offers practical implications for managers seeking to strengthen their organization's sustainability profile and enhance employees' engagement in green initiatives.

The paper's structure is as follows: After the introduction, the second section reviews related research and develops hypotheses. Section three describes the methodology, and the subsequent sections present the main results and discuss the suggested model. The final section outlines the research implications, limitations, and future research directions.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The following section explains the theoretical background and concepts for developing hypotheses for this study (Figure 1).

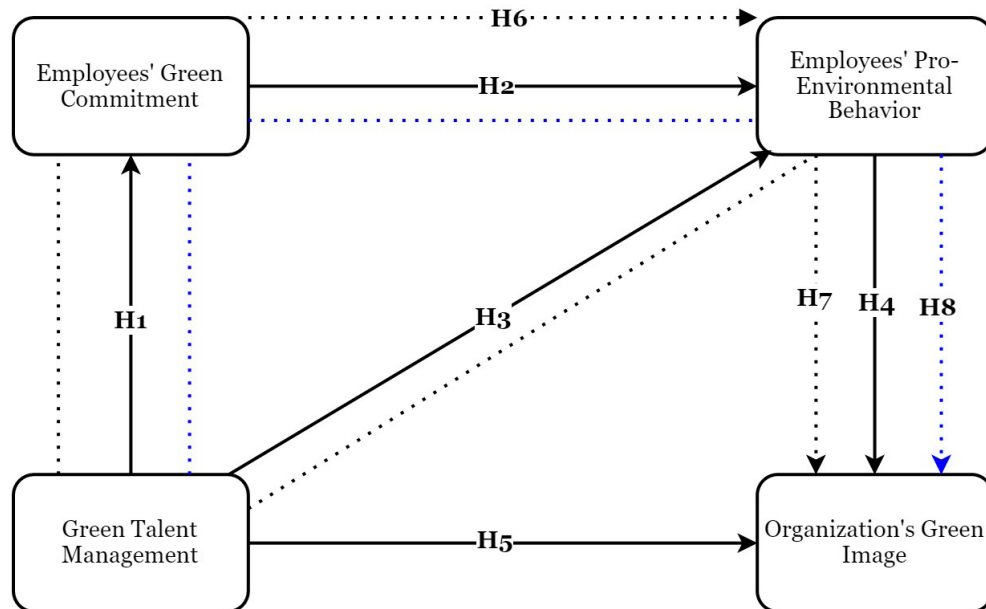


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

GTM and employees' green commitment

An organization's HRM policies can affect its performance by shaping employees' attitudes and behaviors. In contrast, green HR practices can encourage employees' green behaviors and environmental commitment (Ansari et al., 2021). It can help enhance employees' abilities by providing the necessary knowledge, skills, and capabilities, and by inculcating a sense of purpose, responsibility, and commitment to environmentally sustainable actions in the workplace (Alnaqbi et al., 2024). Furthermore, organizations can attract and retain committed employees in the environment. According to social exchange theory (SET) (Blau, 1964), employees who receive economic or socio-emotional benefits from the organization will feel compelled to reciprocate. GTM is a strategy through which organizations aim to ensure the right talent is consistently attracted, trained, developed, and retained, thereby promoting their green initiatives (Gardas et al., 2019; Hong et al., 2022). Actions, including green training and development, green reward and compensation, and green employee empowerment, affect green commitment. In a sustainable environmental context, Pham et al. (2019) argued that, in green-oriented organizations, employees tend to strengthen their green commitments, values, and mindsets to adapt to the organization's green culture and goals. Moreover, if employees actively participate in environmental initiatives, it can help them better understand the organization's environmental targets and policies, thereby strengthening their green commitment. Thus, we can argue that GTM practices can stimulate employees' green commitment, and for this present study, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: A positive relationship exists between an organization's GTM and employees' green commitment.

Employees' green commitment and employees' PEB

The PEB is considered an employee performance that encourages environmentally sustainable practices in the workplace (Zhu et al., 2021) or addresses environmental degradation, global warming, and climate change while improving human conditions and minimizing adverse environmental effects (Ali et al., 2023). A workplace PEB depends on a person's commitment and concern for nature and mankind. Therefore, we suggest an affirmative relationship between green commitment and PEB. Following the SET (Blau, 1964), it appears that employees who are committed to green initiatives seek to maintain high-quality relationships with their organizations. They are engaged in green reward and

compensation systems that offer financial and non-financial rewards to attract, motivate, and retain the workforce and achieve the organization's green goals (Tang et al., 2018; Tulsi & Ji, 2020). Regarding the link between green commitment and PEB, it can be assumed that employees' green commitment positively affects their green-work-related outcomes. Employee commitment to green behaviors can motivate them towards green behaviors for organizational sustainability (Aboramadan, 2020). The present study argues that individuals can participate in the organization's pro-environmental initiatives when motivated by a strong commitment to environmental protection. Thus, in this study, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: There is a positive relationship between employees' green commitment and PEB.

GTM and employees' PEB

Based on the conservation of resources (COR) (Hobfoll et al., 2018), employees aim to acquire, maintain, and safeguard valuable resources. Thus, GTM activities can serve as an external resource to enhance employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities. This helps to effectively enrich the employee resource pool and shape their positive behaviors, including PEBs (Yu et al., 2024). Following Aboramadan (2020), employees are expected to reciprocate an organization's environmental dedication and efforts by exhibiting environmentally conscious behaviors when they demonstrate the commitment to environmental management practices through the establishment of clear green goals, green recruitment and selection, green training and development, efficient green performance appraisal, and green reward systems. Within organizations, such green HR practices inspire employees, enhance their skills to demonstrate PEB, and motivate them to develop original concepts and deliver cutting-edge, environmentally friendly solutions (Aboramadan, 2022). The organization's green HR initiatives are essential to ensure employees' participation in environmentally sustainable workplace practices, thereby helping the organization attract environmentally conscious employees who exhibit PEB (Zhu et al., 2021). To achieve this, it is emphasized that GTM strategies be developed to support the net-zero transition across the entire employment life cycle, from pre-recruitment to post-retirement (Bhushan & Singh, 2024). The organization's green HR practices can affect the PEB (Alshaabani et al., 2021; Fawehinmi et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2021). Thus, we can argue that emphasizing green values in recruitment and selection, and becoming an environmental protection brand, enables organizations to attract and retain environmentally aware workers who can naturally exhibit PEB. In this study, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: A positive relationship exists between the organization's GTM and the employees' PEB.

Employees' PEB and OGI

An organization's image is a combination of factors that reflect and communicate its identity, and it is significantly shaped by its ethical and moral responsibilities in business (Yadav et al., 2016). Meanwhile, OGI could be a set of perceptions held by employees and customers about the organization that are linked to their commitment to and concerns about the environment (Chen, 2010). In this study, OGI reflects employees' internal perceptions of their organization's environmental image rather than an externally assessed corporate reputation. More and more organizations are getting involved in environmentally friendly activities to build their green image. For example, through a green shared vision, they encourage the PEB (Khai et al., 2024). Such behaviours result from individuals being increasingly aware of environmental problems and communities being pressured to establish a green image (Saran & Shokouhyar, 2021; Widyastuti, 2019). Organizations that invest in environmental issues present a better image because their efforts for society give them a favorable edge over those not involved in such activities (Chen, 2008). Employees are crucial to shaping the organization's internal and external image. When employees are engaged in PEB, they begin to view their organization as environmentally responsible. This aligns their actions with organizational values, thereby strengthening their internal perception of the green organization.

Moreover, workers can promote organizational values by serving as brand ambassadors and modeling these behaviors (Ali et al., 2023). According to social information processing (SIP) theory, individuals are adaptive organisms who seek to align attitudes, behaviors, and opinions with the social context (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). With reference to this, in this study, employees' exhibition of PEB shapes their perception of the OGI. Thus, it can be assumed that employees' PEB can enhance organizations' future environmental image (Zhu et al., 2021). Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H4: The employees' PEB positively influences their internal perception of the OGI.

GTM and OGI

GTM can be considered an organizational practices that integrate environmental values into talent-related functions (Ogbeibu et al., 2022). From the perspective of SIP theory, such practices signal environmental priorities and shape employees' interpretations of the organization's environmental orientation (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Pham et al., 2019). When employees consistently observe GTM practices, they perceive their organization as committed to sustainability initiatives, which builds their OGI. Similarly, SET suggests that employees interpret GTM as the organization's investment in environmental responsibility and employee development, which helps foster their positive attitude toward the organization (Blau, 1964; Ansari et al., 2021). Green HR practices are considered positively associated with organizational reputation and green image. Thus, we can argue that GTM contributes to a favorable green image as perceived by employees. For this, the present study proposes the following hypothesis:

H5: GTM is positively associated with employees' perception of the OGI.

Mediating role of employees' green commitment

When people hold an environmentally friendly belief system, their concerns are more closely aligned with environmental issues and environmental responsibility (Zhu et al., 2021). Therefore, such commitment motivates them to behave consistently with that belief system. Employees' green commitment reflects positive feelings, and the organization's GTM practices reinforce it. An effective HR strategy can yield positive, significant workplace outcomes, such as employee commitment (Pham et al., 2019). The organization's environmental protection practices help employees become environmentally committed and could lead to their PEB at work. Within the green HR context, GTM not only directly affects PEB but also does so indirectly through diverse mechanisms. Therefore, investigating the relationship between GTM and PEB holds significant theoretical importance. However, we have found a dearth of research on the mediating mechanism of the impact of GTM and PEB. Previously, Zhu et al. (2021) found that green HR policies may convey green values and ethics to employees, prompting attention to environmental issues and influencing the PEB. This study suggests the following hypothesis:

H6: The relationship between the organization's GTM and the employees' PEB is mediated by employees' green commitment.

Mediating role of employees' PEB

Within the SET (Blau, 1964) perspective, employees favorably view their organization's green initiatives and seek to engage in them for organizational and societal benefits. An organization's green engagement shapes employees' attitudes and behaviors (Ali et al., 2023). For the sake of green performance, organizations need to align their HR practices with employees' green behavior and their green image (Fawehinmi et al., 2020). The organizational green culture encourages employees to practice PEB in the workplace. Accordingly, we can argue that an organization's GTM activities foster positive feelings that stimulate engagement in green activities, which, in turn, help them practice PEB at the workplace. As a result, implementing GTM enhances firms' long-term competitiveness by projecting a positive image of green behavior externally and saving costs internally. Furthermore, as brand ambassadors, employees influence consumers' attitudes and behaviors by transmitting organizational culture, norms, and regulations, thereby contributing to the development of the organizational image. We can argue that employees' PEB may be influenced by an organization's pro-environmental policies, including GTM, which serves as an intermediary mechanism between GTM and OGI. It was observed that PEB acts as a mediator between an organization's CSR activities and green image (Ali et al., 2023). It is crucial to comprehend how businesses develop their green image through GTM initiatives and workplace PEB. Therefore, the present study proposes the following hypothesis:

H7: Employees' PEB mediates the relationship between the organization's GTM and OGI.

Moreover, by examining H5 and H6 jointly, the present study suggests sequential mediating roles for green commitment and PEB in the organization's GTM activities and employees' perceptions of a green corporate image. Following SET (Blau, 1964) and SIP theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), we suggest a significant connection via sequential mediation that

prior TM literature has not explored. We specifically propose that employees adhere to and exemplify their company's environmental policies and procedures. They integrate their organization's environmental conservation actions into their personal value system. They engage in green activities to protect and participate in environmental activities because of the social significance of environmental conservation, especially its implications for social welfare. As a result, they are motivated to get involved in pro-environmental activities at work. Additionally, frontline staff convey the company's environmental principles to clients by acting in accordance with these principles when interacting with customers. The present study proposes that organizations' green HR activities, particularly GTM activities, stimulate employees' green engagement, which in turn fuels employees' PEB at the workplace and eventually builds the organization's green image. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H8: Employees' green commitment and PEB sequentially mediate the relationship between GTM and the OGI.

METHODOLOGY

The oil and gas sectors are a significant source of income for Oman. However, the government is making substantial efforts to develop the tourism industry as a substitute for oil and gas as a source of economic activity (Piya et al., 2022). As a result of the government's efforts to diversify the economy, the Oman 2040 Vision initiative was launched, with tourism identified as one of the key development areas (Salem et al., 2022). Accordingly, the target population for this study comprises frontline employees in hotels engaged in green HR practices in Oman. The present study employed a quantitative approach and a cross-sectional survey. The data were collected using a purposive sampling. It enabled us to identify 5-Star and 4-Star hotels that met the inclusion criteria. To achieve this aim, we first reviewed their websites and, to establish necessary links with hotel managers, used personal networks and local knowledge. Subsequently, formal approval was obtained from the HR departments of the participating hotels. Due to the hotels' privacy concerns, the representatives of the selected hotels were able to collect data from frontline employees. The participation in this study was voluntary, confidential, and anonymous.

The questionnaire was administered in English, the primary working language at the participating hotels. Prior to full deployment, the instrument was reviewed by hospitality professionals for clarity and relevance, and minor wording refinements were made to improve comprehension. The validated scales were adapted from prior studies to assess dependent, independent, and mediating variables; therefore, the instruments' validity and reliability were already established. These measures were slightly modified to align with the study's context. A five-point Likert scale was used, where "1: represented "strongly disagree" and "5" represented "strongly agree". GTM was measured by adapting a seven-item scale from the work done by Ogbeibu et al. (2022). A sample item is "My organisation offers green training, workshop opportunities, coaching and courses that advance my knowledge on how to foster environmental sustainability." Employees' green commitment was measured with an eight-item scale adapted from Raineri & Paillé (2016). A sample item is "I would feel guilty about not supporting the environmental efforts of my company." A seven-item scale was used to measure employees' PEB. This scale was adapted from the work of Robertson and Barling (2013), and one of the sample items is "I print double-sided whenever possible." Finally, based on Martínez (2015), a five-item scale was adapted to measure employees' green image of the organization. The sample item is "The organization is well-established in its environmental concerns."

Of the 390 distributed questionnaires, 325 were suitable for final analysis. Demographic data showed that a majority of respondents were male (59.08%). The respondents were in the three age groups: 20-30 (62.51%), 31-40 (30.92%), and over 41 (6.57%), reflecting that most young adults work as frontline hotel staff. In PLS-SEM, social desirability bias may introduce common variance in responses (Kock, 2015). Additionally, Podsakoff et al. (2003) note the potential for common-method bias, as data on both independent and dependent variables were collected simultaneously from the same respondents using the same measurement instrument. This study employed the technique from Kock (2015) to assess the full collinearity among variables and items. Kock analyzed inner VIF collinearity and suggested that an inner VIF of 3.3 is an appropriate threshold. We adopted this measure, treating each variable in turn as the dependent variable, with all others as independent. As shown in Table 1, all within-group VIF values are below 3.3, confirming that no common-method bias exists in this study.

Table 1. Common method bias test (Kock, 2015). Full collinearity test

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Employee’s green commitment | | 1.928 | 1.882 | 2.223 |
| 2. Employees pro-environmental behavior | 1.844 | | 2.055 | 1.950 |
| 3. Green talent management | 1.523 | 1.703 | | 1.676 |
| 4. Organization’s green image | 1.774 | 1.633 | 1.738 | |

For the present study, the proposed hypotheses were tested using PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 4. This tool is helpful for small sample sizes, and normality is not required for its application (Hair et al., 2019). Initially, we evaluated the measurement model and then analyzed the structural model.

Measurement model

Initially, the analysis was conducted on the reflective items’ measuring model. In Table 2, Cronbach’s Alphas, Rho_A, and composite reliability for all the constructs were above the threshold value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 2. Reliability and validity

| Constructs | Reliability | | | |
|--|------------------|------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | Cronbach’s alpha | CR (Rho_A) | Composite reliability | AVE |
| 1. Employees’ green commitment | 0.895 | 0.895 | 0.916 | 0.578 |
| 2. Employees’ pro-environmental behavior | 0.872 | 0.875 | 0.902 | 0.568 |
| 3. Green talent management | 0.924 | 0.925 | 0.939 | 0.686 |
| 4. Organization’s green image | 0.823 | 0.828 | 0.883 | 0.654 |

Convergent validity was assessed by evaluating the average variance extracted (AVE) and outer loadings. As it is presented in Table 1, the AVE values for all the reflective constructs were greater than the threshold value of 0.50, which means that all the items were relevant to the respective constructs and explained more than 50% of the constructs’ variance. For loading, each measurement item’s loading on its corresponding construct should be greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). In this study, all loadings exceeded the recommended value. Importantly, for the OGI, one item (OGI2) was removed due to low loading. Indicators with lower loadings may be removed if deleting them increases AVE (Hair et al., 2017). The results in Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 2 show that the measurement model meets all set criteria.

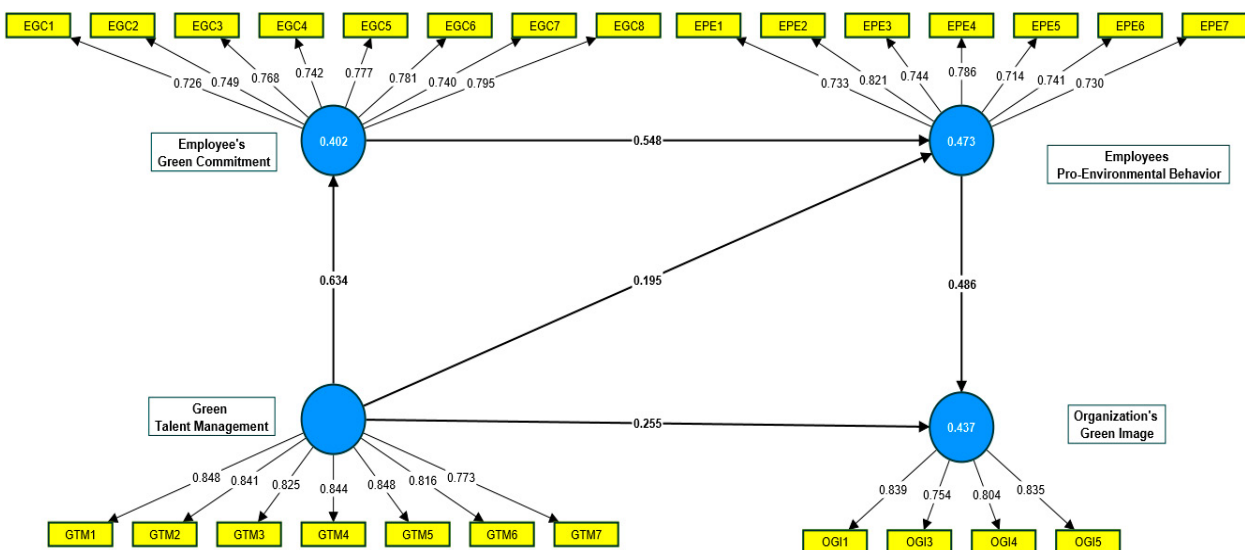


Figure 2. Measurement model

After this, discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). As shown in Table 3, all HTMT values were <0.85. The results indicate that all constructs exhibit sufficient discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015), indicating that the measurement model satisfies the condition for discriminant validity.

Table 3. HTMT ratio

| Constructs | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| 1. Employees' green commitment | | | | |
| 2. Employees' pro-environmental behavior | 0.758 | | | |
| 3. Green talent management | 0.693 | 0.602 | | |
| 4. Organization's green image | 0.677 | 0.736 | 0.591 | |

RESULTS

Structural model

After this, the structural model was assessed. Its assessment helps the researcher determine the model's capability to predict the target constructs (Hair et al., 2017). The hypothesised association between the constructs was assessed for significance by evaluating path coefficients. As shown in Table 4, all five direct relationships were significant. (Criteria: * $p \leq 0.05$)

Table 4. Hypothesis testing results (Bootstrapping@5000 subsamples)

| | β | t | p-values | Result |
|---|---------|-------|----------|----------|
| H1: Green talent management \rightarrow Employees' green commitment | 0.634 | 9.970 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H2: Employees' green commitment \rightarrow Employees' pro-environmental behavior | 0.550 | 5.281 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H3: Green talent management \rightarrow Employees' pro-environmental behavior | 0.192 | 2.206 | 0.027 | Accepted |
| H4: Employees' pro-environmental behavior \rightarrow Organization's green image | 0.490 | 5.932 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H5: Green talent management \rightarrow Organization's green image | 0.253 | 3.487 | 0.000 | Accepted |

Mediation analysis

The mediation analysis for this study considered both direct and indirect effects (Zhao et al., 2010). Table 5 presents the direct and indirect effects, which indicate that all three mediation hypotheses are supported (H6, H7, H8).

Table 5. Mediation hypothesis

| Effect type | Relationships | Hypotheses | β | Confidence interval | SD | T statistics | P values | Result |
|-----------------|---|------------|---------|---------------------|-------|--------------|----------|--------|
| Indirect effect | GTM \rightarrow EGC \rightarrow PEB | H6 | 0.349 | [0.189-0.519] | 0.086 | 4.077 | 0.000 | Accept |
| Direct effect | GTM \rightarrow PEB | | 0.192 | [0.030-0.363] | 0.087 | 2.206 | 0.027 | |
| Indirect effect | GTM \rightarrow PEB \rightarrow OGI | H7 | 0.094 | [0.015-0.189] | 0.045 | 2.106 | 0.035 | Accept |
| Indirect effect | GTM \rightarrow EGC \rightarrow PEB \rightarrow OGI | H8 | 0.171 | [0.073-0.303] | 0.060 | 2.860 | 0.004 | Accept |
| Direct effect | GTM \rightarrow OGI | | 0.253 | [0.112-0.398] | 0.073 | 3.487 | 0.000 | |

Note: Abbreviations: SD – Standard Deviation, GTM - Green Talent Management, EGC - Employees' Green Commitment, PEB - Pro-Environmental Behavior, OGI - Organization's Green Image (Criteria: * $p \leq 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that employees' green commitment positively mediates the relationship between GTM and PEB, with both the indirect and direct effects being statistically significant. Besides, the PEB of employees also mediates the relationship between GTM and the OGI, with both the indirect and direct effects being positively and statistically significant. Finally, the sequential mediation provides support to our hypothesis that employees' green commitment and

PEB sequentially mediate the relationship between GTM and OGI. Both direct and indirect effects are positive, and evidence indicates that the type of mediation is complementary. Later, the R^2 (coefficient of determination) levels were assessed. The R^2 value of 0.402 indicates that GTM accounts for 40.2% of the variance in employees' green commitment. Moreover, the R^2 value for PEB (0.473) indicates that the set of modeled antecedents (GTM and employees' green commitment) jointly explains 47.3% of the variance in employees' PEB. Similarly, the R^2 value for OGI (0.437) shows that its antecedent constructs collectively explain 43.7% of the variance in OGI. Consistent with PLS-SEM conventions, R^2 reflects the combined explanatory power of all predictors specified for an endogenous construct rather than the effect of any single path. In PLS-SEM practice, R^2 benchmarks are often ~ 0.75 (substantial), 0.50 (moderate), and 0.25 (weak). Hence, the reported endogenous R^2 values of 0.40-0.47 indicate moderate predictive accuracy, and we can presume that significant correlations exist between our endogenous constructions and the corresponding exogenous constructs.

The effect size (f^2) was used to evaluate the changes in R^2 values when the exogenous variable was omitted from the structural model. Four exogenous effect sizes on endogenous constructs were calculated based on the f^2 score interpretation of Cohen (1988), which is 0.35 as a large effect, 0.15 as a medium, 0.02 as a small, and <0.02 as a trivial effect. GTM had a large effect size (0.671) on employees' green commitment, while employees' green commitment had a medium effect (0.341) on PEB. Similarly, PEB had a medium effect (0.297) on the OGI. However, it was observed that GTM had a small effect (0.043) on the PEB of employees. Predictive relevance (Q^2) was assessed using the blindfolding procedure to analyze the predictive power over endogenous constructs (Geisser, 1974). All endogenous constructs had Q^2 values above 0 (0.384, 0.271, 0.252), indicating the model's predictive relevance and validity.

Drawing on SET, SIP, and COR theories, this study clarifies the mechanisms by which GTM contributes to OGI. SET explains how employees interpret GTM practices as organizational investments and signals of environmental values. In response to these perceived organizational commitments, employees reciprocate by developing stronger green commitment, consistent with exchange-based obligations. However, SET alone is insufficient to explain how such commitment translates into sustained behavioral enactment. SIP theory explains how GTM practices function as salient environmental cues that signal organizational priorities and norms, shaping employees' perceptions about the organization's environmental orientation. COR theory complements this explanation by accounting for how green commitment functions as a valuable psychological resource that motivates employees to invest effort in PEB. From a COR perspective, employees engage in PEB to protect and leverage their environmental commitment, particularly when organizational practices support resource gain rather than depletion. By integrating SET, SIP, and COR sequentially, the study captures both the formation of green commitment and its translation into behavior and reputational outcomes, avoiding theoretical redundancy.

Consistent with this integrated framework, the findings of this research found that employees' perception of GTM positively influences their green commitment and PEB. The result aligns with the work of Ansari et al. (2021) and Pham et al. (2019), who found that an organization's green HR activities can facilitate employees' green commitment and PEB. Similarly, employees' green commitment shows a positive effect on PEB. Furthermore, employees' green commitment mediates the relationship between GTM and PEB. The results show that the organization's green initiatives motivate employees to engage in environmentally friendly practices at work. The findings of the study provide an important result: GTM positively influences employees' own green organization image and employees' green commitment, and PEB sequentially mediates this relationship, which was overlooked in past research and is an important contribution of the present study. The organization's claims of being pro-environment through GTM and its employees' green commitment build a positive image. It also helps to gain a competitive advantage. This study makes a novel contribution by identifying the PEB of employees as an antecedent to the OGI. The results indicate that employees' PEB directly affects their perception of the OGI. According to Ali et al. (2023), the PEB of employees affects the perception of clients about the OGI. The present study is important to take into consideration the employees' perceptions as well. These findings will provide useful insights for developing strategies and policies to nurture green talent within organizations.

Due to increasing public concern and awareness of environmental issues, organizations have recognized the importance of green talent for market competitiveness (Gardas et al., 2019; Odugbesan et al., 2022; Ogbeibu et al., 2022). GTM is a new trend that is more beneficial for organizations in terms of brand building to attract and retain people. Hence, organizations have begun to align their goals, aims, strategies, and tactics with the GTM function, as demonstrated in this study. The hotel sector plays a noteworthy role in adopting green practices and supporting eco-friendly initiatives. The study shows that the perceptions of the OGI reciprocate with the organizations, instilling green commitment and PEB among their employees. The present study identified a way for organizations to use GTM to stimulate employees' green commitment and PEB. Organizations can implement practices such as green training and rewards to strengthen

green commitment and foster PEB. Environmental concerns should be a part of the job description and design, and employees should be encouraged to implement green initiatives. Within organizations, there is a need to organize meetings, workshops, or seminars on green initiatives to promote a green image among employees. Furthermore, there should be frequent communication with employees about the organization's environmental initiatives. Moreover, although OGI is measured in this study as employees' internal perceptions, such internal image evaluations may influence how organizations are ultimately perceived by customers and other external stakeholders. As employees often act as organizational representatives in service encounters and external interactions, a positive internal OGI may plausibly strengthen external green image over time.

CONCLUSION

This research underscores the essential role of GTM in advancing organizational sustainability. Initially, GTM elevates employees' commitment to environmental goals, promoting greater engagement in PEB. Subsequently, employees' PEB supports their dedication and improves the OGI. Additionally, employees' green commitment and PEB serve as sequential mechanisms that demonstrate how GTM enhances the organization's green reputation. These findings provide valuable theoretical insights into the connections between TM, employee behaviors, and organizational perception. In practice, companies can leverage GTM to cultivate a sustainability-focused culture, boost employee participation, and build a strong green identity among both internal teams and external stakeholders.

Although this study offers important insights for both theory and practice, several areas need further exploration. Initially, respondents were chosen using non-probability and convenience sampling methods. The data are self-reported, cross-sectional, and originate from a single source, with hotel representatives conducting the surveys internally. This setup increases the risk of social desirability bias and potential feedback loops between attitudes and reported behaviors. Future research could employ probability sampling to enhance generalizability. This study conceptualizes GTM from a soft talent management perspective, emphasizing development, empowerment, and support practices that promote employees' voluntary participation in environmental initiatives. As a result, lifecycle stages like green recruitment, selection, and performance evaluation were not included in the measurement model. While this approach aligns with the study's theoretical frame and operationalization, future research could incorporate broader, multidimensional GTM measures to explore how lifecycle-based talent management practices collectively influence pro-environmental behaviors and organizational green outcomes. Furthermore, this study investigates employees' perceptions of their organization's green image. Future studies can bring in the perception of the customers or other stakeholders as well to get a deeper understanding of the concept. They can conduct qualitative analysis with in-depth interviews or focus groups of customers and employees.

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Appendix

Questionnaire Items

Employee's green commitment (EGC) (Raineri & Paillé, 2016)

- EGC1. I really care about the environmental concerns of my company.
- EGC2. I would feel guilty about not supporting the environmental efforts of my company.
- EGC3. The environmental concern of my company means a lot to me.
- EGC4. I feel a sense of duty to support the environmental efforts of my company.
- EGC5. I really feel as if my company's environmental problems are my own.
- EGC6. I feel personally attached to the environmental concerns of my company.
- EGC7. I feel an obligation to support the environmental efforts of my company.
- EGC8. I strongly value the environmental efforts of my company.

Pro-Environmental behavior of employees (PEB) (Robertson & Julian Barling, 2013)

- PEB1. I print double-sided whenever possible.
- PEB2. I put compostable items in the compost bin.
- PEB3. I put recyclable material (e.g., cans, paper, bottles, batteries) in the recycling bins.
- PEB4. I bring reusable eating utensils to work (e.g., a travel coffee mug, water bottle, reusable containers, and reusable cutlery).
- PEB5. I turn the lights off when not in use.
- PEB6. I participate in environmentally friendly programs (e.g., bike/walk to work day, bring your local lunch day).
- PEB7. I make suggestions about environmentally friendly practices to managers and/or environmental committees, in an effort to increase my organization's environmental performance.

Green talent management (GTM) (Ogbeibu et al., 2022)

GTM1. My organisation cares about my well-being and offers considerable support for my welfare when executing green-centered initiatives.

GTM2. My organisation offers green training, workshop opportunities, coaching, and courses that advance my knowledge of fostering environmental sustainability.

GTM3. My organisation offers me a considerable degree of autonomy when carrying out green-related tasks.

GTM4. My organisation offers me job rotation opportunities associated with environmental sustainability.

GTM5. My organisation is very supportive of green-related activities that can help me plan my future development.

GTM6. My organisation offers me challenging assignments that are grounded in environmental sustainability.

GTM7. In my organisation, green tasks are driven with several opportunities that allow me to express myself and share my opinions on green-related matters

Organization's green image (OGI) (Martínez, 2015)

OGI1. The organization is regarded as the point of reference for environmental commitments.

OGI2. The organization has a strong environmental reputation. (Removed)

OGI3. The organization is successful in its environmental protection.

OGI4. The organization is well-established in its environmental concerns.

OGI5. The organization is trustworthy about its environmental promises.

Biographical notes

Sonia Umair is a dedicated academic and researcher with over a decade of expertise in management studies. She is currently serving as an Assistant Professor in the College of Commerce and Business Administration at Dhofar University, Oman. Her research and academic interests span human resource management, sustainability, business ethics, leadership, and organizational behavior. She has contributed extensively to reputable journals and conferences, offering valuable insights and advancing knowledge in her field.

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Author contributions statement

Sonia Umair: Conceptualization, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Validation, Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Writing – Review & Editing. **Umair Waqas:** Investigation, Methodology, Software, Supervision, Validation, Visualization. **Beata Mrugalska:** Investigation, Methodology, Resources, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing, Funding Acquisition. **Ilya Bystrov:** Formal Analysis, Project Administration.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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