



Volume and Issues Obtainable at the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management-
The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Bahawalpur, Pakistan 63100.

Journal of Tourism, Hospitality, and Services Industries Research

ISSN: 2958-5570 ; ISSN (E): 2958-5589

Volume 1, No.1, June 2021

Journal homepage: <https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/jthsir>

DOI:10.52461/jths.v1i1.1588

The Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Nexus between Green HR Practices and Sustainable HR Management: Evidence from Health-Care Sectors of Pakistan

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ARTICLE DETAILS

History

Revised format: March 2021

Available Online: June 2021

Keywords

Green Human Resource Management; Sustainable Human Resource Management; Corporate Social Responsibility; Strategic Human Resource Management

ABSTRACT

The global evolvement of green human resource management practices within organizations has significantly influenced the retention of personnel and sustainable growth of the firms. It is very imperative to examine the strengthening relationship between green human resource management (GHRM) and sustainable human resource management (SHRM) practices. Hence, the purpose of this study is to bridge the knowledge gap to examine the moderating effect of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on the GHRM and the SHRM practices link. The study collected a total of 300 respondents engaged in the human resource management practices of health care units in Punjab using random stratified sampling data. The data was analyzed using the PLS-SEM approach along with the descriptive statistics of the variables. The existing research studies have already provided the mediating effects of many other variables on the GHRM and sustainable HRM practices in the healthcare industry of Pakistan.

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Introduction

Besides the focus on strategic and functional level practices of green and sustainable human resource management practices around the globe, the role of corporate social responsibility contributes to the strengthening the sustainable practices of HR functioning in the organizations (Kansal, Joshi, Babu, & Sharma, 2018; Luu, Rowley, Siengthai, & Thanh Thao, 2017). The inclusion of CSR practices in the functioning of corporations attained the attention of scholars to examine its impact on sustainable human resource practices (Crifo, Diaye, & Pekovic, 2016). We have conducted this research to add the CSR practices as moderated in the sustainable HRM in the health care settings of Pakistan. In addition, this study is not examining the only effect of CSR as moderated on individual behaviors. This research study has been extended to the gap addressed by Shen and Zhang; and Turner et al. in 2019 in the overall healthcare hospitals of Pakistan. We have conducted this research to respond to this gap and analyze the mechanism which works in the performance of sustainable HR practices from the perspective of GHRM. The concept of sustainable development of the organizational functional areas and innovative ways of doing business called for the significant attention of the scholar to consider the elements of corporate social responsibility. The corporate governance statement of the firms tends to focus on the specific performance of various CSR dimensions that directly contributes to the social image of the organization and the social welfare of the community.

The statistical results confirmed that the Green HRM practices positively influence the overall sustainable HRM in the organizations. In addition, the results also confirmed that the working complexity and the tight working policies negatively influence employee motivation towards commitment in the organizations (Carbery, Cross, & McLaughlin, 2019; Diaz-Carrion, López-Fernández, & Romero-Fernandez, 2019). The green HR behaviors of the leaders transform the HR practices sustainably, however, in complex organizations, the green behaviors of the leaders were found least effective in employee commitment (Sarvaiya, Arrowsmith, & Eweje, 2019). The positive behaviors environment of the leaders and the workers together positively influences sustainable HR. The transformation of only green leadership behaviors in the work environment may not consistently implement sustainable HR in the firms (Podgorodnichenko, Edgar, & McAndrew, 2019). The affective responses of the leaders towards the cultivation of the green working environment associated with CSR practices may result in sustainable HR practices. The healthcare settings of Pakistan are complex, and time-bound with stressed work requiring employee motivation through the fulfillment of social responsibilities in the organizations. The perspective of a positive and green work environment in the health care institutes of Pakistan increases employee commitment with the realization that CSR practices have been made in line with the welfare of employees and society in general.

The relationship between Green HR practices and Sustainable HR practices in numerous studies was found proportionate. CSR can serve as the psychological motivator to increase the job commitment of employees in healthcare settings. This research has also extended the future research avenues which may include one or more dimensions of individual effect on the sustainable HR practices in the healthcare settings of Pakistan. Furthermore, the research has also added that the application of CSR practices a merely linked to Sustainable HR but can also examine the impact on the job commitment of the employees in complex organizations.

Our research from the above discussion seeks to examine the moderating effect of CSR practices between Green HR and Sustainable HR practices in the healthcare settings of Pakistan. Secondly, the research also examines whether green HR and Sustainable HR practices are being practiced in this sector or not. Finally, the research aims to establish the direct and indirect effects of CSR practices in the healthcare setting of Pakistan in the existing model. This research seeks to understand how CSR practices may result in the effective performance of sustainable HR practices in healthcare settings with policy suggestions & recommendations.

Literature review

The adoption of managerial strategies and practices is directly associated with the social, financial, and ecological goals of the firm performance (Dumont, Shen, & Deng, 2017). The management controlling functions in the organizations are primarily meant to achieve the overall goals and to control unintended deviations in the firm performance (Naicker & Mafaiti, 2019). The impact of HRM practices has a significant direct impact on customer satisfaction, service quality, and firm performance (Sköld, 2019). Sustainable human resource management has been identified as one of the concepts of developing HR policies that leads to improving the overall business performance by adding to the professional growth and development of the employees (Naicker & Mafaiti, 2019). The external pressure of the employee sustainable HRM policies and practices gained increased importance to consider the implementation of the CSR dimensions in HR functions.

Sustainable HRM

The concept of sustainable human resource management likewise green human resource management recently emerged as an innovative and unique employee and socially connected contribution of the organizations. Sustainability development is based upon the ideology of contributing to future development in all the functional and non-functional areas without compromising the present needs (Bombiak & Marciniuk-Kluska, 2018; Järlström, Saru, & Vanhala, 2018). The real sense of sustainable development views the organization from the dimensions of the economy, environment, the society (Stankevičiute & Savanevičiene, 2018). The sustainable human resource management in this research study focuses on two clear dimensions i.e. competence development and employee relations,

Competence development

Employee competence development is one of the core functions that either the conventional or the recent dynamic human resource management function is responsible for the employees within the organization (Adam, 2018). Sustainable human resource management argues that the clear path of employee progression positively influences the employees towards the addition of skills and capability to achieve career progression (Baum, 2018). The competence development policies of the organization encourage the employee's active participation in formal employee development activities such as formal training & development programs, performance-based rewards, and progression, etc. Moreover, the career progression of the employees shall be a shared responsibility of both the employee and the manager. The working relation and competence development both are positively associated and hence have a positive impact on the overall performance of the firm. Finally, extensive training and development programs with a specific focus on the contents, and technical and logical understanding of the work tasks are imperative in the performance of

employee job tasks (De Stefano, Bagdadli, & Camuffo, 2018). Thus, the clear progression path, formal employee development activities, shared career management responsibility, and extensive training programs are the major determinants of competence development in sustainable HRM.

Employee relations

The dimension of employee relations of sustainable human resource management focuses on employee relations i.e. the valued recognized resources, employee satisfaction, high level of employee motivation, and performance feedback. The studies examined and found that an organization with clear agenda of recognizing the employees as their core resource resulted in low employee turnover and positively influences the overall firm performance. Sustainable human resource management recognized employees as the most valuable resource (Martínez-García, Sorribes, & Celma, 2018). Employee satisfaction has been measured from the two major dimensions i.e. the financial and non-financial rewards. In complex organizations, the financial and non-financial rewards of the employees were found to have a significant impact on the job performance and satisfaction of the employees (Zaim, Keceli, Jaradat, & Kastrati, 2018). Moreover, the study also focused that employee motivation strategies and policies that should be well-linked with their domestic, social, and professional needs. One of the operational constructs of sustainable human resource management in employee relations empirically confirmed a significant contribution to the HR function is the performance feedback to get a high level of performance from the employees (Wikhamn, 2019). Thus, employee recognition as a valued resource, satisfaction, motivation, and feedback are the four major reflectors of employee relations in sustainable human resource management.

The two dimensions of sustainable human resource management i.e. competence development and employee relations. These two dimensions have multiple effects on job performance and overall firm performance in organizations.

Green HRM

The concept of green human resource management entails the development of policies and practices that lead to meeting the social and organizational objectives by delivering the continuous growth of the organization and personnel. The green HRM translates organizational HR objectives into manageable practices (Luu et al., 2017). The empirical evidence in Kansal et al. in 2018 confirmed that the organization tending to adopt green HR practices have reported improved ROI over 20 years of firm financial profitability. The qualitative studies have consistently focused that CSR practices embedded with Green HRM and Sustainable HRM change the way understand the dimensions of corporate social responsibility and sustainable human resource management (Dumont et al., 2017). Employee satisfaction, employee development, and overall firm performance are the key goals of the organizations that come from the HR functions of the organization. Employee and customer orientation are relatively new dimensions in the perspective of green human resource management. The relative association of green human resource management is effective in the Sustainable human resource management practices in the manufacturing organizations in Pakistan. However, the studies conducted in the setting of health care found that the organizations are complex in nature and customer satisfaction is dependent upon the behavior of the working staff and the infrastructure provided both for the employees and the patients. Navratilova et al. 2019 discussed green human resource management practices proportionate to sustainable human resource management practices.

The goal setting of the employees within the organization is one of the most significant elements to be considered by HR. The research studies have established that the employees realized the element of the green settings of the goals in the hospital industry resulted in high performance of the employees and patient satisfaction even though the hospital is a complex organization with a skilled workforce (Luu et al., 2017). In another research study, it was diagnosed that the training and development of the employees positively influence CSR and sustainable human resource management, however, the green training & development programs initiated on consistent schedules resulted in sustainable human resource management practices and improved the job commitment of the employees in the health care settings (Sköld, 2019). Furthermore, the contents of the knowledge and skill development of the employees in the training programs are found more effective in the high performance of the employees and also sustain the human resource management functions in the organization (Chaudhary, 2019). The studies have focused that the behavioral contents being closely associated with the overall functions of the business organizations. The green behavior and reward policy with the patient and employees interaction positively influences sustainable human resource management functions (Wikhamn, 2019). The research also focused that workplace behaviors positively contributing to employee promotions and career development (Hossain, Adams, & Walker, 2019).

Preposition-1: Green Human Resource Management is directly proportionate to Sustainable Human Resource Management and the Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility:

Corporate social responsibility has become one of the major areas of focus for scholars and practitioners in organizations. The increased industrialized and self-centered impact of the industrial sector in the communities at domestic and international levels raised the concern of social welfare contribution within the community where the company is doing the economic activities (Arnaud & Wasieleski, 2014; Jamali, El Dirani, & Harwood, 2015; Simmons, 2008). The studies have established scope of CSR is not limited to the performance of various functions depending upon the preferences and the requirement of the running business dynamics (Aggerholm, Andersen, & Thomsen, 2011). The dimensions of CSR include the social welfare, environmental protection, and economic well-being of the quarters concerned (Aggerholm et al., 2011). The research studies have suggested that the incorporation of the dimensions of CSR in all the functional areas of the business organizations is an imperative activity that leads to improving the overall performance and commitment of the employees. Furthermore, the research studies also confirmed that CSR has a positive impact on sustainable human resource management (Cooke & He, 2010; Martínez-García et al., 2018). It has also been argued and viewed that CSR practices moderates the relationship between green HRM and sustainable HRM (Celma, Martínez-García, & Coenders, 2014; Wang & Sarkis, 2017).

The element of corporate social responsibility in the health care settings demanded more of the design and implementation of CSR practices. These factors have been suggested by Simmons in 2008 that the psychological problems of the personnel and the patients shall be paid considerable attention to as the quality of work and the organizational complexity have a direct impact on the psychological issues (Arnaud & Wasieleski, 2014). In another research study, the psychological problems of the general public have a direct association with the working employees of the organization due to the direct interaction and provision of the services (Aggerholm et al., 2011). The studies have also suggested the provision of services and facilitation regarding the treatment

of the various programs related to employee social status, family contribution, and workplace behaviors (Shabana, Buchholtz, & Carroll, 2017). The analysis of the studies on CSR has operationalized the three basic elements i.e. the employee psychological problems, psychological problems of the general public, and the strategies to support the employees. The functional practices in the organizations are now extended beyond the conventional policies rather the organizations are required to take care of the employee which must be of welfare contributions. The complex organizations are causing excessive work overload on the employees and particularly the human factor of anxiety and pain in the health care settings. This requires that the psychological relief of the employees and the general public must be attended to to enhance employee performance leading to business performance in the organizations. In sum, the role of CSR is inevitable in sustainable HRM practices in complex organizations.

Preposition-2: Corporate Social Responsibility moderates the relationship between sustainable human resource management and green human resource management in healthcare settings

The synthesis of the literature on Green human resource management, sustainable HRM, and corporate social responsibility. The independent variable of Green HRM and Sustainable HRM are moderated by corporate social responsibility, whereas, Green HRM and CSR has also a direct impact on sustainable HRM. The conceptual framework of the study focuses on examining the moderating effect of CSR between the Green HRM and Sustainable HRM to fill up the research gap as negligible studies have been conducted in this area specifically in a healthcare setting. The theoretical framework of the study concludes the positive impact of Green HRM on Sustainable HRM moderated by CSR. However, the study also examines the direct impact of CSR on the dependent variable sustainable HRM.

Conceptual framework:

The conceptual framework of the research study of Green HRM, CSR, Competence Development, and Employee Relations of SHRM are elaborated as under:

Data, Variables and Methodology

This research study followed the cause-and-effect research approach using the PLS-SEM approach to analyze the research data collected from a sample of 300 respondents from the healthcare units operating in Pakistan. The research approach undertook extensive literature on both the qualitative theories and the empirical evidence in establishing the relationships of dependent, independent, and moderating variables.

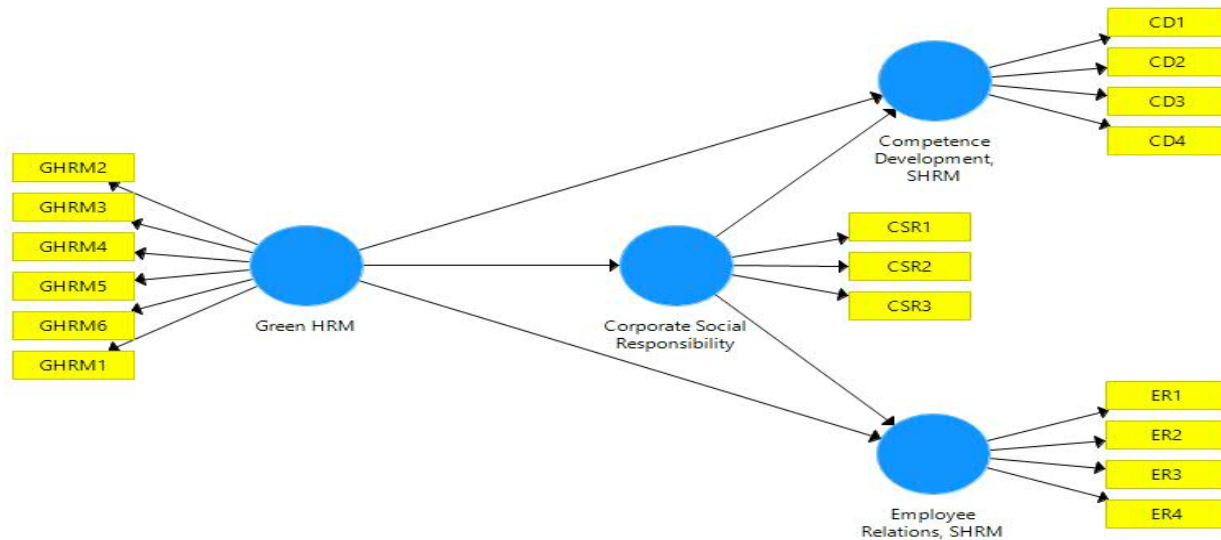


Figure 1.

Measures:

The measures of the research instruments have been divided into two major sections, whereas, the 1st section of the research collected the demographic information of the target respondent which has been used to analyze the data for basic descriptive statistics. In the 2nd section of the research instruments, the data have been collected on the Green HRM, CSR, Competence Development & Employee Relations of HRM. The measures of the research study have been adopted from earlier studies. Six items scales on Green HRM (Dumont et al., 2017), three items scales on CSR (Dumont et al., 2017), and Sustainable HRM (Wikhamn, 2019) eight items scaled divided equally into competence development and employee relations were adopted. The itemized questions have been modified in wording to be used for the healthcare settings. The research instrument has also been translated into the national language in addition to English and the target respondents were given ample support and guidance to make it well understood for more reliable and genuine data of information. The adopted measures were also examined to test the discriminant reliability and validity to generalize the results of the study.

Results and analysis

Descriptive and PLS-SEM approaches have been used on the collected data to analyze the results of the study. The demographic statistical results of the study were analyzed and tabulated below to understand the characteristics of the respondent. The composition of the gender participation in the data collection was made almost equal where the male participation rate was 52% whereas the female employees were 48%. The computed mean value of the gender is 1.48. The age factor of the employee revealed that most of the employees aged between 40 to 49 with a mean value of 3.0167, Std. Deviation of 1.15795 and variance of 1.341. The target respondents of the study were mostly Doctors serving in the health care institutes on the designation of Assistant Profession where the mean value of 4.18, Std. Deviation 0.92942 and 0.864, 3.5033, 1.38675, and 1.923 respectively. The demographic statistical information of the target respondents revealed the

employees working in health care units in Pakistan have significant experience of work experience in the industry, thus, the responses of the respondents are reliable to analyze.

Descriptive Statistics

| Demographics | N | Mean | S.D | Variance |
|--------------|-----|--------|---------|----------|
| Gender | 300 | 1.4800 | 0.50043 | 0.250 |
| Age | 300 | 3.0167 | 1.15795 | 1.341 |
| Education | 300 | 4.1800 | 0.92942 | 0.864 |
| Designation | 300 | 3.5033 | 1.38675 | 1.923 |

Table 1

Reliability and Validity Test

The reliability and validity tests on the construct of the developed theoretical framework have been performed to check the generalizability of the results. The value of Cronbach's Alpha computed from the data is 0.956, 0.955, 0.966, and 0.981 for competence development, CSR, employee relations, and Green human resource management. The value of Cronbach's alpha is above the minimum acceptable standard of 0.6 for all the constructs hence proving that the data results on the given scale are reliable and measure the variables consistently. If we look at the composite reliability and AVE, the values of the study are also found to be above the minimum set standards of assessing the reliability and validity of the instrument.

Construct Reliability and Validity

| Construct | Cronbach Alpha | Rho_A | Composite Reliability | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Competence development | 0.956 | 0.956 | 0.968 | 0.885 |
| CSR | 0.955 | 0.956 | 0.971 | 0.918 |
| Employee Relations, SHRM | 0.966 | 0.967 | 0.976 | 0.909 |
| GHRM | 0.981 | 0.981 | 0.985 | 0.916 |

Table 2

Outer loading values

The research data analysis on the outer loading values tabulated below which are above the minimum acceptable standard of 0.6 for all the items of the constructs in the study. The outer loading values of the sustainable human resource management competence development (SHRM-CD), corporate social responsibility (CSR), sustainable HRM employee relations (SHRM-ER), and Green human resource management (GHRM) are above 0.9 indicating that the loaded value of the constructs is elaborating the most reliable data for analysis. Hence, the outer loading value

indicates that the model outer fit is significantly best fit to analyze the relationship and explain the power of the variables in the study. The result of the model is supported by the outfit model.

Outer Loading

| Construct Item | SHR_CD | CSR | SHRM-ER | GHRM |
|----------------|--------|-------|---------|-------|
| CD1 | 0.868 | | | |
| CD2 | 0.951 | | | |
| CD3 | 0.977 | | | |
| CD4 | 0.963 | | | |
| CSR1 | | 0.954 | | |
| CSR2 | | 0.952 | | |
| CSR3 | | 0.968 | | |
| ER1 | | | 0.944 | |
| ER2 | | | 0.960 | |
| ER3 | | | 0.944 | |
| ER4 | | | 0.965 | |
| GHRM2 | | | | 0.967 |
| GHRM3 | | | | 0.977 |
| GHRM4 | | | | 0.976 |
| GHRM5 | | | | 0.973 |
| GHRM6 | | | | 0.891 |
| GHRM1 | | | | 0.954 |

Table 3

Regression analysis

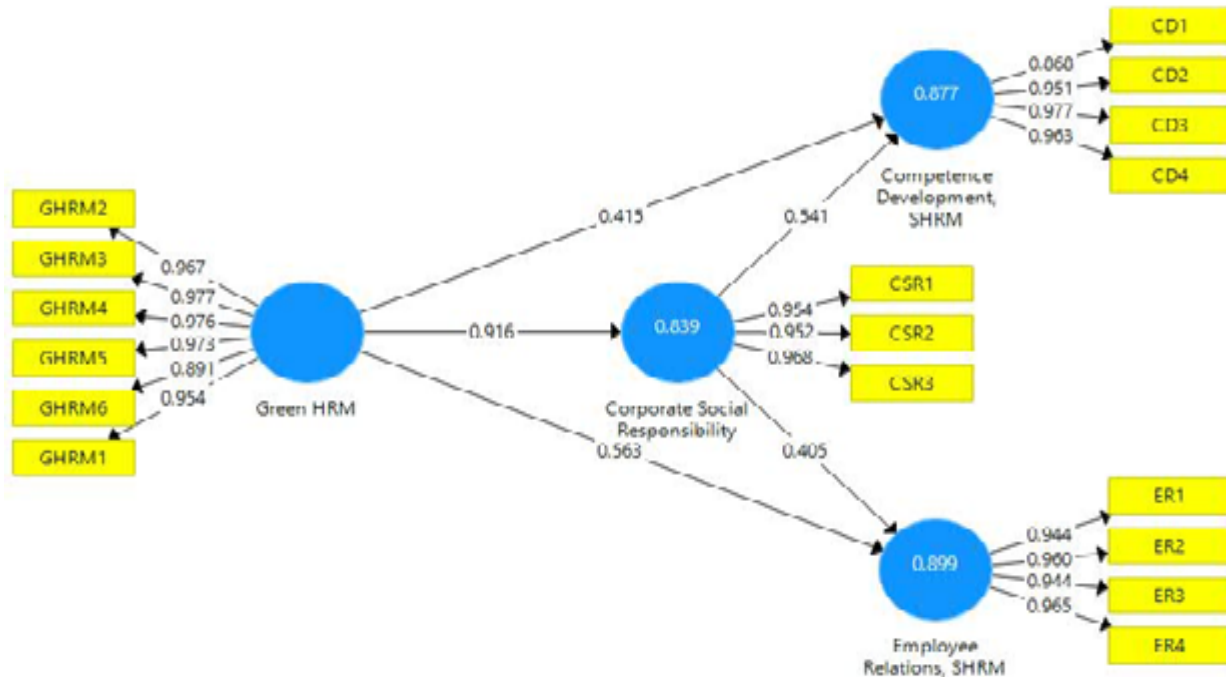
The regression analysis of the construct to explain the relationship using the PLS-SEM approach for the theoretical model was performed. The statistical results of the study revealed that the Green HRM has a significant positive influence on the competence development and employee relations of SHRM and CSR with an R² value of 0.877, .899, and 0.839 thus by accepting the proposition that the Green HRM positively influences the sustainable HRM constructs of CD and ER. The proposition of corporate social responsibility significantly moderated the relationship between green human resource management and sustainable human resource management in healthcare settings.

R Square

| Construct | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|------------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Competence Development, SHRM | 0.877 | 0.876 |
| CSR | 0.839 | 0.838 |
| Employee Relations, SHRM | 0.899 | 0.898 |

Table 4.

The R^2 values of the Green human resource management, corporate social responsibility, competence development, and employee relations dimensions of sustainable human resource management are significant and compute value over and above the minimum set standard of 0.5. This research examined the moderating effect of CSR on strengthening the relationship between Green HRM and Sustainable HRM and hence concluded with a significantly higher R^2 value that the effect of CSR further strengthens the relationship between these two variables.



The model analysis of the research study can also be seen that the outer fit of the values for green HRM, CSR, and the two dimensions of Sustainable HRM i.e. ER and CD. The model significantly explained the relationship among the variables.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The dimensions of the organizational function and overall performance have now been viewed from the social perspective in addition to profitability and other measures. This research study was conducted to bridge the research gap of assessing whether corporate social responsibility practices moderate the relationship between Green human resource management and sustainable human resource management. The results confirmed that the functional performance of green strategies and practices tends to have a positive impact on sustainable human resource management practices in healthcare settings. The statistical results further confirmed that CSR practices further strengthen the impact of green human resource management practices over sustainable human resource management. The health care organization is complex both in functional and job tasks perspective. The stress and complicated work tasks of the employees and the complex structures require that CSR practices must be implemented to motivate the employees to employ sustainable

HRM. The findings of the study recommend that CSR practices must be implemented focusing on the psychological problems of the employees, and the public and offering the family leisure time and welfare both financial and non-financial rewards for the employees to gain a positive public image and the employee branding.

Research implications

The findings of the study recommend that the corporate social responsibility strategies and practices related to the employee and public should be formulated and implemented to facilitate the employees and the customers which at the same time gains public image and positive employee branding. The results also suggest that the quarters concerned the employees should also be motivated with appropriate CSR strategies which may include family benefits, education, and organizational discounted benefits.

Future research and limitations

The study is cross-sectional as it has collected data from the target respondents at a single point in time, the results may vary with the passage of time and the level of information, quality of CSR, and the CSR practices performed by the organization. The research results can be generalized in the setting only in the settings of Pakistan. More variables can be added to check the mediating and moderating effects of this research model. Future research can also consider public and private healthcare organization practices.

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