

# Grey Companies, Green Employees: Inquiry into Green Human Resource Management Practices in Croatia and Montenegro

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**Grey Companies, Green Employees: Inquiry into Green Human Resource Management  
Practices in Croatia and Montenegro**

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### **Abstract**

Green Human Resource Management [GHRM] has been gaining popularity in organizations of all sizes and industries in recent years. The reason for this stands in the fact that its practices ensure that employees comply with environmental regulations and as a result address the ongoing challenges of sustainability. This paper investigates whether this emerging concept is embraced by companies in Southeast European countries and whether GHRM practices impact employee behavior. A questionnaire consisting of pre-tested and empirically validated statements was distributed to 74 employees. Even though results detected that there were low levels of GHRM practices in the region, employees nevertheless reported to have high levels of individual green values. It was further revealed that the higher the individual values were, the more effect they had in shaping employee green behavior.

*Keywords:* GHRM, employee green behavior, individual green values, green practices, Croatia & Montenegro

## **Grey Companies, Green Employees: Inquiry into Green Human Resource Management Practices in Croatia and Montenegro**

Earth's natural wealth has been depleting at an accelerating rate and environmental issues such as global warming, water, air and soil pollution, ecosystem degradation and natural resource depletion, pose a serious threat to human health and wellbeing (OECD, 2011). Consequently, there has been an increase in environmental awareness and commitment to sustainability and for the aforementioned reasons, both publicly and privately-owned establishments realize the value of implementing environmentally friendly practices as part of their corporate strategy and organizational culture. Companies, regardless of their size and industry type, are additionally pressured by government authorities, non-governmental environment organizations and consumers to meet their social and environmental responsibilities (Olson, 2008).

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment Development originally put forward the notion of sustainability in what is commonly referred to as the Brundtland Report or “Our Common Future” and thenceforth, it became clear to managers of all fields of expertise that companies had to strategically set organizational performance objectives with environmental protection in mind (Sharma and Vredenburg, 1998). Sustainable development has been defined as development that aims to prevent the overexploitation of resources in order for them to be available for posterity (United Nations General Assembly, 1987). A distinctive feature of this definition is that it emphasizes the importance of intergenerational equality and takes into consideration the needs of people as well as those of the environment while conventional environmental policies focus merely on assimilating the external factors that could pose a threat to the environment. Therefore, it can be concluded that the fundamental aim of sustainable development is to sustain economic expansion while simultaneously preserving the immeasurable value of the environment (Emas, 2015).

In light of the foregoing, it is worth mentioning that the European Union took action regarding this matter in 2001 when the first EU Sustainable Development Strategy [EU SDS] was introduced at the Gothenburg Summit. The strategy sets forth key objectives that ought to be met in order to better the conditions and quality of life by encouraging the rational and optimal utilization of natural resources and emphasizing the importance of sustainable communities (European Commission Report, 2009). The EU SDS was renewed in 2006 in an effort to better demonstrate the unrelenting efforts of the EU to safeguard the nature, promote principles of social justice, facilitate inclusive growth and address the challenges of sustainability in a more proactive and efficient manner (Council of the European Union, 2006).

In the 2000s, a wide range of concepts such as greening, eco-management and eco-efficiency became prominent and were used to refer to the promotion of sustainability. Greening in particular was oftentimes considered to be synonymous with sustainable development and the two were used indistinguishably in the business world (Ehrenfeld, 2012). The environment and the concept of sustainability became fundamental pillars of corporate social responsibility [CSR], a concept described as the devotion of one organization to sustainable business practices that benefit the economy, society and the environment (Du et al., 2011). Enhert and Harry (2012) additionally asserted that corporate social responsibility incited the interest of academic researchers following the immediate release of the Brundtland report which noted the necessity of focusing not merely on financial responsibilities but on philanthropic ones as well.

Environmental sustainability related literature has revealed that Human Resource Management [HRM], as a crucial strategic approach, is inextricably linked to the efforts of organizations to sustainably grow and expand (Cohen et al., 2012; Jackson et al., 2011). After the emergence of Green Human Resource Management [GHRM] however, this new branch of HRM gained a principal function in organizations that engage in CSR given the fact that it not

only facilitates sustainable development but it also ensures that an organization operates pursuant to environmental protection legislation (Daily and Huang, 2001).

### **Introduction to Green Human Resource Management**

Greening has several organizational implications and one of the most important ones is changing an organization's frameworks, systems, processes and procedures to contribute more to environmental protection by reducing waste, mitigating greenhouse gases and utilizing sustainable energy sources (Benevene and Buonomo, 2020). In addition to this, the same publication notes that it greatly impacts the culture of an organization and ultimately, the values, perspectives and behavior of employees and all stakeholders involved. Taking into consideration that employees were among the most affected by this new pro-environmental approach, scholars and managers both concluded that HRM as an organizational strategy, was a critical instrument for the effective enforcement of environmentally friendly practices. Wehrmeyer (1996) further argued that an eminently knowledgeable and trained workforce from an environmental point of view is a fundamental imperative of all pro-environmental organizations considering that ultimately, the success of all implemented business practices is chiefly determined by the workforce itself. Thus, as indicated above, a new branch of HRM eventually emerged, publicly referred to as Green Human Resource Management [GHRM]. Its primary purpose was to precisely address the challenges of creating an environmentally aware workforce that recognizes and values the importance of initiating environmental actions and embedding environmental considerations into an organization's strategies, processes and core culture.

The term 'green' is explicated through various definitions however, HRM academics and practitioners associate it with the following meanings with regard to HRM: (1) protection of the nature i.e., of all ecological communities in which biotic and abiotic components subsist; (2) conservation of the natural environment or in other words, management and control of

natural resource consumption and protection of the existing nature for future generations; (3) avoidance or minimization of water, air and land pollution (Opatha and Arulrajah, 2014).

Considering the above-mentioned explanation, it can be concluded that GHRM consists of the practices, methods and actions that directly mitigate the environmental impact of organizations and consequently benefit not merely organizations but the global community and the natural environment as a whole. GHRM is explained as "phenomena relevant to understanding relationships between organizational activities that impact the natural environment and the design, evolution, implementation and influence of HRM systems" (Ren et al., 2018, p.10). Correspondingly, GHRM has been described as a multidisciplinary strategic approach that contains and utilizes HR related principles of various disciplines in order to promote environmentally sustainable development and corporate social responsibility (Ren et al., 2017).

A further fact of importance in relation to GHRM arises from the fact that it is considered a primary function in *greening* HR areas of responsibility towards reaching organizational sustainability and a fundamental element in increasing employee morale. In fact, academic scholarship on GHRM has revealed that its practices not only encourage attitudinal and behavioral developments and changes in employees while at work but also outside it (Dubois, 2012). It is paramount to determine the extent and manner in which green HRM effects employees in order to effectively create and establish green practices that will yield desired results (Ren et al., 2018).

### **Green HRM functions and areas of responsibility**

#### **Recruitment and selection**

Person-organization fit is paramount due to the fact that it exerts a positive influence on employee work performance (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), organizational citizenship behavior (Abdurachman and Siswati, 2017) and ultimately, organizational commitment

(Valentine et al., 2002). In connection therewith, Wehrmeyer (1996) asserted that recruitment and selection practices greatly enhanced the effectiveness of environmental and sustainability management standards and regulations by ensuring that newly recruited employees share the same values and point of view regarding the environment. Wehrmeyer additionally stated that an increasing number of job applicants considered the environmental performance of an organization and the environment-related values and practices to be determining factors in the decision-making process when in search of employment.

### **Training and development**

A significant body of research was conducted in an effort to reveal the extent to which environmental training and development practices impact employee organizational commitment and compliance with environmental norms and standards (Jackson et al., 2011). Ramus (2002) reported on a survey that examined the beliefs of individuals in middle management positions and it was concluded that establishing an environmentally friendly and focused organizational culture and having the adequate environmental training and development practices in place were the most influential factors to enhance the engagement and participation of employees in green activities and objectives. The main purpose of having a training and development function within an organization that embraces environmental sustainability is to increase employees' awareness and understanding of the green values, practices and objectives a specific organization has implemented (Jackson et al., 2011). Fernandez et al. (2003) further argue that green training and development is also intended to provoke behavioral and attitudinal changes in employees and result in a subconscious contribution to environmental initiatives.

### **Compensation and rewards**

Financial compensations or other types of nonmonetary rewards are indisputably powerful incentives that motivate employees to conform to environmental protection measures



and activities (Jackson et al., 2011). DuPont, a major producer of industrial chemicals, introduced the “Environmental Respect Awards” incentive scheme which acknowledges employees who work tirelessly to attain environmental objectives “above and beyond the call of duty” (May and Flannery, 1995, p. 35). Similarly, other large corporations based in the United States from various industries (e.g., Nordstrom, 3M, AT&T, Procter & Gamble) have implemented environment-related incentive programs in an effort to increase employee involvement, encourage employee eco-initiatives and perform in consonance with environmental performance standards (May and Flannery, 1995). Neste Oil is another example of a company that distributes a vast array of compensations to employees who meet environmental performance standards and objectives thereby ensuring that they have an environmentally conscious and responsible workforce (Ramus, 2002).

Berrone and Gomez-Mejia (2009) conducted a longitudinal study in which they examined 469 U.S. firms that mostly belonged to the medium- and high-polluting sectors. Based on the results, it was concluded that firms which scored the highest in environmental performance were the ones that rewarded their highest-ranking executives the most. Many firms have introduced recognition programs as part of their compensation schemes which also act as powerful impetuses that induce employees to attain environmental objectives, conform to environmental regulations and link organizational interests to employees’ interests. (Jackson et al., 2011). 3M, a multinational conglomerate company based in the United States, put into operation the 3P (Pollution Prevention Pays) program which rewards all best performing employees who come up with a sound environmentally friendly project with awards such as traveling opportunities, certifications, paid time off and much more (Jackson et al., 2011; Govindarajulu and Daily, 2004).

### **Green behavior**

Chou (2014) notes that organizations will not be successful in their efforts to prevent and manage environmental deterioration if they lack the active involvement and contribution of employees, even if they implement proven methodologies and the best pro-environmental practices and procedures. According to Stern (2000), there are four types of environmentally significant behavior with employees' environmental behavior being considered one of them. The other types include environmental activism (committed participation in ecological associations); nonactivist patterns of conduct in society (compliance with environmental regulations, acceptance of public policies and willingness to spend more on environmental protection) and private-sphere environmentalism (exploitation of environmentally friendly goods and participation in green consumerism). Stern (2000) further asserts that the environmental behavior of employees is circumstantial and is impacted by sociodemographic and attitudinal factors. The value-belief-norm [VBN] theory on the other hand, supports the fact that environmental behavior is influenced by the environment-related beliefs and norms of employees (Stern et al., 1999).

A plethora of literature indicates that the environmental performance of employees is significantly influenced by their own willingness and additionally strengthened by the occupational setting (Tudor et al., 2008; Pichel, 2008; Ramus, 2001; Stern, 2000). The GHRM literature further differentiates between in-role behavior or compulsory work responsibilities that are ultimately recognized and rewarded and extra-role behavior or nonmandatory and voluntary behaviors that are not rewarded but nonetheless create value for the organization (Ramus and Killmer, 2007).

In view of the foregoing, it is worth noting that this study uses essentially the same hypotheses that were developed by Dumont, Shen and Deng (2016) in order to determine the impact of GHRM practices on the two above-explained categories of employee green behavior.

*Hypothesis 1a: Green HRM is positively related to employee workplace in-role green behavior.*

*Hypothesis 1b: Green HRM is positively related to employee workplace extra-role green behavior.*

### **Psychological green climate**

According to Renwick et al. (2013) GHRM practices indisputably affect employee work attitudes, behavior and performance. They confidently assert that transparency concerning the organization's pro-environmental focus in the recruitment and selection stage and furtherance of green values in the training and development stage, are inclined to positively reflect on employees' awareness, comprehension and perception of green practices. Employees' perception of the need and role of green HRM practices significantly determines to what extent these practices will successfully impact employee behavior (Nishii, Lepak and Schneider, 2008). Providing employees with a well-designed green training program not only builds their skillset and enhances their knowledge but it also incentivizes them to initiate and participate in green activities. Performance management, appraisal and pay and reward systems that account for employees' contribution and engagement in green activities further incentivize them to act in accordance with organizational pro-environmental standards (Renwick et al., 2013). Therefore, in this way GHRM can act as a guiding hand in the way employees satisfy and execute in-role green tasks and responsibilities and as a supporter and promoter of employee extra-role green behavior.

Organizations that attain pro-environmental objectives and take actions to initiate and implement green policies and practices are said to have a psychological green climate (Dumont et al., 2016; Chou, 2014; Ramus, 2002). A climate of this nature is established as a result of employees' standpoints and impressions of a particular organization's environmentally friendly standards, policies and procedures that determine its values, long-term focus and vision (Dumont et al., 2016). The same research paper suggests that green HRM will most

definitely impact the psychological green climate of an organization in a positive and beneficial way as long as employees are clearly briefed regarding their workplace pro-environmental responsibilities and tasks through proper means.

Parker et al. (2003) indicated that a significant body of relevant works supported the fact that a green organizational culture resulted in a sense of satisfaction, organizational commitment, work engagement, meaningful motivation and improved labor productivity. Kopelman et al. (1990) support the aforementioned statement and further add that employee job-related attitudes (i.e., satisfaction, dedication, engagement) moderate the connection between psychological green climate and predominant organizational behaviors, namely organizational performance and citizenship behaviors.

In view of this, the following hypotheses that were once again taken from the study of Dumont, Shen and Deng (2016) can be incorporated for the purposes of this study:

*Hypothesis 2a: Green HRM indirectly influences employee workplace in-role green behavior through the mediation of psychological green climate.*

*Hypothesis 2b: Green HRM indirectly influences employee workplace extra-role green behavior through the mediation of psychological green climate.*

### **Individual green values**

Individual values are considered to be fundamental in understanding both behavioral and attitudinal reactions (Davidov et al., 2008). Theorists consider values to be deeply embedded motivating forces that control, vindicate and explain behavioral and attitudinal responses (Schwartz, 1992). The two most widely used theories that explain the close connection between values and behaviors are the value-belief-norm [VBN] theory (Stern et al., 1999) and the supplies-values fit theory (Edwards, 1996). The former postulates that individual views and standards play a fundamental role in impacting employee workplace behavior (Stern et al., 1999). Whereas, the latter claims that if individual values are compatible with the values

promoted and encouraged by the workplace environment, employee attitudinal and behavioral traits will be positively affected (Edwards, 1996, 2007). Hence, if organizations provide employees with a favorable and beneficial work environment that highlights employees' values and consequently, these values are once again compatible with those of the organization, employees are indisputably more likely to demonstrate pro-environmental workplace behaviors and engage in activities of a similar nature.

Taking into account that there is an explicit correlation between all the already mentioned variables, the remaining hypotheses developed by Dumont, Shen and Deng (2016) are incorporated into this study:

*Hypothesis 3a: Individual green values will moderate the effects of green HRM on employee workplace (1) in-role green behavior and (2) extra-role green behavior, such that the effects will be stronger when individual green values are high and weaker when low.*

*Hypothesis 3b: Individual green values will moderate the effects of psychological green climate on employee workplace (1) in-role green behavior and (2) extra- role green behavior, such that the effects will be stronger when individual green values are high and weaker when low.*

## **Methods**

### **Purpose**

As noted, this research aimed to determine whether companies in southeast European countries located on the Adriatic coast of the Balkans were familiar with Green Human Resource Management practices, whether they implemented them as part of their organizational culture and if this proved to be the case, whether they impacted employee green behavior.

### **Participants**

Participants in this study were randomly selected through the RIT Alumni Network which was initially used as a primary means of acquiring contacts. Subsequently, the snowball

sampling technique or chain-referral sampling was used to obtain additional contacts and as a result, 74 participants fully completed the survey. Complete anonymity and confidentiality were ensured and participation was completely voluntary. Female participants resulted to complete more surveys (n=45) than their male counterparts (n=29) and the majority of them had either completed a bachelor's degree (n=43) or a master's degree (n=23). Additionally, the overwhelming majority of participants came from Croatia (n=42) and Montenegro (n=21), perhaps considering the fact that contacts were mostly gathered through the RIT Alumni network, and they mainly worked for companies/organizations in the private sector (n=56).

### **Materials**

The Google survey was electronically distributed via email and social media platforms, primarily Instagram and Facebook and consisted of two sets of questions with four subtopics, two for each set of questions. Statistical significance between categories was analyzed through the use of SPSS, which is a commercially available software package that performs sophisticated procedures for data analysis. Statements of all categories proved to have high reliability scores in view of the fact that they were taken from reliable, evidence-based and professional sources, as summarized in Table 1.

The first set of questions asked participants to mark the answer that best described the company/organization in which they were currently employed by referring to a 5-point Likert scale in which 1 stood for "not at all" and 5 stood for "very much". As stated, the first set of questions was divided into two subtopics which were GHRM and psychological green climate, respectively. The pre-tested statements used to evaluate the existence and impact of GHRM practices were developed by Dumont, Shen and Deng (2016), who identified seven primary practices after thoroughly reviewing the existing literature on the respected topic. The statement *"My company considers candidates' green attitudes in recruitment and selection"* was included as part of the already-noted seven primary GHRM practices due to the fact that

the survey was distributed to random companies/organizations in comparison to the Dumont, Shen and Deng's survey which excluded this particular statement because the Chinese subsidiary of the multinational Australian company they examined did not enforce green practices on this particular HR area of responsibility at the time. On the contrary, measures of psychological green climate were essentially the same as those used by Chou (2014) with some slight modifications. This study used less statements for all four categories merely so they could suit the targeted demographic group better as some were not relevant and applicable to them. Having said this, eight statements regarding this specific category were used and all were modified from "*Our hotel...*" to "*My company...*", for the same purpose. A sample statement is "*My company publicly publishes an environmental policy.*"

In the second set of questions participants were asked to mark the answer that best described them and their attitudes by also referring to the same 5-point Likert scale. This set of questions examined individual green values and the overall green behavior of employees. Individual green values were measured by using six statements from Chou (2014), one of them being "Business and industry should reduce their waste production to help protect the environment." Lastly, eight statements from Chou's (2014) employees' environmental behaviors were used to measure employee overall behavior. An example of a statement for in-role behavior was "Before I get off work, I turn off all electric appliances, such as computers, printers, copy machines..." and a sample statement that indicated extra-role behavior was "I sort and recycle garbage."

## **Results**

Statistical analysis revealed that there were low levels of green HRM in the region ( $M=1.81$ ,  $SD=.915$ ), as indicated in Table 2. Participants reported that companies mostly set green goals for employees as an indicator of pro-environmental orientation and green HRM ( $M=2.20$ ,  $SD=1.086$ ). However, these results should be carefully interpreted in order to avoid

misinterpretation of data considering that even the highest score is nevertheless very low. Interestingly, it is shown (Table 3) that even though companies may have green goal-setting practices for employees, they are least concerned with relating employees' workplace green behavior to rewards or other compensation, be that monetary or non-monetary ( $M=1.55$ ,  $SD=1.007$ ).

On a similar note, psychological green climate also received low scores ( $M=2.46$ ,  $SD=.938$ ) and this can perhaps be connected to the fact that companies in this region have shown to be far more passive than proactive in taking green initiatives and making valuable contributions to environmental activities (Table 2). When the subjects were questioned on the psychological green climate of their companies, on average, they believed that companies were mostly doing their part in ensuring environmental sustainability by emphasizing energy-saving policies and measures ( $M=2.73$ ,  $SD=1.130$ ). The analysis (Table 4) further revealed an interesting and rather surprising piece of information as it was indicated that these companies did not generally request employees to consider environmentally friendly products when making purchase decisions, in fact, this statement scored the lowest in this category ( $M=2.03$ ,  $SD=1.112$ ).

Strong evidence of individual green values was found ( $M=4.2$ ,  $SD=.616$ ) as this category received the highest values along with in-role green behavior, as shown in Table 2. The most striking result to emerge from this data is that respondents supported more strongly statements that emphasized the role of businesses, industries and legislative authorities on the matter of protecting the environment rather than those indicating personal obligation and responsibility (Table 5). Based on these results, it can be concluded that respondents perceive competent legal authorities and leaders across industries to have a principal function in ensuring environmental sustainability and perhaps the reason why personal obligation statements received less support is because of the respondents' opinionated belief that



businesses and governments should act in a more proactive manner and demand strict compliance with environmental protection legislation.

Additional analysis, shown in Table 2, detected a slight difference between the two remaining categories, in-role ( $M=4.21$ ,  $SD=.782$ ) and extra-role green behavior ( $M=3.90$ ,  $SD=.845$ ). Broadly speaking, respondents reported to mostly be mindful and conscious of preserving electricity by turning off the lights ( $M=4.48$ ,  $SD=.959$ ) but least when it came to other electronic work appliances and devices ( $M=3.91$ ,  $SD=1.256$ ) which are conceivably left in standby mode more frequently (Table 6).

Overall, respondents also demonstrated high levels of extra-role green behavior, with the exception of recycling ( $M=3.50$ ,  $SD=1.333$ ), and showed that the subject of preserving electricity is of particular importance anew ( $M=4.45$ ,  $SD=.925$ ) (Table 7).

#### *Correlations between categories and hypothesis test*

No significant correlation was detected between GHRM and neither in-role ( $r=.104$ ,  $p=.413$ ) nor extra-role green behavior ( $r=.183$ ,  $p=.148$ ) (Table 8). Contrary to expectations, this result confirms the lack of GHRM practices in regional companies and consequently implies that it does not have any effect on employee workplace green behavior.

Similarly, the analysis did not identify a statistically significant correlation between psychological green climate and neither in-role ( $r=.031$ ,  $p=.810$ ) nor extra-role green behavior ( $r=.181$ ,  $p=.152$ ) (Table 8). This finding has further strengthened the aforementioned conclusion of the data comparison between GHRM and both in-role and extra-role green behavior, reinforcing that GHRM practices are not commonly embedded in the culture of regional companies and that employees' viewpoints of the pro-environmental measures and practices of these companies are relatively low. Returning to hypotheses, it is now possible to confirm that hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b were not supported by the results obtained in this paper.

It is important to note that despite tests revealing a non-significant correlation between psychological green climate and both in-role and extra-role green behavior in an overall context, a more careful analysis revealed that there was a slight correlation with some variables. For instance, a slight but nonetheless noteworthy correlation was found between companies that emphasized energy-saving policies and measures and employees that turned off electric appliances after work ( $r=.306$ ,  $p=.014$ ). In addition to this, another slight but interesting correlation was found between companies that demanded waste volume reduction and employees that engaged in recycling as an extra-role green activity ( $r=.248$ ,  $p=.048$ ). Hence, these results lend support to the assumption that if companies were to enforce more green practices and require adherence to environmental protection measures, employees would conceivably act in a more environmentally friendly manner.

Having noted that, individual green values was the only category that was strongly correlated to both in-role ( $r=.455$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and extra-role green behavior ( $r=.575$ ,  $p<.001$ ), as it is shown in Table 8. The most striking observation to be noticed from this correlation comparison was that individual green values were more strongly associated with extra-role green behavior than in-role and this can perhaps be related to the aforementioned fact that companies, generally speaking, lacked pro-environmental practices and policies and did not sufficiently encourage engagement in green activities.

As expected, there was a very strong correlation between employees that felt a personal obligation towards preventing environmental degradation and those that attempted to reduce paper usage at work ( $r=.510$ ,  $p<.001$ ) (Table 9) and reduce water consumption ( $r=.407$ ,  $p<.001$ ) (Table 10). Similarly, a statistically significant correlation was detected between employees that felt a personal obligation to reduce the unnecessary usage of resources and those that refrained from using disposable cups at work ( $r=.404$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and practiced recycling ( $r=.433$ ,  $p<.001$ ), as summarized in Table 9 and Table 10, respectively. These findings clearly underline

the importance and role of individual green values in impacting the green behavior of employees overall, thus, confirming the last two hypotheses (3a, 3b).

Another relevant point to note is that there is a significant correlation between in-role and extra-role green behavior ( $r=.697$ ,  $p<.001$ ) which implies that respondents who reported to engage in pro-environmental compulsory work activities also engaged in voluntary ones to a great extent.

### **Differences in demographics**

There were no statistically meaningful differences reported for the following demographic classifications: age, level of education, country of residence, sector and industry of work, job position and job tenure. Some of these categories were detected to have no significant effect on any of the study scale variables while others consisted of subcategories with relatively small and insufficient sample sizes that could conceivably lead to misleading and incorrect conclusions. Therefore, this study did not take into account any obtained information that could not result in a consequential and meaningful comparison.

On the contrary, a statistically significant difference was found between female ( $M=4.34$ ,  $SD=.606$ ) and male participants ( $M=4.02$ ,  $SD=.591$ ) with regards to the individual green values category. It can consequently be concluded that female participants resulted to be more environmentally conscious in their values and beliefs.

Furthermore, another statistically meaningful difference was reported between micro ( $M=4.11$ ,  $SD=.673$ ) and large companies ( $M=4.25$ ,  $SD=.471$ ) and small ones ( $M=3.44$ ,  $SD=.902$ ) with regards to the extra-role behavior category. This finding is of importance due to the fact that it indicates that employees of both micro and large companies alike engage in voluntary green behavior almost to the same extent while small companies seem to contribute significantly less. The explanation for this could perhaps be that micro companies, which are in the initial stages of growth and aim to attract a talented and knowledgeable pool of

employees, want to establish a competitive advantage and stand out by following emerging trends; large companies want to maintain a favorable public image and small companies simply do not have the sufficient resources to take on these green initiatives.

### **Discussion**

The past decade has witnessed a considerable amount of interest in GHRM and this is clearly evident from the abundance of literature that has been written on the matter. Despite this growing interest, however, previous literature has failed to examine the implications and consequences of GHRM practices in Southeast European countries. Consequently, this research was initiated to broaden current knowledge of the aforementioned matters and to provide insight on the extent to which GHRM practices impact the overall green behavior of employees in the predefined region, be that compulsory or voluntary.

After careful data examination, results detected that, contrary to the findings of Dumont, Shen and Deng (2016), there was no significant correlation between GHRM practices and employee in-role and extra-role green behavior, indicating that GHRM did not directly nor indirectly effect employee behavioral or attitudinal reactions.

On account of the fact that these findings were based on companies that did not sufficiently implement GHRM practices and that there was a lack of knowledge and understanding concerning these practices in an overall context, the results from such analyses must be interpreted and compared with considerable care to avoid misconception and distortion of data.

In spite of the fact that the results of this specific category cannot be compared with previous research more in depth for the foregoing reasons, it can still be concluded that they do not support the previous results reported in the literature (Ramus, 2002; May and Flannery, 1995; Jackson et al., 2011; Renwick et al., 2013) which claim that GHRM practices significantly impact employee behavior and shape the organizational culture of companies.

Despite this non-alignment with previous results, as hypothesized, tests revealed that there was a meaningful correlation between individual green values and employee in-role and extra-role green behavior. In contradiction with earlier findings (Dumont, Shen and Deng, 2016; Edwards, 1999, 2007) that support the supplies-values fit theory, findings of this study fully support the value-belief-norm [VBN] theory put forward by Stern et al., (1999) that indicates that individual values have a significant impact on employee workplace behavior and as expected, results confirm that the higher the individual values the more effect they will have in shaping both in-role and extra-role green behavior.

### **Study limitations, implications and directions for future research**

This paper represents a first attempt to address the subject and presence of GHRM practices in regional companies and their impact on employee workplace behavior. Therefore, a number of important shortcomings ought to be underlined as it is plausible and assumed that they might have influenced the results obtained and the conclusions that were drawn.

To begin with, due to limited time constraints, 15 weeks to be exact, there were some difficulties in terms of collecting a sufficient amount of data. Initially, the aim of this paper was to explore and investigate the above-mentioned research questions in Southeast European countries, however, since the timeframe did not allow for a more thorough and extensive investigation, the focus mainly remained on Croatia and Montenegro considering that the majority of responses came from these countries. Thus, another shortfall to be borne in mind is the fact that investigation was based on an unrepresentative sample and conclusions stated herein are neither representative nor indicative of the extent to which these countries practice GHRM practices overall.

A substantial amount of work still has to be performed before a full comprehension of the extent of these practices on employee behavior is established in the region. Therefore, the findings of this paper should be validated by a larger sample size and a longitudinal study is

encouraged in order to explore the questions, assumptions and expectations this paper has put forward and reach conclusions that could be applicable on a broader level.

Despite the limitations of this paper, findings nevertheless confirmed that employees have strong individual green values and that these values significantly influenced both in-role and extra-role green behavior. This finding could prove to be an invaluable piece of information for companies in all sectors and industries that want to positively contribute to sustainability and simultaneously create an environmentally conscious workplace. Future research should concentrate on investigating the behavior of employees in such a workplace and whether or not their behavioral responses would be positively impacted by the implementation GHRM practices.

This paper may improve knowledge and understanding of GHRM in the region, however the findings of a more thorough and extensive study, if proven to support current behavioral HRM literature, may encourage companies to significantly alter and modify their organizational culture to better fit the dynamic trends of the business world, to conform to environmental protection measures in a larger scale and to contribute to the betterment of society as a whole.

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**Table 1.** *Reliability of scales*

Scales	Source	Number of items	Reliability of scales
Green Human Resource Management Scale	Dumont, Shen & Deng, 2016	7	$\alpha = .94$
Psychological Green Climate Scale	Chou, 2014	8	$\alpha = .92$
Individual Green Values Scale	Chou, 2014	7	$\alpha = .87$
In-role Green Behavior Scale	Chou, 2014	4	$\alpha = .76$
Extra-role Green Behavior Scale	Chou, 2014	4	$\alpha = .75$

**Table 2.** *Descriptive statistics for all five categories*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Green HRM	64	1.00	4.00	1.8170	.91508
Psychological Green Climate	64	1.00	4.75	2.4648	.93845
Individual Green Values	64	2.67	5.00	4.2135	.61612
In-role behavior	64	2.25	5.00	4.2148	.78284
Extra-role behavior	64	1.75	5.00	3.9023	.84588
Valid N (listwise)	64				

**Table 3.** *Descriptive statistics for GHRM category*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. My company sets green goals for its employees.	64	1	5	2.20	1.086
3. My company provides employees with green training to promote green values.	64	1	5	1.87	1.120
5. My company considers employees' workplace green behavior in performance appraisals.	64	1	5	1.84	1.158
2. My company considers candidates' green attitudes in recruitment and selection.	64	1	4	1.84	1.101
4. My company provides employees with green training to develop employees' knowledge and skills required for green management.	64	1	5	1.75	1.084
7. My company considers employees' workplace green behaviors in promotion.	64	1	5	1.66	1.072
6. My company relates employees' workplace green behaviors to rewards and compensation.	64	1	5	1.55	1.007
Valid N (listwise)	64				

**Table 4.** *Descriptive statistics for psychological green climate category*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
13. My company emphasizes energy-saving policies and measures.	64	1	5	2.73	1.130
14. My company demands waste volume reduction.	64	1	5	2.67	1.222
15. My company emphasizes resource recycling.	64	1	5	2.64	1.173
9. My company emphasizes observing environmental regulations and laws.	64	1	5	2.64	1.173
11. My company promotes environmental measures in the workplace.	64	1	5	2.42	1.307
10. My company participates in local or community environmental activities.	64	1	5	2.42	1.257
8. My company publicly publishes an environmental policy.	64	1	5	2.16	1.158
12. My company requests employees to consider environmentally friendly products when making purchase decisions.	64	1	5	2.03	1.112
Valid N (listwise)	64				

**Table 5.** *Descriptive statistics for individual green values category*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
3. Business and industry should reduce their waste production to help protect the environment.	64	2	5	4.52	.690
4. The government should put pressure on businesses to do a better job in protecting the environment.	64	1	5	4.45	.853
5. I feel morally obliged to save energy, regardless of what others do.	64	3	5	4.30	.728
6. I feel obliged to bear the environment and nature in mind in my daily behavior.	64	3	5	4.12	.745
1. I feel a personal obligation to do whatever I can to prevent environmental degradation.	64	2	5	3.95	.933
2. I feel a sense of personal obligation to take action to stop wasting resources.	64	2	5	3.94	.906
Valid N (listwise)	64				



**Table 6.** *Descriptive statistics for in-role green behavior category*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
8. When the office is not in use, I turn off the light.	64	1	5	4.48	.959
9. I use my own cup instead of disposable ones at work.	64	1	5	4.31	1.052
10. I reduce using paper by printing double-sided.	64	1	5	4.16	1.116
7. Before I get off work, I turn off the electric appliances, such as computers, printers, copy machines, etc.	64	1	5	3.91	1.256
Valid N (listwise)	64				

**Table 7.** *Descriptive statistics for extra-role green behavior category*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
11. I turn off the light or electricity when I don't need it.	64	1	5	4.45	.925
12. I save water.	64	1	5	3.89	1.156
13. I take stairs instead of taking elevators when moving between 2-3 floors.	64	1	5	3.77	1.205
14. I sort and recycle garbage.	64	1	5	3.50	1.333
Valid N (listwise)	64				

**Table 8.** *Correlations between all categories*

		Green HRM	Psychological Green Climate	Individual Green Values
Green HRM	Pearson Correlation	1	.803**	.290*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.020
	N	64	64	64
Psychological Green Climate	Pearson Correlation	.803**	1	.289*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.021
	N	64	64	64
Individual Green Values	Pearson Correlation	.290*	.289*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	.021	
	N	64	64	64
In-role behavior	Pearson Correlation	.104	.031	.455**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.413	.810	.000
	N	64	64	64
Extra-role behavior	Pearson Correlation	.183	.181	.575**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.148	.152	.000
	N	64	64	64

		In-role behavior	Extra-role behavior
Green HRM	Pearson Correlation	.104	.183
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.413	.148
	N	64	64
Psychological Green Climate	Pearson Correlation	.031	.181
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.810	.152
	N	64	64
Individual Green Values	Pearson Correlation	.455**	.575**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	64	64
In-role behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.697**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
Extra-role behavior	Pearson Correlation	.697**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 9.** *Correlations between the most significant variables in individual green values and in-role behavior**category*

		1. I feel a personal obligation to do whatever I can to prevent environmental degradation.	2. I feel a sense of personal obligation to take action to stop wasting resources.
1. I feel a personal obligation to do whatever I can to prevent environmental degradation.	Pearson Correlation	1	.879**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
2. I feel a sense of personal obligation to take action to stop wasting resources.	Pearson Correlation	.879**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64
9. I use my own cup instead of disposable ones at work.	Pearson Correlation	.419**	.404**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001
	N	64	64
10. I reduce using paper by printing double-sided.	Pearson Correlation	.510**	.465**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	64	64

  

		9. I use my own cup instead of disposable ones at work.	10. I reduce using paper by printing double-sided.
1. I feel a personal obligation to do whatever I can to prevent environmental degradation.	Pearson Correlation	.419**	.510**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000
	N	64	64
2. I feel a sense of personal obligation to take action to stop wasting resources.	Pearson Correlation	.404**	.465**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000
	N	64	64
9. I use my own cup instead of disposable ones at work.	Pearson Correlation	1	.634**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
10. I reduce using paper by printing double-sided.	Pearson Correlation	.634**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64

\*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

		14. I sort and recycle garbage.
1. I feel a personal obligation to do whatever I can to prevent environmental degradation.	Pearson Correlation	.504**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	64
2. I feel a sense of personal obligation to take action to stop wasting resources.	Pearson Correlation	.433**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	64
12. I save water.	Pearson Correlation	.304*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015
	N	64
14. I sort and recycle garbage.	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	64

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 11.** *Differences between genders (ANOVA)*

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Green HRM	Between Groups	1.511	3	.504	.590
	Within Groups	51.243	60	.854	
	Total	52.754	63		
Psychological Green Climate	Between Groups	1.447	3	.482	.536
	Within Groups	54.036	60	.901	
	Total	55.483	63		
Individual Green Values	Between Groups	1.404	3	.468	1.247
	Within Groups	22.511	60	.375	
	Total	23.915	63		
In-role behavior	Between Groups	1.008	3	.336	.536
	Within Groups	37.601	60	.627	
	Total	38.608	63		
Extra-role behavior	Between Groups	7.060	3	2.353	3.714
	Within Groups	38.017	60	.634	
	Total	45.077	63		

*ANOVA*

		Sig.
Green HRM	Between Groups	.624
	Within Groups	
	Total	
Psychological Green Climate	Between Groups	.660
	Within Groups	
	Total	
Individual Green Values	Between Groups	.301
	Within Groups	
	Total	
In-role behavior	Between Groups	.659
	Within Groups	
	Total	
Extra-role behavior	Between Groups	.016
	Within Groups	
	Total	

## Appendix

## Questionnaire

Dear Survey Participant:

My name is Sara Sinistaj and I am a senior student at RIT Croatia Dubrovnik, a global campus of Rochester Institute of Technology, based in Rochester, New York.

For my final research project in International Hospitality and Service Management, I am examining the effects of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices on employee behavior. The term 'green' in this context pertains to environmental preservation and sustainability in general.

Because you are an employee in a service-based company, I am inviting you to participate in this research study by completing the attached survey. It will require approximately 7 minutes to complete.

Please note that your participation is completely voluntary and the information you provide on this survey will be kept completely anonymous and confidential and will be used for the purposes of this research only. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, please do not state your name or the name of your company in your answers.

If you decide to participate, please answer all questions as honestly and accurately as possible.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my educational endeavors, your participation is greatly appreciated.

If you would like additional information about this survey or my research project, please contact me at this number and/or email: +385 97 7462 680, [sarasinishtaj1@gmail.com](mailto:sarasinishtaj1@gmail.com) or my mentor, Dr. Vanda Bazdan at this number and/or email: +385 91 5503 504, [vanda.bazdan@croatia.rit.edu](mailto:vanda.bazdan@croatia.rit.edu).

Sincerely,

Sara Sinistaj



Please read each statement carefully, refer to the rating scale provided, and mark the answer that best describes the company/organization in which you are currently employed.

1. My company sets green goals for its employees.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
2. My company considers candidates' green attitudes in recruitment and selection.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
3. My company provides employees with green training to promote green values.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
4. My company provides employees with green training to develop employees' knowledge and skills required for green management.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
5. My company considers employees' workplace green behavior in performance appraisals.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
6. My company relates employees' workplace green behaviors to rewards and compensation.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
7. My company considers employees' workplace green behaviors in promotion.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
8. My company publicly publishes an environmental policy.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
9. My company emphasizes observing environmental regulations and laws.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much

10. My company participates in local or community environmental activities.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
11. My company promotes environmental measures in the workplace.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
12. My company requests employees to consider environmentally friendly products when making purchase decisions.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
13. My company emphasizes energy-saving policies and measures.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
14. My company demands waste volume reduction.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
15. My company emphasizes resource recycling.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much

Please read each statement carefully, refer to the rating scale provided, and mark the answer that best describes you/your attitudes.

1. I feel a personal obligation to do whatever I can to prevent environmental degradation.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
2. I feel a sense of personal obligation to take action to stop wasting resources.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
3. Business and industry should reduce their waste production to help protect the environment.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
4. The government should put pressure on businesses to do a better job in protecting environment.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
5. I feel morally obliged to save energy, regardless of what others do.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
6. feel obliged to bear the environment and nature in mind in my daily behavior.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
7. Before I get off work, I turn off the electric appliances, such as computers, printers, copy machines, etc.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
8. When the office is not in use, I turn off the light.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
9. I use my own cup instead of disposable ones at work.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much

10. I reduce using paper by printing double-sided.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
11. I turn off the light or electricity when I don't need it.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
12. I save water.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
13. I take stairs instead of taking elevators when moving between 2-3 floors.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much
14. I sort and recycle garbage.	1 Not at all	2 Only a little	3 To some extent	4 Rather much	5 Very much

Please fill in the demographic information below.

- What is your gender?  
A. Female      B. Male      C. Other (please specify)
- What is your age?  
A. 18 or under    B. 19-30    C. 31-50    D. 51-65    E. 66 or older
- What is the highest level of formal or school education that you have completed?  
A. Elementary school      B. High school      C. Associate's Degree  
D. Bachelor's Degree      E. Master's Degree      F. Doctoral Degree
- What is your current country of residence?  
A. Albania      B. Bosnia and Herzegovina    C. Croatia      D. Kosovo  
E. Montenegro      F. Serbia      G. Other (please specify)
- The organization you work for is in which of the following?  
A. Public sector      B. Private sector    C. Not-for-profit sector  
D. Other (please specify)
- Which of the following categories best describes the industry you primarily work in?

- A. Utilities
- B. Computer and Electronics Manufacturing
- C. Wholesale
- D. Transportation and Warehousing
- E. Software
- F. Broadcasting
- G. Other Information Industry
- H. Real Estate, Rental, Leasing
- I. Primary/Secondary Education
- J. Health Care and Social Assistance
- K. Hotel and Food Services
- L. Legal Services
- M. Other Manufacturing
- N. Retail
- O. Publishing
- P. Telecommunications
- Q. Information Services and Data Processing
- R. Finance and Insurance
- S. College, University and Adult Education
- T. Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- U. Government and Public Administration
- V. Scientific and Technical Services
- W. Other Industry (please specify)

7. Which of the following best describes your role in the organization you work for?

- A. Upper Management    B. Middle Management    C. Junior Management
- D. Administrative Staff    E. Support Staff    F. Trained Professional
- G. Consultant    H. Temporary Employee    I. Researcher
- J. Self-employed    K. Other (please specify)

8. How long have you been working in the current organization?

- A. Less than a year    B. 1-3 years    C. 3-6 years    D. 6-10 years    E. 10-20 years
- F. 20+ years

9. What is the size of the organization you currently work for?

- A. Micro (1-10 employees)    B. Small (11-50 employees)
- C. Medium (51-250 employees)    D. Large (251+ employees)