



**“Green CSR, Organizational Support and Employee Engagement in Hotels:
A Review and Theoretical Model”**

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Abstract

Background / Objectives:

Employee engagement is a critical factor in the hotel industry, influencing performance, retention, and service quality. This paper examines employee engagement in the context of Green Corporate Social Responsibility (Green CSR) and Perceived Organizational Support (POS), exploring how these factors shape engagement among hotel employees. Additionally, it proposes a theoretical model illustrating the relationships among Green CSR, POS, and employee engagement.

Methods / Review Approach:

A systematic literature review was conducted, encompassing 30–40 empirical and conceptual studies published over the last decade, with a focus on hotels and hospitality. Studies were included based on (i) relevance to hotel settings, (ii) explicit treatment of Green CSR or environmental CSR, and (iii) discussion of organizational support or perceived support. The review examined antecedents of various dimensions of engagement, including emotional, behavioral, and green work engagement.

Findings:

The review indicates that Green CSR initiatives—such as environmental sustainability practices, resource conservation, and green building initiatives—positively influence employee engagement, particularly when employees perceive these practices as authentic and aligned with organizational values. Organizational support, including leadership involvement, provision of resources, training, and supportive HR policies, acts as both a direct driver and a mediator/moderator of the Green CSR–Engagement relationship. Individual factors (e.g., personal values, environmental commitment) and job characteristics (e.g., role clarity, autonomy in green tasks) further shape engagement levels. Despite growing research, gaps remain regarding mediating and moderating mechanisms, cross-cultural variations, longitudinal studies, and standardized metrics for “green engagement.” The proposed theoretical model suggests that



Green CSR influences employee engagement directly and indirectly through POS, with employee-level and job-related variables acting as moderators or mediators.

Practical Implications:

Hotel managers are encouraged to integrate Green CSR into organizational values, ensure visible leadership support, provide adequate resources and training, and align HR policies with environmental objectives. Such strategies can enhance employee engagement, reduce turnover, and improve both employee satisfaction and service performance.

Contribution / Value:

This paper synthesizes current knowledge on the interplay between Green CSR and Organizational Support in fostering employee engagement within hotels, identifies key research gaps, and offers a theoretical framework to guide future empirical studies and managerial practice.

1. Introduction

Recent technological advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) have revolutionized business paradigms by embedding AI technologies into service delivery to enhance efficiency, reduce operational costs, and improve overall performance (Hui et al., 2024; Liang & Li, 2022; Malik et al., 2021). In the service industry, AI has significantly enhanced operations through automation of routine tasks, improved customer service, and data-driven decision-making (Khan et al., 2023). For instance, AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants enable 24/7 customer support with much faster response times than human staff. Additionally, predictive analytics and machine learning algorithms optimize supply chains, manage inventories, and forecast demand, resulting in cost savings and better resource allocation (Oseni et al., 2021). AI-powered tools can also analyze vast datasets to uncover patterns, generate actionable insights, and deliver personalized customer experiences (Khan, 2023).

Despite these efficiencies, reports by Deloitte (2024) and IBM (2024) highlight employee skepticism toward AI adoption in the service sector, primarily due to concerns over job security, skill relevance, and the need for reskilling or upskilling to remain competitive (McKinsey, 2024). Employees may also grapple with ethical implications and transparency issues in AI deployment, further contributing to their apprehensions (IBM, 2024).

In the hospitality sector, challenges persist across functional areas such as marketing, operations, finance, human resources, and technology. Key issues include standardization, rising land costs, social media influence, and adoption of online technologies (Dhiraj et al., 2023). Operational challenges, such as the high energy consumption in food preparation, highlight inefficiencies, with up to 40% of energy wasted due to poor utilization. Workforce-related issues, including high turnover and attrition, skill shortages, and work-visa restrictions, exacerbate labor scarcity, particularly for entry-level positions (Bharwani & Butt, 2012). Recruitment, training, and retention remain persistent concerns, while revenue pressures from food and beverage operations and high commissions from online travel agencies further strain hotel operations. Labour demand is expected to rise by 33% in Canada by 2030, reflecting a broader global trend in the



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hospitality industry. Additionally, sustainable development calls for green hospitality, labor cost management, multicultural workforce integration, and higher education to meet industry demands (Jin-zhao & Jing, 2009).

Employee engagement is a critical factor for hotel performance, retention, and service quality, particularly in the context of sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize the importance of creating positive and sustainable impacts on the economy, society, and the planet. While CSR and sustainability have been part of the tourism and hospitality discourse since the early 1990s, academic research has increasingly focused on their role in promoting SDGs following the UN's endorsement of the agenda (Kolk et al., 2017; Seifi & Crowther, 2020). Businesses are expected to act responsibly, address global social, economic, and environmental challenges, and integrate strategies to mitigate the negative impacts of their operations (Rodriguez-Fernandez, 2016; Borgert et al., 2020). Integrating CSR strategically can enhance performance across the economic, social, and environmental pillars of sustainability (Wang et al., 2016).

Environmental sustainability has gained heightened global attention due to climate change awareness, lobbying activities, and supportive corporate and governmental measures. Green initiatives offer both ecological and economic benefits, and stakeholders increasingly demand environmental accountability. Green human resource management (GHRM) plays a pivotal role in promoting eco-friendly practices, aligning employee behavior with organizational environmental objectives, and enhancing sustainability performance (Hameed et al., 2020; Rehman et al., 2022). Environmental challenges, such as air and water pollution, climate change, and excessive energy consumption, require coordinated corporate responses (Kraus et al., 2020; Nichols et al., 2022). Well-designed environmental regulations can further enhance corporate competitiveness while reducing environmental impact (Bresciani et al., 2021; Qin et al., 2019). GHRM encompasses HR practices that integrate environmental considerations, including recruitment, training, performance assessment, and incentives, to foster employee engagement in sustainability initiatives (Abid et al., 2021; AlZgool et al., 2021). Developing green capabilities within organizations allows for the adaptation and utilization of internal and external resources to promote sustainability, enhance employee well-being and productivity, and achieve long-term business growth (Afum et al., 2020; Jahangir, 2023; Ministry of Commerce, 2024).

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory posits that a company's ability to achieve a competitive advantage depends on leveraging strategic resources that are valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate (Barney, 1991; Amit & Schoemaker, 1993). Leadership is considered a strategic resource, particularly for environmental management (Zhou et al., 2018). Transformational leadership (TL) and Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) have been linked to enhanced organizational performance, innovation, employee motivation, and green behaviors (Della Peruta et al., 2018; Donate & Sánchez de Pablo, 2015; Çop et al., 2021). GTL encourages employees to exceed expectations in achieving environmental objectives, fostering eco-friendly behaviors, and improving both psychological and organizational outcomes (Mittal & Dhar, 2016; Kusi et al., 2021). Leaders play a critical role in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors, and implementing GTL can cultivate a culture of engagement and sustainability within organizations (Chen & Chang, 2013; Singh et al., 2020).



Research Objectives

- "To examine the impact of Green CSR initiatives and Perceived Organizational Support on Green Work Engagement in the hotel industry."

"To develop a theoretical model illustrating how leadership and job-related factors influence the relationship between Green CSR initiatives and employee engagement."

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) represents the integration of ethical, social, and environmental considerations into business operations, balancing the interests of organizational stakeholders (Carroll, 1991). CSR theories have evolved over time, reflecting changing perspectives on the role of businesses in society. Scholars broadly classify CSR theories into five categories: early understanding, instrumental, political, integrative, and ethical (Amaeshi et al., 2013; Garriga & Melé, 2004; Ibrahim et al., 2023; Shwetzter et al., 2019; Torres & Augusto, 2021). The early understanding phase emphasized philanthropy and societal contributions without formalized strategies (Garriga & Melé, 2004).

Over time, CSR has moved from a philanthropic approach to a strategic necessity, allowing companies to gain competitive advantage while addressing social and environmental concerns (Latif & Sajjad, 2018). The concept is largely informed by stakeholder theory, which asserts that organizations have obligations toward a broad spectrum of stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). CSR is increasingly framed as an extension of corporate governance, with businesses expected to consider the broader societal impacts of their activities (European Commission, 2011; Theodoulidis et al., 2017).

2.2 Hospitality and Tourism Industry Context

The hospitality and tourism (H&T) industry is a major contributor to global economic growth. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2022), it accounted for 7.6% of global GDP and created 22 million jobs, with market value projected to reach USD 9 trillion by 2027 at an annual growth rate of 3% (Market Data Forecast, 2023). However, the industry's rapid expansion has led to substantial environmental challenges, particularly in hotels, including excessive consumption of energy and water and resource wastage (Filimonau et al., 2024).

The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed vulnerabilities in the H&T sector. Employee stress, physical and psychological health issues, and declining workplace confidence were widespread, affecting engagement and productivity (Wong, 2021; Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021; Zhong et al., 2021). In Mongolia, operational capacities were severely constrained, with labor shortages reported in 78% of tour operators, 68% of tourist camps, 25% of hotels, and 50% of restaurants (The Ministry of Environment, 2022). These challenges underscored the critical role of skilled and committed employees in ensuring organizational resilience and recovery (Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021; Bichler et al., 2022).

2.3 Green CSR and Sustainable Practices

2.3.1 Green CSR Initiatives

Modern CSR aims to achieve corporate objectives while minimizing negative impacts on natural, social, and cultural environments (Chan, 2011). Integration of economic, social, and



environmental responsibilities—commonly referred to as the “triple bottom line” of People, Planet, and Profit—is central to contemporary CSR (Elkington, 1998; Kolk, 2010). Aguinis and Glavas (2013, p. 339) describe CSR as context-specific organizational actions and policies addressing stakeholder expectations while ensuring performance across economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

In hospitality, CSR extends beyond compliance, integrating social, environmental, human rights, and consumer concerns into core operations. Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) facilitates this by embedding environmental principles into HR practices such as recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and compensation, fostering employees’ green consciousness (Ahmed et al., 2021; Jamil et al., 2023).

The relationship between GHRM, circular economy, green organizational culture, and resilience is often examined through Resource-Based View (RBV) and Stakeholder Theory. RBV posits that competitive advantage arises from resources that are valuable, rare, and unique (Barney, 1991; Sahu et al., 2024). GHRM practices promoting environmentally responsible behavior constitute valuable resources, while circular economy strategies supporting resource efficiency and waste reduction are rare and unique. Stakeholder Theory emphasizes the inclusion of employees, customers, suppliers, and communities in decision-making (Friedman & Miles, 2002). Aligning GHRM, circular economy, and stakeholder interests fosters positive organizational culture, enhances environmental outcomes, and strengthens long-term resilience.

Despite established links between GHRM and circular economy (Jabbour et al., 2019; Marrucci et al., 2021; Obeidat et al., 2023; Subramanian & Suresh, 2022), gaps remain, including limited understanding of mechanisms linking GHRM to resilience in hospitality (Ren et al., 2018), underexplored moderating roles of green organizational culture (Linnenluecke & Griffiths, 2010; Roscoe et al., 2019; Wang, 2019), and lack of empirical studies combining GHRM, circular economy, and resilience in emerging economies (Sorin & Sivarajah, 2021; Le et al., 2022). Additionally, resilience research often neglects environmental and social dimensions vital for sustainable development (Perramon et al., 2024).

2.3.2 Green Work Engagement (GWE)

Work engagement refers to employees’ active involvement and strong commitment to their work, characterized by enthusiasm and proactive behavior (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Khairy et al., 2023a). Green Work Engagement (GWE) extends this concept to environmentally responsible behaviors, reflecting dedication to sustainability and eco-friendly practices (Aboramadan, 2022; Bhutto et al., 2021). GWE encompasses cognitive focus, emotional dedication, and organizational belonging (Marini et al., 2023; Khairy et al., 2024).

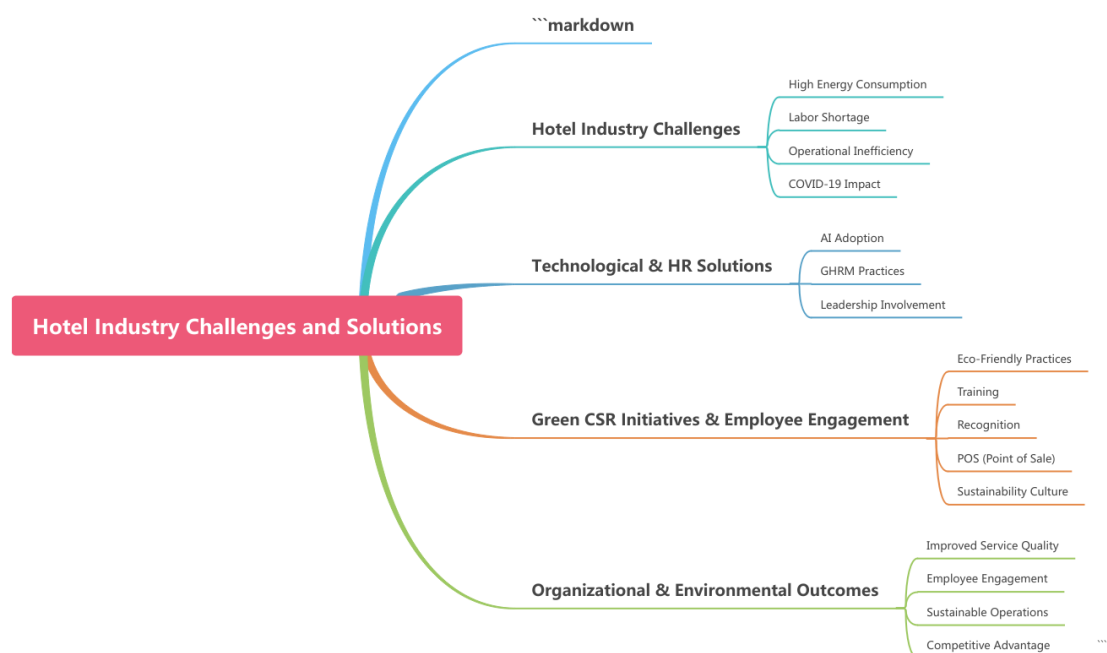
Leadership plays a crucial role in fostering GWE. Inclusive and transformational leadership encourages trust, psychological safety, skill development, autonomy, and participation in decision-making (Carmeli et al., 2010; Hollander, 2012; Bannay et al., 2020; Zeng et al., 2020). Green Inclusive Leadership (GIL) inspires employees to adopt environmentally responsible behaviors, highlighting the direct influence of leadership on sustainability engagement (Abdou et al., 2023).

2.3.3 Willingness to Pay for Sustainable Tourism (WTP)

Willingness to Pay (WTP) refers to the maximum amount consumers are willing to spend on services meeting ethical or environmental standards. Eco-certifications such as Green Globe, LEED, or ISO 14001 enhance trust and signal environmental compliance, positively affecting WTP (Han, Hsu, & Lee, 2009). Energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction also increase consumer willingness to pay (Millar & Baloglu, 2011; Lee et al., 2010). However, an intention-behavior gap often exists due to price premiums or limited awareness of certified options (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Integrating the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) with moral norms helps explain how attitudes, subjective norms, perceived control, and ethical considerations shape WTP, guiding eco-certified service marketing strategies.

2.3.4 Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) refers to employees' beliefs that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). POS enhances engagement, especially when organizational initiatives align with employees' values. In Green CSR contexts, POS ensures that sustainability initiatives are perceived as meaningful, fostering motivation, commitment, and discretionary effort (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Hotels demonstrating high POS through training, recognition, and leadership involvement create an environment where employees feel valued and aligned with the organization's sustainability mission.



“Figure 1: Contextual Overview of Green CSR, Employee Engagement, and Sustainability in the Hotel Industry”

Source: Authors' Own



3. Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature highlights strong links between Green CSR, GHRM, GWE, WTP, and POS. Green CSR and GHRM enhance employee engagement and sustainability outcomes, while leadership and organizational support strengthen these relationships. Despite this, gaps remain:

Limited integrated studies combining GHRM, circular economy, and resilience in emerging economies.

- Underexplored moderating role of green organizational culture.
- Lack of research connecting GWE, POS, and consumer WTP within the hospitality sector.
- Need for comprehensive framework-based studies in H&T addressing sustainability, engagement, and economic outcomes.

4. Theoretical Model / Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework can link Green CSR initiatives, GHRM practices, employee engagement (GWE), and sustainability outcomes, integrating RBV, Stakeholder Theory, and TPB. This framework guides future empirical research in hospitality, bridging organizational practices, employee behavior, and consumer responses.

4.1 Description of Relationships:

Green CSR → Employee Engagement:

Green CSR initiatives, such as energy and water conservation, waste management, and community involvement, directly enhance employee engagement by fostering a sense of purpose and organizational pride.

Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support (POS):

POS strengthens the relationship between Green CSR and engagement. Employees who perceive organizational support feel empowered to contribute meaningfully to sustainability goals, which enhances engagement outcomes.

Moderating Role of Leadership:

Leadership styles, particularly Green Transformational and Inclusive Leadership, influence how effectively employees engage with CSR initiatives. Leaders act as role models, provide guidance, and inspire environmentally responsible behavior.

Influence of Job-Related Factors:

Personal, cultural, and role-specific differences (e.g., luxury vs. budget hotels, guest-facing vs. back-office roles) shape the intensity and nature of engagement. These factors moderate the impact of CSR and POS on engagement.

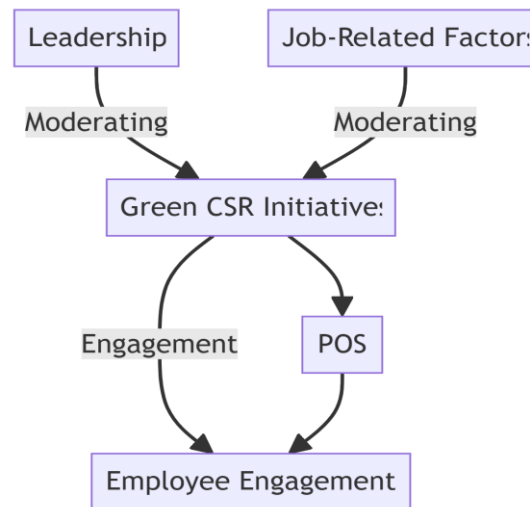


Figure 2: Purpose: Visual and theoretical representation of relationships
Source: Authors' Own

5. Discussion

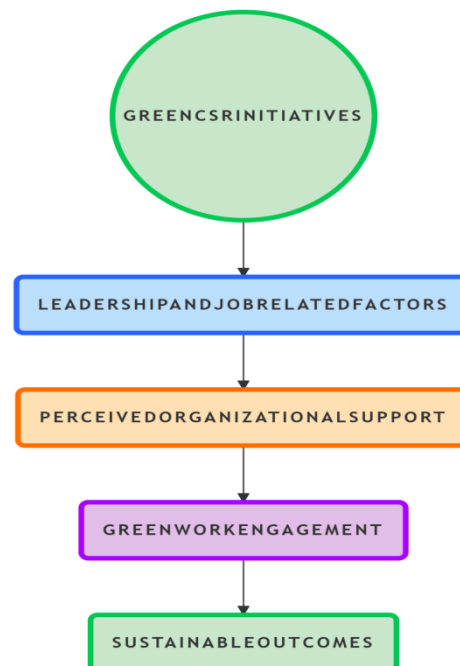


Figure 3 :“Proposed Model Linking Green CSR, Organizational Support, Leadership, and Green Work Engagement”
Source: Authors' Own

1. Variability in Green Work Engagement among Hotel Employees

Employee engagement in the hotel industry is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by personal, cultural, and job-related factors. When extended to Green Work Engagement (GWE),



these factors determine the degree to which employees actively participate in environmentally responsible behaviors and sustainability initiatives within the organization.

Personal Differences: Individual motivations, personality traits, career aspirations, and work-life balance preferences play a critical role in shaping engagement. Employees with high intrinsic motivation, a strong sense of purpose, and alignment with organizational sustainability goals tend to exhibit higher GWE. Conversely, employees facing personal stressors, misalignment with job expectations, or lack of awareness of environmental initiatives may demonstrate lower engagement levels (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Khairy et al., 2023a).

Cultural Differences: Hotels often employ a diverse workforce spanning regional and international backgrounds. Cultural norms influence attitudes toward authority, communication, teamwork, and service delivery. Employees from collectivist cultures may prefer collaborative work and collective recognition, while those from individualistic backgrounds may value autonomy and personal achievement. This cultural diversity shapes engagement patterns and determines how staff respond to sustainability initiatives (Freeman, 1984).

Job-Based Differences: Engagement also varies by role, operational complexity, and accommodation type:

Employees in luxury resorts face higher service expectations, longer working hours, and intensive guest interactions, which can increase stress but also foster engagement when adequate support mechanisms are provided.

Staff in budget hotels or hostels experience fluctuating guest volumes, limited resources, and broader operational responsibilities, which affect motivation and GWE differently.

Specialized roles such as housekeeping, front office, and food and beverage differ in autonomy, recognition, and workload, influencing their engagement with green initiatives.

The diversity of accommodation types—eco-hotels, boutique hotels, resorts, hostels, and serviced apartments—creates a complex engagement landscape. For instance, employees in eco-hotels may show heightened GWE due to alignment with sustainability practices, while staff in traditional hotels may prioritize operational efficiency and service quality.

2. Impact of Green CSR Initiatives on Green Work Engagement

Green Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives have emerged as a critical determinant of employee engagement in the hospitality sector. Green CSR refers to environmentally sustainable practices implemented by hotels to reduce ecological footprints while promoting social responsibility. Common initiatives include energy and water conservation, waste management programs, renewable energy adoption, responsible sourcing, and community support (Ahmed et al., 2021; Jamil et al., 2023).

Employees experience enhanced GWE when they perceive their organization as socially responsible and environmentally conscious. Engagement with green initiatives fosters pride, purpose, and organizational commitment, as employees recognize that their work contributes to a larger societal and environmental cause beyond profit (Aboramadan, 2022; Bhutto et al., 2021). Research indicates that hotels implementing Green CSR initiatives achieve higher employee engagement, as staff identify with organizational values and goals. Examples include smart energy-saving systems, eco-friendly housekeeping practices, and sustainable food sourcing, which empower employees and instill a sense of pride. Guest-facing employees benefit indirectly as improved sustainability practices enhance customer satisfaction, reinforcing employees' sense of accomplishment and engagement (Marini et al., 2023).



From a Resource-Based View (RBV) perspective, GHRM practices and Green CSR initiatives constitute valuable, rare, and inimitable organizational resources, contributing to sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Sahu et al., 2024). Engaged employees become active contributors to these resources by promoting sustainable behaviors that align with organizational goals.

3. Role of Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) refers to employees' beliefs that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). POS strengthens the relationship between Green CSR initiatives and GWE by providing structural and emotional support for employees to participate meaningfully in sustainability practices.

Key Components of Organizational Support:

Induction and Training: Structured orientation programs ensure new employees understand sustainability goals and operational expectations, promoting early engagement with green initiatives.

Continuous Skill Development: Ongoing training on eco-friendly practices, guest service excellence, and operational efficiency reinforces engagement and develops environmentally conscious competencies.

Recognition and Reward Programs: Incentives for sustainability practices, teamwork, and service excellence motivate employees to actively participate in CSR initiatives.

Leadership Involvement: Active leadership support, particularly through Green Inclusive Leadership (GIL), demonstrates the importance of integrating environmental practices into daily operations and encourages employees to align their behavior with organizational sustainability goals (Abdou et al., 2023).

POS ensures that employees perceive sustainability initiatives as meaningful and supported, fostering motivation, commitment, and discretionary effort that translates into higher GWE (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

4. Practical Implications for Hotels

To maximize Green CSR effectiveness and employee engagement, hotels should adopt targeted strategies:

New Employees: Induction programs should emphasize sustainability goals, realistic job previews, and orientation on eco-friendly practices.

Existing Employees: Team-building exercises, recognition programs, and involvement in sustainability-related decision-making can reinforce engagement.

Continuous Alignment: Integrating CSR into daily operations, performance appraisals, and standard operating procedures ensures consistent reinforcement of sustainable practices.

These strategies help tailor interventions based on engagement variability and ensure alignment between employees' motivations, cultural backgrounds, and job-specific expectations.

5. Challenges and External Influences

Implementing Green CSR initiatives and fostering GWE is not without challenges:

Internal Challenges:

Employee resistance due to additional workload, limited awareness, or misalignment with personal values.



Organizational cultures that do not prioritize sustainability may undermine engagement efforts.

External Challenges:

Political and legal factors such as local regulations, taxation policies, and government incentives influence the feasibility of sustainability practices.

Market trends: Increasing consumer preference for eco-friendly hotels can enhance employees' pride and engagement when sustainability is embedded in the business strategy.

Technological advances: AI-powered revenue management, contactless check-in, smart room technology, and digital concierge services reduce operational pressure and improve employee efficiency.

PESTEL Factors (Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, Technological, Environmental, Legal) shape organizational strategies and employee experiences, influencing engagement in complex ways.

Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach, integrating leadership, GHRM practices, POS, and organizational culture to create an environment conducive to high GWE.

6. Linking Green Work Engagement to Sustainable Outcomes

Employees' engagement with Green CSR initiatives is not only beneficial for organizational performance but also contributes to broader sustainability goals. Higher GWE results in:

Enhanced resource efficiency and reduced environmental impact.

Improved service quality and customer satisfaction through responsible practices.

Development of a culture of sustainability that strengthens long-term organizational resilience.

By fostering GWE through Green CSR and POS, hotels can simultaneously achieve economic, social, and environmental objectives, aligning with the triple bottom line framework and ensuring sustainable competitive advantage (Elkington, 1998; Aguinis & Glavas, 2013).

6. Conclusion

Employee engagement in the hotel industry is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon shaped by personal, cultural, and job-related factors. This study confirms that variability in engagement arises from individual motivations, career aspirations, cultural backgrounds, and specific job roles within hotels. Recognizing these nuances is essential for designing targeted strategies that foster meaningful engagement among diverse employees.

Green Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) emerges as a critical driver of engagement. Hotels implementing environmentally sustainable practices—such as energy and water conservation, responsible sourcing, and community initiatives—instill a sense of purpose, pride, and organizational commitment among employees. **Perceived Organizational Support (POS)** further strengthens this relationship; when employees perceive that the organization values their contributions, provides resources, training, and recognition, and actively supports sustainability initiatives, engagement levels increase significantly.

Leadership involvement and job-related factors act as key moderators, ensuring that employees are motivated, supported, and able to align their efforts with organizational goals. The conceptual model proposed in this study illustrates the dynamic interplay between Green CSR, POS, leadership, and job-related factors in driving employee engagement.

By embedding sustainability into strategic and operational frameworks and cultivating supportive organizational cultures, hotels can enhance employee engagement, service quality,



operational efficiency, and overall reputation. Ultimately, this study reinforces that employee engagement is not merely an outcome of HR practices but a dynamic process shaped by ethical, environmental, and organizational considerations. For the hotel industry, investing in Green CSR initiatives, POS, and leadership development represents both a moral imperative and a strategic pathway to cultivating a motivated, committed, and high-performing workforce capable of delivering exceptional guest experiences.

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