

THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE GREEN TRAINING ON HOTEL ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE IN THE EGYPTIAN HOTELS

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ABSTRACT

Considering the difficult challenges facing the hospitality industry, environmental hotel performance becomes an important issue facing the hospitality industry to satisfy customers' needs. However, employee training plays a critical role in hotels' success, lack of research existed to identify deeply the impact of green employee training on environmental hotel performance. The current paper aims to reveal the influence of both perceived access to green training (PAGT) and perceived support for green training (PSGT) on hotel environmental performance. With a sample of 369 hotel employees and using structural equation model analyses, the results highlighted the positive impact of both PAGT and PSGT on environmental hotel performance. Drawing on these findings, theoretical and managerial implications, and related future research are discussed.

Keywords: *Green Training, Green Hotel, Environmental Hotel Performance, Hospitality Industry*

INTRODUCTION

The global hospitality industry faces several challenges due to the diverse environmental changes resulting in the severe competition (Alharthi *et al.*, 2019; Esteban-Lloret, Aragón-Sánchez, & Carrasco-Hernández, 2018), the Egyptian hospitality industry experiences the same situation. After the events of the 25th January (the Egyptian Revolution) the Egyptian tourism and hospitality sectors have been highly unsatisfactory influenced, resulting in high employee turnover and severe competitions among hotels and tourism business and severe competitions among hotels and tourism business (Abu-Elhassan, Elsayed, & Soliman, 2016; Abuelhassan, Elsayed, & Soliman, 2017; El-Hassan, Elsayed, & Soliman, 2015). Thus, the Egyptian hoteliers launched campaigns to create new ideas in order to enhance the quality of services and products (Alareefi *et al.*, 2019; Alsaadi *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, the past few decades saw an important attention by both governments and organizations regarding the environmental issue (Robertson & Barling, 2017). Nowadays, the hospitality market and customers force hospitality businesses to increase their awareness and experience of handling environmental issues (Pham, Tučková, & Jabbour, 2019).

For instance, the hospitality sector such as hotels should enhance their green efforts to educate employees and consumers to maintain a higher level of conserving water and energy in their operations, and declining waste (Bohdanowicz, Zientara, & Novotna, 2011).

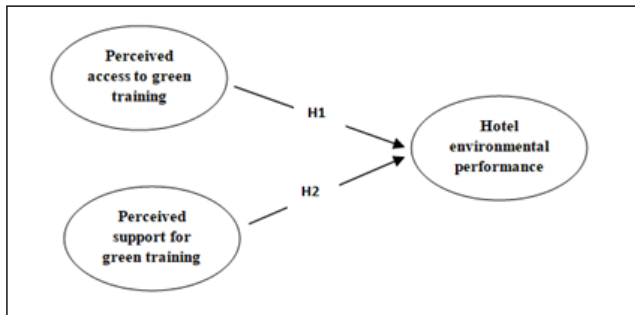
Thus, a dynamic approach is required in these current circumstances through merging Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices representing in the availability of green training with supervisor support for green training to adopt high environmental performance. As employee training is considered as a significant factor in the success of organizations - developing and maintaining sustainable competitive advantage (Kim *et al.*, 2019; Koch & McGrath, 1996; Alshamsi *et al.*, 2019).

Green marketing is growing fast in the hospitality industry due to the increasing guests' interest to green hotels, this pushed several past studies to investigate hotel companies' environmental management practice in terms of water preservation and energy saving (Hsiao, Chuang, Kuo, & Yu, 2014), customers and employees' perspectives (Kim & Choi, 2013), customer attitudes and behaviors concerning hotels' environmentally friendly practices (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007), and environmental performance and Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) (Kim *et al.*, 2019). However, regardless of the impact of employee green training on hotels' environmental performance, there is a lack of empirical research that link both access to and support for green training to environmental performance (refer to figure 1). On the light of the important role of HRM's training activities and supervisor support for training in improving organizational effectiveness (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010; Sangkala, Ahmed, & Pahi, 2016), this study tries to

investigate the like between Perceived Access to Green Training (PAGT) and Perceived Support for Green Training (PSGT) to the effectiveness of hotel's environmental performance.

Theoretical framework and hypothesis formulation

Figure 1: The Supposed Hypotheses



LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The relationship between green training and hotel environmental performance

Drawing on the theory of Human capital (Riley, Michael, & Mahoney, 2017) which refers to formal education, work experience, workplace instruction, and on-the-job training (Miller, Xu, & Mehrotra, 2015), the investment in hotels' employees through the training can bring favorable economic value as it develops and increases the employees' knowledge, skills and behavior, thus, enhancing their environmental performance. Yet, in some previous studies (Grip & Sieben, 2005; Riley, Michael, & Mahoney, 2017), it was found that investing in human capital had positive effect on productivity-related measures, but the positive influence on organizations' environmental performance is unclear (GHRM).

Depending on the definition of training (Buckley & Caple, 1995), employee training is a systematically planned and organized work to provide employees in a learning experience with the desired knowledge, skill, attitude, and behavior, to carry out their job tasks professionally. Past research has reported that the productivity and performance of an organization are significantly influenced though the investment of employee training (Elnaga & Imran, 2013; Nadeem, 2010). Thus, it is important for fostering hotel environmental performance investing in hotels' human resources through providing training in green desire skills, knowledge, and behaviors. However, researchers' suggestions (Bulut & Culha, 2010; Ehrhardt *et al.*, 2011) are presented highlighting the importance of consistent efforts which are required for effective and adequate

employee training to achieve organizational goals with a higher level of professions and confidence. In spite of this, very few studies have investigated the positive impact of Human resources Department's green training practices on hotel environmental performance (Phama, Tučková, & Jabbour, 2019).

2. The relationship between perceived access to green training (PSGT) and hotel environmental performance

Providing employee training in desirable knowledge and skills is believed to be in the most significant human resource of the hotels because employee training can enhance employees' satisfaction level relate to professional and personal development (Alkhateri *et al.*, 2018; Alshehhi, Abuelhassan, & Nusari, 2019; Jaworski *et al.*, 2018), as well as employee training is considered as an effective method to improve hotels' performance and service quality (Alsaadi *et al.*, 2019; Dhar, 2015; Karatepe, 2013).

Regarding to GHRM practices, employees are provided with green training including the needed information, skills, attitudes, and behaviors concerning environmental practices (Jabbour, Santos, & Nagano, 2010) to meet the hotels' environmental targets through increasing employees' awareness of environmental standards, issues and solutions and encouraging them to adopt proactive attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Daily & Huang, 2001). For instance, providing employees with green training related to environmental policies and standards increases employees' awareness, knowledge, and skills regarding environmental issues and solutions (Govindarajulu & Daily, 2004), thus, it will boost employees' voluntary environmental behaviors (Boiral, 2009), and grasp and decline negative environmental impacts (Vidal-Salazar, Cordón-Pozo, & Ferrón-Vilchez, 2012), and foster positive environmental participation (Pless, Maak, & Stahl, 2012).

As the investment in employee training is an important topic of current management function in the hospitality industry (Bulut & Culha, 2010). Therefore, access to green training is considered as the core factor of HRM functions, along with the other HRM activities (Bulut & Culha, 2010; Tanova & Nadiri, 2005). The hospitality business which target heavily achieving the competitive advantage (Abdulla *et al.*, 2019; Mohamud *et al.*, 2017; Sudigdo, Khalifa, & Abuelhassan, 2019) they should understand the importance of training in enhancing the employees' performance (Alharthi *et al.*, 2020; Esteban-Lloret, Aragón-Sánchez, & Carrasco-Hernández, 2018). Previous research presented the great

benefits of training programs on both employee and organizational performance (Alshehhi, Abuelhassan, & Bhaumik, 2019; Esteban-Lloret, Aragón-Sánchez, & Carrasco-Hernández, 2018; Samwel, 2018). To cope with the current and recent challenges more easily and smoothly, it should develop a more conducive learning environment through effective training programs (Alsaadi *et al.*, 2019; Tai, 2006).

Does not only PAGT improve the abilities of the employees' thinking but develop their creativity to take better decision in time and in result performing productively and professionally (Farooq & Khan, 2011), by changing the old insufficient behaviors to effective and efficient behaviors (Talwar & Thakur, 2016). Drawing on many past studies, it was found that there is a strong positive relationship between HRM practices, and employee and organizational performance (Guest, 1997; Mohamed *et al.*, 2018; Vlachos, 2008). The current study suggests that PAGT as a part of HRM practices can influence positively hotel environmental performance. There are some pieces of evidence for this suggestion. It was found that access to training influences the organizational performance and it is consider to be a significant element in the fulfillment of organizational goals (Khan, Khan, & Khan, 2011; Russell, Terborg, & Powers, 1985).

Furthermore, the probability of providing access to a training program becomes a substantial predictor to favorable organizational outcomes (e.g., strong corporate culture) and desired performance (e.g., Bulut & Culha, 2010; Ehrhardt *et al.*, 2011; Elnaga & Imran, 2013; Esteban-Lloret, Aragón-Sánchez, & Carrasco-Hernández, 2018; Talwar & Thakur, 2016). Finally, in the hospitality context, perceived access to training has a positive relationship with service quality (Dhar, 2015). Accordingly, this study supposes that:

H₁: Perceived access to green training positively influences hotel environmental performance.

3. The relationship between perceived support for green training (PSGT) and hotel environmental performance

Leaders are doing best to enhance their subordinates' capabilities through developing the effective training programs for their subordinates to improve the desired knowledge, skills and abilities to meet organizational goals (Farooq & Khan, 2011). Thus, this study supposes that PSGT can positively influence hotel environmental performance. There are previous studies demonstrated the potential benefits for organizations which may be given from supervisor support to

encourage training participation (Alkhateri, Khalifa, & Abuelhassan, 2019). Supervisor support for training can positively impact training participation (Noe & Wilk, 1993), and both affective organizational commitment and the service quality in the hospitality industry (Dhar, 2015). Depending on past research (Noe & Wilk, 1993) PSGT can impact effectively employees' decisions to participate in green training which will boost their feelings of attachment to hotels and their development and career planning resulting in enhancing their green behaviors towards hotel environmental performance. Accordingly, this study suggests that:

H₂: Perceived supervisor support for green training positively influences hotel environmental performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Sample and data collection

With at least one-year work experience, the research data was collected from hotel employees in Hurghada, one of the important tourist destinations in Egypt such as Cairo and Sharm El-Sheikh (Moneim, Gad, & Hassan, 2019). Hurghada four and five-star hotels were only engaged in this study because they are providing green training and environmental protection training. Hurghada contains 70 four and five-star hotels; 23 five-star hotels and 47 four-star hotels (EHA, 2019). The general managers or human resource directors of 70 hotels were contacted to participate in the current research. He also asked some questions whether the hotels provide employee training related to environmental protection or environmental education programs. Thirty-nine hotels only provide this kind of training and 21 hotels accepted to participate in this investigation.

After the researcher obtained acceptance from the hotels' general managers, the human resources directors provide the researcher with the employees' necessary information and allow him to distribute and explain the survey to the employees during the break times. The questionnaires were randomly distributed in which each employee in each hotel received the same opportunity in the survey participation. The researcher invited 400 employees to engage in the survey. The employees were informed concerning the research purpose and confidentiality. Each questionnaire has a unique code number. Sealed collection boxes were placed in the hotels. The researcher collected the boxes.

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

Employees' Details (n= 369)	Frequency (s)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	261	70.7
Female	108	29.3
Age (in yrs)		
18 - 20	46	12.5
21-30	108	29.3
31-40	135	36.6
41-50	52	14.1
51 & above	28	7.6
Education		
Senior School	61	16.5
Diploma	136	36.9
Bachelor	166	45.0
Postgraduate	6	1.6
Tenure (in yrs)		
1-3	80	21.7
4-7	114	30.9
8-11	110	29.8
12-15	43	11.7
16 & above	22	6.0

The distributed 400 survey questionnaires and collected 369 (92.3%) complete and valid questionnaires for the analysis of the study present hypothesis. Of the 369 employees, 261 (70.7%) were male and 108 (29.3%) were female. In terms of age, most of the participants are ranging from 31 to 40 years old presenting 36.6% following by 21-30 group age presenting 29.3%. The participants' educational level is limited by senior school (16.5%), diploma (36.9%), bachelor (45%) and postgraduate (a mere 1.6%). Surprisingly, the highest work experience for those participants is ranging from 4 to 7 years (more than 30%), while, the second-highest work experience is ranging from 8 to 11 years almost 30%, see table 1.

2. Measurement

With using two bilingual academic researchers who are fluent both in English and Arabic, the questionnaire was translated from English to Arabic then re-translated into English following Brislin, Lonner, and Thorndike's (1973) technique. A Likert-type scale ranging from

“strongly disagree (1)” to “strongly agree (7)” evaluated each closed question of the access to green training, support for green training, and hotel environmental performance constructs. The researcher developed the three items of access to green training based on Dhar's (2015) items and developed the six items of support for green training depending on Bulut & Culha's (2010) items to be adapted with the research purpose. Hotel environmental performance with seven-items was adopted from (Kim *et al.*, 2019).

3. Analytic approach

Depending on the SPSS AMOS 21, the study data was analyzed. Before testing the study hypotheses, the measurement model, reliability and construct validity were conducted (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). To verify the fitness of all the measurements, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted as well as, the following measures were adopted the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) to assess the fitness of the suggested model.

RESULTS

1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 2: The Results of Measurement Model

Fit Indices	Reference Value	References	The Study Results
X2/df	< 3.00	(Bentler & Bonett, 1980)	0.936
CFI	≥ 0.9	(Medsker, Williams, & Holahan, 1994)	0.99
NFI	≥ 0.9	(Bentler & Bonett, 1980)	0.97
GFI	> 0.8	(Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993)	0.97
AGFI	> 0.8	(Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993)	0.96
RMSEA	< 0.8	(Steiger, 1990)	0.02

Table 3: The Descriptive Analysis, Variance Inflation Factor, Correlations, and Discriminant Validity of the Constructs

	Construct	Mean	S.D.	VIF	1	2	3
1	Access to Green Training	3.12	1.13	1.11	0.83		
2	Support for Green Training	3.11	1.05	1.11	0.36**	0.77	
3	Hotel Environmental Performance	3.20	1.03		0.55**	0.51**	0.76

Note: **p<0.01; The numbers in the cells of the diagonal line are AVE; VIF = Variance Inflation Factor

The findings in table 3 reveal the descriptive analysis, correlations, and discriminant validity. Hotel environmental performance is positively correlated

with perceived access to green training ($\gamma = 0.55$, $p < 0.001$) and perceived support for green training ($\gamma = 0.51$, $p < 0.001$), as well as, perceived access to green training is positively correlated with perceived support for green training ($\gamma = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$). First, to use the Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) method for estimating the model, the items of the study constructs must achieve the measure of multivariate normality. The normality test adopted the skewness and kurtosis criteria. The outcomes of skewness and kurtosis in table 4 present no departure from normality (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Due to the high correlations among the construct variables, the construct validity was conducted prior to testing the study hypotheses. Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA) was performed to test the construct validity. The results of the CFA reveal a good fit, for instance, $\chi^2 = 94.525$; $df = 101$, $\chi^2/df = 0.936$; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.02; GFI = 0.97; AGFI =

0.96; NFI = 0.97, see table 2. Secondly, other tests were adopted to ensure the construct reliable and validity. The outcomes of table 4 present that the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the study constructs is higher than 0.70 ranging from 0.907 to 0.870, thus, the study constructs are sufficiently reliable (Hair *et al.*, 1998).

Regarding the convergent validity, table 4 indicates the results of the factor loading, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) as indicators to the convergent validity. The factor loadings of all the constructs' items were significant and above 0.50, the AVE values of the study constructs are higher than 0.50 ranging from 0.583 to 0.693, and the CR values of the constructs are above 0.60 ranging from 0.901 to 0.871. Therefore, these findings confirmed the convergent validity model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

Table 4: The Convergent Validity Indicators of the Constructs and Normality

Construct	Indicators	Factor loadings	S.E.	t-value	α /CR	AVE	skew	kurtosis
Access to Green Training	AGT1	0.878	0.027	32.51***	0.870/	0.693	-0.071	-0.971
	AGT2	0.837	0.039	21.46***	0.871		-0.127	-0.975
	AGT3	0.779	0.039	19.97***			-0.105	-0.988
Support for Green Training	SGT1	0.762	0.053	14.38***	0.897/ 0.898	0.594	-0.103	-0.970
	SGT2	0.732	0.052	14.08***			-0.154	-0.976
	SGT3	0.795	0.047	16.92***			-0.146	-0.899
	SGT4	0.770	0.049	15.71***			-0.157	-0.857
	SGT5	0.773	0.050	15.46***			-0.177	-0.921
	SGT6	0.789	0.043	18.35***			-0.107	-0.989
Hotel Environmental Performance	HEP1	0.759	0.046	16.50***	0.907/ 0.901	0.583	-0.980	-0.980
	HEP2	0.754	0.048	15.71***			-0.994	-0.994
	HEP3	0.757	0.048	15.77***			-0.965	-0.965
	HEP4	0.717	0.056	12.80***			-0.915	-0.915
	HEP5	0.781	0.044	17.75***			-0.992	-0.992
	HEP6	0.791	0.041	19.29***			-0.996	-0.996
	HEP7	0.783	0.049	15.98***			-0.907	-0.907

Note: *** Significant at the 0.001 significance level; AVE represents average variance extracted; CR represents construct or composite reliability

Meanwhile, discriminant validity is revealed in table 3. The findings empirically ensure that the constructs of

the current study are distinct because the variances extracted by constructs (AVE) were higher than any

squared correlation among the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In the present study, the two independent constructs (perceived access to green training and perceived support for green training) are linearly related; hence, a variance inflation factors (VIF) analysis was conducted. The results of VIF values are lower than 5 (table 3), showing no proof of multicollinearity issues (Hair *et al.*, 2006). Thus, the results highlight that the independent variables construct have a good relationship with each other.

Additionally, the study survey was conducted just only by hotels' employee, thus, the probability of a common method biases maybe existed. Harman's one-factor test (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986) was performed to test the problem of common method bias. The results indicate that the issue of common method bias does not exist in this study because the first factor presents a variance (40.9%) is less than 50% (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

2. Structural Equation Model

Table 5: Hypotheses' Results

Hypotheses	β	S.E.	t-value	Results
1 Path from AGT to HEP	0.43**	0.045	9.56	Supported
2 Path from SGT to HEP	0.36**	0.041	8.78	Supported

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; AGT = Access to Green Training; SGT = Support for Green Training; HEP = Hotel Environmental Performance

Using MLE, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was developed to test the study hypotheses. Hypothesis₁ stated that perceived access to green training has a positive impact on hotel environmental performance. The findings from the table 5 indicated that the association between perceived access to green training and hotel environmental performance is positively significant ($\beta = 0.43$, $p < 0.01$), supporting Hypothesis₁. Meanwhile, Hypothesis₂ mentioned that perceived support for green training has a positive impact on hotel environmental performance. The findings in table 5 revealed that the link from perceived support for green training to hotel environmental performance is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.01$), supporting Hypothesis₂. Moreover, the R^2 (R-square value = 0.42) support for green training and access to green training generates a convenient variance in hotel environmental performance.

DISCUSSION

Theoretical implications

The present research recruited hotel employees as the sample and developed and empirically tested a SEM to determine the influence of employee green training

(access to green training and support for green training) on environmental hotel performance. This research has several theoretical implications.

First, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study to develop a SEM to examine the direct effects of perceived access to green training and perceived support for green training on environmental hotel performance. Second, this study enhances the literature of access to training and hotels' performance through revealing the positive impact of access to green training on environmental hotel performance. Depending on the present findings which are constant with previous studies liked the positive relationship between employee access to training and organizational commitment and service quality (Bulut & Culha, 2010; Dhar, 2015), perceived access to green training programs can enhance the elements of green environmental hotel performance through developing and boosting the environment knowledge and skills that seems to be significant for the achievement of green environmental performance. In other words, access to green training programs can be able to fill the greater the gap between the necessary environmental knowledge and skills and those possessed by the employees. Furthermore, the access to this kind of programs helps the employees to get the desired environmental techniques to perform successfully particular green practices and to avoid green practices' errors and mistakes.

Finally, the second finding of Hypothesis₂ improves the literature of employee training and hotels' performance through highlighting the positive effect of perceived support for green training on environmental hotel performance. However, considerable previous studies have investigated the impact of support for training on organizational commitment (Dhar, 2015; Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui, 2011), it is rare to find a study has tested the influence of support for training on organizational performance, especially environmental performance. Prior work confirmed that when employee perceive support from an organization regarding training will improve training participation (Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui, 2011) which ultimately enhances organizational performance (Khan, Khan & Khan, 2011). The current findings suppose that when employees perceive support from their hotels regarding green training, environmental hotel performance increases.

Managerial Implications

Hotels' management should have an awareness of the importance of environmental hotel performance for

achieving competitive advantage through meeting hospitality market and customers' environmental needs and for increasing the profit through declining waste and conserving water and energy in operations. The findings found that employees' perceived access to and support for green training play a critical role in enhancing environmental hotel performance. The role of HRM in hotels' environmentally friendly management is relatively underexplored. This research tested how to enhance hotels' environmental performance through GHRM's activities represented in providing access to and support for green training from hotels' HRM.

CONCLUSION

This study suggested that HR directors should develop green training programs which will increase hotels' employees' environmental knowledge, skills and behaviors will improve hotels' environmental performance. Also, HR directors should pay more attention to the important role of green training support in increasing the level of hotels' environmental performance. They should construct a supportive environment that boosts the quantity and effectiveness of the green training programs' participation.

Limitations and future research

Like any study, the current study has some limitations. The first limitation is that the present research model lacks involving potential mediators or moderators. In future research, scholars should investigate some contracts may influence the strongest of the relationships between employees' perceived access to and support for green training, and environmental hotel performance through perceived benefit from green training. Also, future studies should investigate possible moderators that may heighten the understanding concerning possible moderating mechanisms between employee green training and environmental hotel performance such as the possibility moderators of work units, personality traits, demographics, organizational culture, and organizational support.

Second, this kind of studies may include Common Method Variance (CMV) may be a problem because a survey technique was adopted to collect the data from the same participants during the same time period (Fuller *et al.*, 2016). However, the study used Harman's one-factor test to check the CMV, but it is better considering different sources of information on the main constructs. For instance, construct such as environmental hotel performance should be gathered from hotels' guests.

Third, from a single industry, the hotel industry, and a specific Middle East culture, the research data was

collected, which may have characteristics that control the findings. Future research should be conducted in other industries in geographical areas may drive different outcomes.

Finally, the current study has not investigated the influence of leadership behaviors on hotels' environmental performance. The future research should investigate the impact of ethical leadership, given the importance of this leadership style on organizational performance through increasing employee organizational commitment.

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