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Unpacking Parallel Mediation Processes between Green HRM Practices and Sustainable Environmental Performance: Evidence from Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This study primarily focused on the behavioral modifications among employees while keeping the contextual factors that enable them to strive for sustainable environmental performance in view. The aim of this research was to uncover the impact of GHRM practices on intrinsic motivation (IM), harmonious work passion (HWP), and sustainable environmental performance (SEP) in small and medium enterprises in Uzbekistan. Moreover, this study mainly investigated intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion as potential mediators in the relationship between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance. Additionally, this study included green mindfulness as a moderator in the association between GHRM practices and mediators (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion). In total, 345 Uzbekistan employees from small and medium enterprises completed a survey. This study deployed the path-analytical approach by using Mplus 8.0. Our findings demonstrate that GHRM practices are positively associated with IM, HWP, and SEP. In addition, this research confirms that intrinsic motivation significantly mediates the relationship between GHRM practices and SEP. Consequently, harmonious work passion also significantly mediates the association between GHRM practices and SEP. Furthermore, this study shows that a high level of green mindfulness strengthens the direct effect of GHRM on IM and HWP, along with the indirect effect of GHRM practices on sustainable environmental performance. Indeed, investigating the associations among study variables via moderated mediation mechanisms remarkably contributes to the extant literature.

Keywords: GHRM practices; intrinsic motivation; harmonious work passion; green mindfulness; sustainable environmental performance



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1. Introduction

It is highly important for organizational leaders to manage their businesses effectively, as they face the dilemma of environmental hazards, which influence everyone's life and will even have long-lasting impacts on future generations. Generally, environmental policymakers of any organization have full faith in their preset standards, and they do not amend them in accordance with ongoing situational circumstances, which may lead to the confrontation of environmental challenges [1]. Nevertheless, environmental problems raise serious concerns for the economy of any country [2]. Determining how to take precautionary measures against environmental hazards has become a hot topic and is gaining the attention of organizational scholars. Primarily, environmental concerns are highly debated all around the globe. Consequently, it is difficult for organizational practitioners to handle and reduce negative influences on the natural environment [3]. The stakeholders of an organization have a tough time mitigating the side effects of environmental waste engendered through their functional businesses [3–5]. Following this paradigm, a number of different factors are responsible for environmental decline, such as chemical waste, contaminated water, a shortage of resources, and serious climate change [1]. As a result, not

only are organizations responsible for taking corrective actions to ensure an eco-friendly culture, but they are also equally liable to oversee environmental practices associated with their performance [6–8]. Indeed, businesses whose primary focus is manufacturing have been tempted to eliminate their waste from production processes, ultimately improving their performance [8]. Environmental performance is an organization's obligation to take necessary actions for the safety of the environment and to ensure that each strategic business unit is working in line with, rather than violating, the given limits of environmental regulations [9]. As the research mainly emphasizes that the key to the success of any firm's performance depends on its human capital in order to handle environmental issues in an optimal way [5], organizations need to pay attention to the well-being of their employees, as they directly influence environmental performance [10]. The HR department in any organization is responsible for improving the core competencies and development of employees, which may lead them to achieve sustainable environmental performance [9]. Meanwhile, organizations should pay equal attention to recent technological trends to reduce problems [11].

Green human resource management (GHRM) practices provide a roadmap for an organization to follow in order to strengthen its economic value in terms of worker experience and achieve sustainable environmental performance [12–15]. Hameed et al. (2019) [16], accentuated that GHRM is an important constituent of the fair implementation of environmentally friendly policies and initiatives for the well-being of employees. Recent studies on GHRM have uncovered its possible consequences in terms of the differential aspects of environmental measures [17,18]. Empirical studies have also determined the positive impacts of GHRM on employees' behavioral responses [19,20]. Employees therefore actively participate in CSR efforts and value them as they provide a means to give back to the community [21]. Employees also make sure to strengthen interpersonal relationships where societal consequences are a priority. Specifically, GHRM focuses on HR-related functions associated with environmental performance [22], yet it has positive effects on environmental measures [23]. This study particularly linked GHRM practices with environmental performance with the aim of ensuring green work practices and providing a healthy workplace environment for workers' safety so that they can contribute in an effective way towards organizational success.

The social exchange theory stipulates that, if employees perceive economic benefits as per their expectations, then, in return, they reciprocate the same response to the organization [24]. Given that, under the presence of GHRM practices, employees are more committed, more energetic, feel empowered, and work on their individual identities to improve their positivity, encouraging them to behave in an acceptable manner, earlier studies used work engagement [25], the psychological climate [26], and pro-environmental psychological capital [27] as mediators and determined their corresponding effects on environmental performance. However, our study mainly integrated parallel mediators (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion) to uncover the relationship between GHRM practices and environmental performance. Therefore, this study provided valuable insights into the potential effects of the mediators' effects on small and medium enterprises in Uzbekistan.

Furthermore, the supply value fit theory suggests that when an individual's personal interests are highly aligned with the resources supplied by higher officials, then they display positive emotions, such as showing a strong affiliation with their work or being internally motivated to be good at their tasks [28]. Prior research has explored the moderating effects of work passion [29], perceived organizational support [30], and environmental knowledge [27] and their related impacts on environmental performance. However, this study mainly indulged green mindfulness as a potential moderator to unveil the association between GHRM practices and parallel mediators (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion), and it provides enough information to understand the cultural norms of the region.

To sum up, the present research makes notable contributions to the environmental management literature. First, the current study explores the influences of GHRM practices on the environmental performances of small and medium enterprises in Uzbekistan. Second, the current study uncovers the parallel mediation processes (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion) underlying the relationship between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance. Third, the present research investigates the effects of the boundary conditions of green mindfulness on the relationships between GHRM practices and mediators (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion). Further, it also determines whether green mindfulness (high vs. low) strengthens or weakens the associations between GHRM practices and mediators.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Green HRM Practices and Sustainable Environmental Performance

In the current era, contemporary organizations are typically focused on improving sustainable environmental measures by highlighting the essential changes in human activities. Human capital can be defined as the “knowledge that people acquire to produce goods and services, ideas to contribute to the market, non-market fields, or their lives” [31]. Educating the workforce and providing a high quality of life strengthens the human capital of organizations; thus, such individuals are proactive in ensuring sustainable environmental measures [32]. This study contributes to the debate on how to reshape human capital in order to maximize sustainable environmental measures. Increasing evidence suggests that organizations are proactive in taking sustainable environmental measures, restructuring firm policies, and regulating their resources [33]. Subsequently, organizations should develop strong reasoning models to overcome performance-related problems [34]. The basic tenet of green HRM is to inject environment-related concerns into employees and to equip them with enough knowledge about how their actions influence environmental sensitivity [35]. Other important reasons to assimilate green HRM are to protect the organizational culture through green measures and to train individuals to be optimistic with respect to the environment [27]. Additionally, adopting new learning abilities helped to improve previous problems [36]. The present research mainly explores the enablers such as green HRM practices in order to achieve a distinct position as compared to competitors with respect to their strategic business units [37]. Notably, a number of different parameters involved under the umbrella term of green HRM practices allow for associations to be established by aligning such practices with organizational strategic goals [8]. Undoubtedly, green HRM practices are mainly categorized via the green recruitment, selection, training, and development and management performance of employees [35]. Therefore, sound management practices communicated by higher officials may strengthen organizational values and beliefs and control different ongoing activities. Numerous studies have reported on some of the dimensional aspects of green HRM practices in relation to environmental performance [7,38]. Uneven distribution of development also causes serious concerns with respect to environment [39]. Organizational management ensures the implementation of proactive environmental strategies in order to maintain the ecological balance by strengthening employees’ self-discretion abilities to better tackle environmental issues [40]. Drawing on the theoretical perspective of the social exchange theory [24], firms actively attempt to identify the factors that significantly contribute to shaping employees’ social patterns in terms of green HR practices which eventually evoke collaborative behaviors within the organization. Subsequently, if an employee receives benefits from the company owners in terms of fair HR practices, then in return, they also engage in self-discretion behaviors rather than displaying negative thoughts. Green HRM practices predominantly influence sustainable environmental performance and lead to improved organizational productivity, increased employee loyalty, and reduced costs [7,41–43]. Accordingly, we proposed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. *Green HRM practices are positively related to sustainable environmental performance.*

2.2. Green HRM Practices and Intrinsic Motivation

The social exchange theory [24] indicates that, when individuals receive socioeconomic benefits from related HR functions, they become internally motivated to exhibit optimistic behaviors that are highly congruent with organizational norms. Consequently, the effective use of green HRM practices improves employees' core beliefs, interpersonal skills, and self-motivation to perform beyond their limits in order to achieve the optimal level of environmental performance [44]. Earlier investigations argued that green HRM practices set the guidelines for achieving green measures and for nurturing conducive environments [45]. Integrating such initiatives can reduce an employee's negative state of mind in terms of psychological disturbances, such as distress [22]. Therefore, in the presence of green HRM practices, employees are more enthusiastic and curious to maintain an ecological balance. Intrinsic motivation is particularly linked to the personal attributes of individuals, that is their motivation to work hard and even perform in a contextual environment to assure the development of the corporate sector [46]. Specifically, intrinsic motivation relates to an individual's inner gratification and sense of eagerness to comply with organizational standards [47,48]. A previous study based on the ability, motivation, and opportunity theory accentuated that fair HR practices implemented by managers strengthen individual core competencies to contribute effectively to work-related obligations [49]. Furthermore, employees anticipate that HR practices are the main pillars that motivate them, resulting in quality social exchanges. Thus, such individuals follow the rationality approach and respect the organizational culture. Hence, we proposed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2. *Green HRM practices are positively related to intrinsic motivation.*

2.3. Green HRM Practices and Harmonious Work Passion

Broadly speaking, green HRM practices prompt individuals to voluntarily contribute to the achievement of green objectives and to exercise decisions in the workplace in a constructive manner [50,51]. Specifically, organizations that incorporate green HRM practices have found that they are helpful in mitigating negative employee emotions such as workplace stress [22]. Earlier empirical investigations reported that an individual's mindset to engage in proactive behaviors is shaped by effective management practices, such as essential care provided by their respective supervisors [52]. Drawing from the theoretical perspective, we argue that green HRM practices increase an employee's commitment to developing interpersonal relationships through their effective contribution to the workplace [53]. The best method of encouraging employees to engage in workplace practices is to provide a friendly environment, which motivates them to carry out their work while expressing positive emotions [54,55]. Organizations should be proactive when designing GHRM practices in order to ensure better environmental performance. Considering that GHRM practices are equally important in the achievement of long-term objectives [26]. Employees engage in constructive workplace practices and prioritize work-related obligations when they receive benefits from the applications of GHRM practices [25]. For instance, when employees anticipate that GHRM practices project timely benefits, they align their work-related responsibilities with their identities. Based on this theoretical underpinning and empirical justifications, we proposed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3. *Green HRM practices will relate positively to harmonious work passion.*

2.4. The Mediating Role of Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is an internal driving factor that encourages individuals to work for the betterment of the workplace and endure workplace norms in line with desired behavior [46]. Intrinsic motivation is a strategic tool used to reshape an individual's mindset to think about progressive measures, such as the creation of new ideas, and to produce a

conducive environment [56]. Prior studies reported that internally motivated individuals are more energetic and enthusiastic and show active participation in workplace obligations, and that in return, their level of satisfaction is also increased [33,34]. Based on the social exchange theory the effective implication of GHRM practices in organizations may ultimately divulge their employees polishing their skills, and having inner desires to achieve more through their satisfactory performance. Consequently, such individuals have a strong sense of achievement, which could lead them to ensure sustainable environmental performance measures. Thus, we believe that GHRM practices positively influence environmental performance through the intervening mechanism of intrinsic motivation.

Increasing evidence argues that GHRM practices and policies give employees a platform to engage in eco-friendly behaviors, such as reducing waste material, taking the actions necessary to elevate productivity by reducing errors during manufacturing, and improving their own performance [57]. Providing a platform to the workers in order to help them to achieve their preset targets can escalate their motivation, which prompts them to actively fulfill their own objectives and the organization's objectives [58]. Subsequently, employees become self-motivated to use all their knowledge, having the aptitude to exercise their own energy through positive contributions, and the required skills at work, which could result in effective organizational performance. Individuals who have high intrinsic motivation are more likely to express positive emotions such as organizational citizenship behavior, and they are also more likely to align workplace duties with their own successes [59]. Specifically, some individuals believe that they are an important asset in organizations which prompts them to perform beyond their limits, and engage in sound practices and achieve their targets in the best optimal way [60]. So far, we hypothesized that GHRM practices are positively linked to sustainable environmental performance and that GHRM practices can positively predict intrinsic motivation. Taken together, we proposed that intrinsic motivation is an intervening variable between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance.

Hypothesis 4. *Intrinsic motivation mediates the relationship between green HRM practices and sustainable environmental performance.*

2.5. The Mediating Role of Harmonious Work Passion

Harmonious work passion refers to self-directed emotions [61], where individuals deliberately and actively view work as congruent with their own identifications because of the attributes of workplace norms. Such individuals are enthusiastic and exert mental efforts in a constructive way, which does not interfere with other facets of their lives [62]. Specifically, harmonious work passion encompasses both affective and cognitive attributes, which distinguishes this construct from other related mediators, such as work engagement and job satisfaction [61]. HWP is a powerful force in an individual's personality, enabling them to become emotionally stable and exhibit flawless performance [63]. According to the social exchange theory, individuals who are equipped with fair GHRM practices from their employer are self-motivated, committed, accept challenges, and voluntarily participate in order to get recognition in terms of their self-identity. Additionally, the implementation of GHRM practices may stimulate positive employee behaviors, which would further accelerate their involvement in improving sustainable environmental performance. Therefore, we expect GHRM practices to positively impact environmental performance via harmonious work passion.

Earlier studies explored whether GHRM practices inject positive emotions into employees and thus, they aid them in performing in a more effective way [27]. Supportive behaviors and effective management practices from higher officials may enable individuals to be optimistic, energetic, and persistent in their behaviors [9]. After employees receive help from their employers, they tend to display constructive behaviors and also suggest novel ways to reduce environmental impacts through their strong commitment to the

organization [64,65]. Previous studies argued that employees with strong inner emotions may achieve an increased sense of accomplishment as they engage in organization-related events [66]. Earlier studies argued that ensuring the implementation of green workplace practices enhances individual commitment and, active participation in discretionary behaviors, and empowers individuals to achieve their goals [16]. The current study aimed to uncover the gap between HRM practices and sustainable environmental performance by integrating the attitudinal mechanism (i.e., HWP). Specifically, when employees feel happy, motivated, and energetic, they tend to contribute effectively to maintaining environmental performance measures. Therefore, we proposed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5. *Harmonious work passion mediates the relationship between Green HRM practices and sustainable environmental performance.*

2.6. The Moderating Role of Green Mindfulness

Mindfulness is defined as “the way people or organizations reflect, collect information, perceived the world around them, and are thus motivated to change their perspective under the current circumstances to achieve the desired outcome” [67]. Specifically, mindfulness refers to the psychological reflection of an individual’s cognitive abilities to respond to internal or external stimuli [68,69]. Accordingly, Boyatzis contended that mindfulness refers to an individual’s ability to sense the ongoing situation and its impact on sustainable environmental measures by analyzing internal or external factors [70]. Similarly, green mindfulness refers to cognitive psychological processes where individuals and organizations alternate their behaviors and practices in order to safeguard against environmental damages and to engage in pro-environmental initiatives to ensure an ecofriendly environment [71]. The deployment of supplies value fit theory emphasizes that when employees wish to be perfectly aligned with organizational resources they tend to behave positively [28]. Given that each person’s environmental ideals are mostly driven by personal motivations [72]. Following this theoretical perspective, we argue that green mindful behaviors exhibited by employees can essentially moderate the relationship between GHRM practices and mediating forces (intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion). Therefore, we believe that individual green mindfulness strengthens the association between GHRM practices and positive contributors (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion).

Individuals who are high in mindfulness are generally more inclined to display positive behaviors, such as trusting others, having a sense of responsibility, and unveiling strong intimacy through their cooperation [73]. Therefore, individuals with strong mindfulness may take collective actions against unlawful practices at the workplace which could adversely affect the well-being of the organization [71]. Accordingly, green mindfulness is quite impactful in the achievement of remarkable environmental performance regardless of whether the organization is facing unfavorable circumstances [74,75]. Prior studies report that green mindfulness positively impacts the social settings in the relationship between green creativity and energy efficiency. Similarly, green mindfulness behaviors under the presence of fair GHRM practices could stimulate an individual’s abilities and drive them to work positively, subsequently, employees may become highly motivated and conscious about their self-identities. Thus, an organization’s level of environmental performance increases gradually under higher green mindfulness behaviors. In particular, individuals with such behaviors are thoughtful and focus on internally driven factors such as motivation and harmonious work passion; thus, such individuals may attempt to engage in sustainable environmental performance.

Contrary to this, in a setting of low mindfulness the positive relationship between GHRM practices and positive contributors (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion) may weaken as such individuals are more conscious about their personal traits and more interested in finding out the reasons behind every task. Subsequently, such individuals are more likely to engage in negative activities such as focusing on personal

achievement, hurting the self-esteem of others, and judging things by following their own instincts rather than facts. Accordingly, such individuals are less motivated to be positive, and as a result, their participation in environmental performance decreases irrespective of fair GHRM practices. Therefore, we proposed the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 6. *Green mindfulness moderates the positive relationship between green HRM practices and harmonious work passion such that the relationship is stronger when green mindfulness is high rather than low.*

Hypothesis 7. *Green mindfulness moderates the positive relationship between green HRM practices and intrinsic motivation such that the relationship is stronger when green mindfulness is high rather than low.*

The above discussion provides valuable support for the framework in which intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion mediate the relationship between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance and in which green mindfulness moderates the relationship between GHRM practices, and (intrinsic motivation, and harmonious work passion). As per our supposition, intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion result in good sustainable environmental performance; therefore, it seems logical to conclude that green mindfulness strengthens the positive mediating effects with respect to the association between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance, combining the moderated mediation model [76]. Therefore, we believe that the association between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance is stronger when individuals are high in green mindfulness and that indirect associations are also stronger in the same case. Thus, we hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 8. *Green mindfulness moderates the indirect effect between GHRM practices, and sustainable environmental performance through intrinsic motivation such that the relationship is stronger when individuals are high in green mindfulness rather than low.*

Hypothesis 9. *Green mindfulness moderates the indirect effect between GHRM practices, and sustainable environmental performance through harmonious work passion such that the relationship is stronger when individuals are high in green mindfulness rather than low.*

The overall theoretical framework is shown in Figure 1.

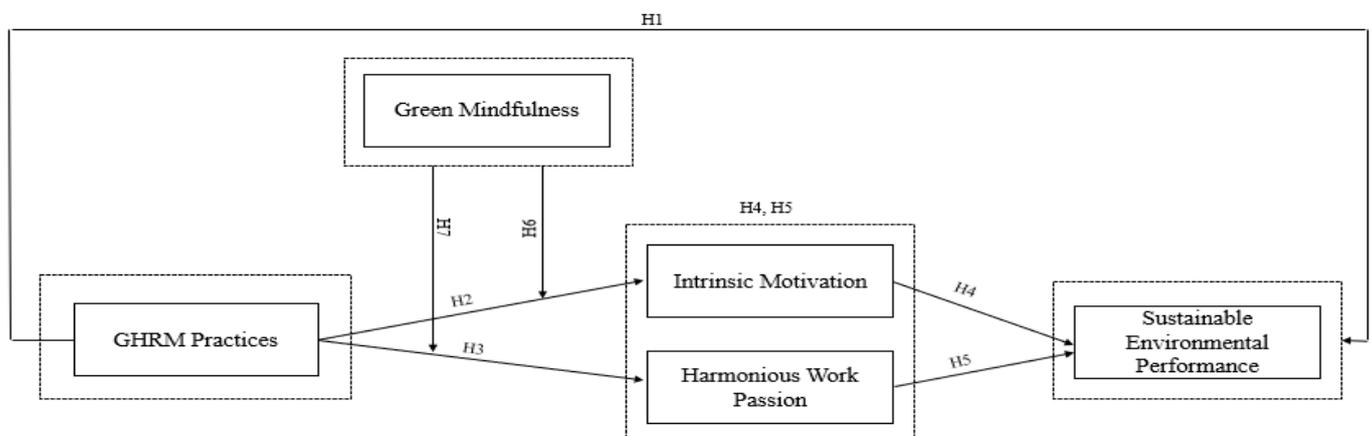


Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

3. Participants and Procedure

3.1. Sample and Procedure

In order to gather data, a survey was administered to small- and medium-sized enterprises in Uzbekistan. The population of this study mainly comprised functional SMEs in Tashkent, the capital city of Uzbekistan. A researcher met with the management staff of the different manufacturing companies to demonstrate the significance of the study and to encourage voluntary participation. Further, in order to investigate the relationships among the study variables based on the conceptual framework, the survey was split into a two-part questionnaire. The first part gathered information regarding demographic characteristics, such as the gender, age, education, and occupation of the respondents. In line with the conceptual model, the second part was chiefly based on the different study variables and their possible impacts on sustainable environmental performance. The survey was initially designed in the English language and then translated into the Uzbek language before dissemination, and, later the answers were translated again carefully [77]. The target audience was owners of SMEs, senior executive officers, managers, and their corresponding employees. The study used a hybrid approach to collect the data. First, the online method was employed to collect data with the help of various social networking apps, i.e., Telegram, commonly used in Uzbekistan. Additionally, the online questionnaire provided the respondents with all of the details regarding the theme of the study. Second, this study employed a paper–pencil questionnaire that was administered to a different mixed audience. Specifically, this study ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents. A specific time frame was given to the respondents to complete the questionnaire, and the data were entered carefully for subsequent analyses. In fact, to ensure that the questionnaires were completed, on time a soft reminder was given to the participants right four days. In addition to this, one hundred and seventy-five copies were disseminated and collected accordingly, while three hundred responses were collected via an online method. The data were gathered during the time period of March–May 2022. A total of 475 responses were gathered. Incomplete and invalid responses were discarded from the survey in order to eliminate bias issues. Responses were mainly excluded for the following reasons: missing information, and uniformity in their replies. Finally, 345 valid responses were retrieved with a valid response rate of 72.63% and they were used for the further analyses of the study variables. As per facts, 57.1% of employees were male, and 40.3% had a master’s degree. Furthermore, approximately 45.2% and 37.1% of samples were from the age groups of 31–40 and 41–50, respectively.

3.2. Measurement of Constructs

For this study, we mainly integrated a six-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree) to measure all the constructs based on the hypothesized framework.

3.2.1. GHRM Practices

We measured GHRM practices by using the six-item scale developed by Shen et al. [78]. One of the sample items was, “My company considers person identity fit in recruitment and selection”. The Cronbach alpha reliability of this scale item was $\alpha = 0.80$.

3.2.2. Intrinsic Motivation

To measure intrinsic motivation, we incorporated the three-item scale developed by Gagne et al. [79]. One of the sample items was, “I enjoy the work very much”. The Cronbach alpha of this scale item was $\alpha = 0.92$.

3.2.3. Harmonious Work Passion

Harmonious work passion was evaluated using the seven-item scale developed by Vallerand et al. [80]. One of the sample items was, “This activity allows me to live a variety of experiences”. The alpha coefficient of this scale item was $\alpha = 0.94$.

3.2.4. Green Mindfulness

Green mindfulness was assessed by incorporating the six-item scale developed by [71]. One sample item was, “The members of the company feel free to discuss environmental issues and problems”. The reliability coefficient for this scale item was $\alpha = 0.75$.

3.2.5. Sustainable Environmental Performance

Sustainable environmental performance was assessed by incorporating the five-item scale developed by Sobaih et al. [81]. One sample item was, “Environmental activities significantly reduced overall costs”. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of this scale item was $\alpha = 0.95$.

3.2.6. Control Variables

This study used gender, age, and education as control variables. Following the directions of previous empirical investigations [82], gender played the role of the dummy variable and was classified into two groups: 1 = male and 2 = female. Further, the age groups were categorized as 16–50 years. The education level of the employees was also considered a quantitative variable.

3.3. Preliminary Analysis

This study mainly integrated the path-analytical approach to investigate the relationships among the variables based on the theoretical framework. To examine Hypotheses 1 and 2, we regressed the mediating variables (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion) on the independent variable (i.e., green HRM practices). Moreover, to test Hypothesis 3, we regressed sustainable environmental performance on green HRM practices. For mediation Hypotheses 4 and 5, the study chiefly performed 10,000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples as suggested by Preacher et al. [83]. Afterwards, to examine moderation effects, this study followed the guidelines of Aiken and West, [84] and calculated the values of simple slopes at one standard deviation above or below the mean by using 10,000 bootstrapped samples. Additionally, to determine the relationship of hypotheses 6 and 7, the mediating variables were regressed on all control variables, the independent variable and the moderating variable. In order to calculate the interactive terms, we mean-centered the variables involved in the moderation effects.

3.4. Construct Validity

This study primarily performed a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) by using Mplus 8.0 [85] to inspect the uniqueness of the five key variables, namely, green HRM practices, intrinsic motivation, harmonious work passion, sustainable environmental performance, and green mindfulness. As depicted in Table 1, our five-factor model fit the best: $\chi^2_{(279)} = 698.32$, (CFI) = 0.94, (TLI) = 0.93, (RMSEA) = 0.06, and (SRMR) = 0.07. This model was knowingly more appropriate than all the other tested models, namely a four-factor model [$\Delta\chi^2$ (Δdf) = 80.8(4), $p < 0.001$]; a three-factor model [$\Delta\chi^2$ (Δdf) = 696.39(4), $p < 0.001$]; a two-factor model [$\Delta\chi^2$ (Δdf) = 1342.11(11), $p < 0.001$]; and a one-factor model [$\Delta\chi^2$ (Δdf) = 1677.26(1), $p < 0.001$]. The inclusive explanation of model fit indices was reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of confirmatory factor analysis.

Models	χ^2	d.f.	$\chi^2/d.f.$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Five-factor model: Green HRM practices, intrinsic motivation, harmonious work passion, green mindfulness, sustainable environmental performance	698.32	279	2.50	0.94	0.93	0.06	0.07

Table 1. *Cont.*

Models	χ^2	d.f.	$\chi^2/\text{d.f.}$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Four-factor model: Green mindfulness and sustainable environmental performance combined	779.12	283	2.75	0.92	0.91	0.06	0.09
Three-factor model: Intrinsic motivation, harmonious work passion, and sustainable environmental performance combined	1475.51	287	5.15	0.82	0.80	0.10	0.10
Two-factor model: Green HRM practices, intrinsic motivation, harmonious work passion, and green mindfulness combined	2817.62	298	9.45	0.63	0.60	0.15	0.13
One-factor model: All variables combined	4494.88	299	15.03	0.39	0.34	0.19	0.17

Note: χ^2 = chi-squared value; d.f. = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations among all study variables.

Table 2. Means, standard deviations and correlations.

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	1.42	0.49								
2. Age	2.55	0.77	0.00							
3. Education	2.54	0.91	−0.00	0.27 **						
4. Green HRM practices	4.46	0.94	0.01	−0.09	0.02	(0.80)				
5. Intrinsic motivation	4.16	1.20	0.10 *	−0.05	0.05	0.46 **	(0.92)			
6. Harmonious work passion	4.74	1.09	0.10 *	−0.03	−0.02	0.46 **	0.41 **	(0.94)		
7. Green mindfulness	4.56	0.88	−0.01	−0.08	0.01	0.32 **	0.18 **	0.28 **	(0.75)	
8. Sustainable environmental performance	4.43	1.19	−0.02	−0.09	−0.04	0.23 **	0.23 **	0.28 **	0.28 **	(0.95)

Note: $N = 345$; Internal reliabilities (alpha coefficients are stated along the diagonal parenthesis), ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.2. Hypotheses Testing

Table 3 displays the unstandardized path coefficients of the direct and the mediating effects. Hypothesis 1 suggests that GHRM practices are positively associated with sustainable environmental performance. Table 3 delineates that GHRM practices have a significant positive impact on sustainable environmental performance ($b = 0.20$, $s.e. = 0.08$, $p < 0.01$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 predicts that GHRM is positively linked with intrinsic motivation. These results demonstrate that GHRM practices have a significant positive influence on intrinsic motivation ($b = 0.59$, $s.e. = 0.06$, $p < 0.01$), supporting Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 3 suggests that GHRM practices are positively associated with harmonious work passion. As shown in Table 3, this study reported that GHRM practices have a significant positive influence on harmonious work passion ($b = 0.53$, $s.e. = 0.07$, $p < 0.01$), supporting Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 4 suggests that intrinsic motivation mediates the relationship between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance. As reported in Table 3, intrinsic motivation significantly mediates the relationship between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance [indirect effect = 0.09, 95% CI (0.02, 0.17)]. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was supported. Hypothesis 5 states that harmonious work passion mediates the relationship between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance. As reported in Table 3, harmonious work passion significantly mediates

the relationship between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance (indirect effect = 0.13, 95% CI (0.05, 0.23)). Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

Table 3. Bootstrapping results for unstandardized indirect effects from SEM.

Path	Coeff.	SE	95% Lower CI	95% Upper CI
Direct Paths				
GHRMP →SEP	0.20 **	0.08	0.06	0.34
GHRMP →IM	0.59 **	0.06	0.47	0.69
GHRMP →HWP	0.53 **	0.07	0.40	0.65
Indirect Paths				
GHRMP →IM →SEP	0.09 **	0.04	0.02	0.17
GHRMP →HWP →SEP	0.13 **	0.02	0.05	0.23

Note: $N = 345$; ** $p < 0.01$, GHRMP: green HRM practices; IM: intrinsic motivation. HWP: harmonious work passion; SEP: sustainable environmental performance; CI (95% confidence interval for bootstrapping with 10,000 subsamples).

Hypothesis 6 argues that green mindfulness moderates the positive relationship between GHRM practices and intrinsic motivation. As presented in Table 4, Model 1 delineates that the interaction term of GHRM practices and green mindfulness is significantly related to intrinsic motivation ($b = 0.28$, $s.e. = 0.06$, $p < 0.01$). This study performed a simple slope analysis and drew an interaction graph at one standard deviation below or above the mean. Figure 2 shows that the simple slope of GHRM practices on intrinsic motivation is positive under high green mindfulness ($b = 0.86$, $s.e. = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$), rather than low green mindfulness ($b = 0.36$, $s.e. = 0.15$, ns), supporting Hypothesis 5. Furthermore, Hypothesis 7 suggests that green mindfulness moderates the positive association between GHRM practices and harmonious work passion. In accordance with Table 4, Model 2 reveals that the interactive effect between GHRM practices and green mindfulness is significantly linked to harmonious work passion ($b = 0.15$, $s.e. = 0.07$, $p < 0.01$). Figure 3 shows that the simple slope of GHRM practices on harmonious work passion is positive under high green mindfulness ($b = 0.63$, $s.e. = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$), rather than low green mindfulness ($b = 0.37$, $s.e. = 0.15$, ns), supporting Hypothesis 7.

Table 4. Regression results for interaction effects.

Variables	Intrinsic Motivation			Harmonious Work Passion		
	Model 1			Model 2		
	Coeff.	SE	95% CI	Coeff.	SE	95% CI
<i>Control Variables</i>						
Gender	0.20	0.11	[0.02, 0.38]	0.20 *	0.09	[0.04, 0.36]
Age	0.20	0.07	[-0.09, 0.14]	0.03	0.06	[-0.07, 0.13]
Education	-0.05	0.05	[-0.14, 0.02]	-0.01	0.04	[-0.09, 0.05]
<i>Independent Variables</i>						
Green HRM practices (GHRMP)	0.61 ***	0.06	[0.50, 0.70]	0.50 ***	0.08	[0.35, 0.62]
<i>Moderator Variable</i>						
Green mindfulness (GM)	0.20 *	0.09	[0.04, 0.34]	0.26 **	0.10	[0.09, 0.43]
<i>Interactive effects</i>						
GHRMP X GM	0.28 ***	0.06	[0.17, 0.37]			
GHRMP X GM				0.15 *	0.07	[0.03, 0.28]

Note: $N = 345$; *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$; CI (95% confidence interval for bootstrapping with 10,000 subsamples).

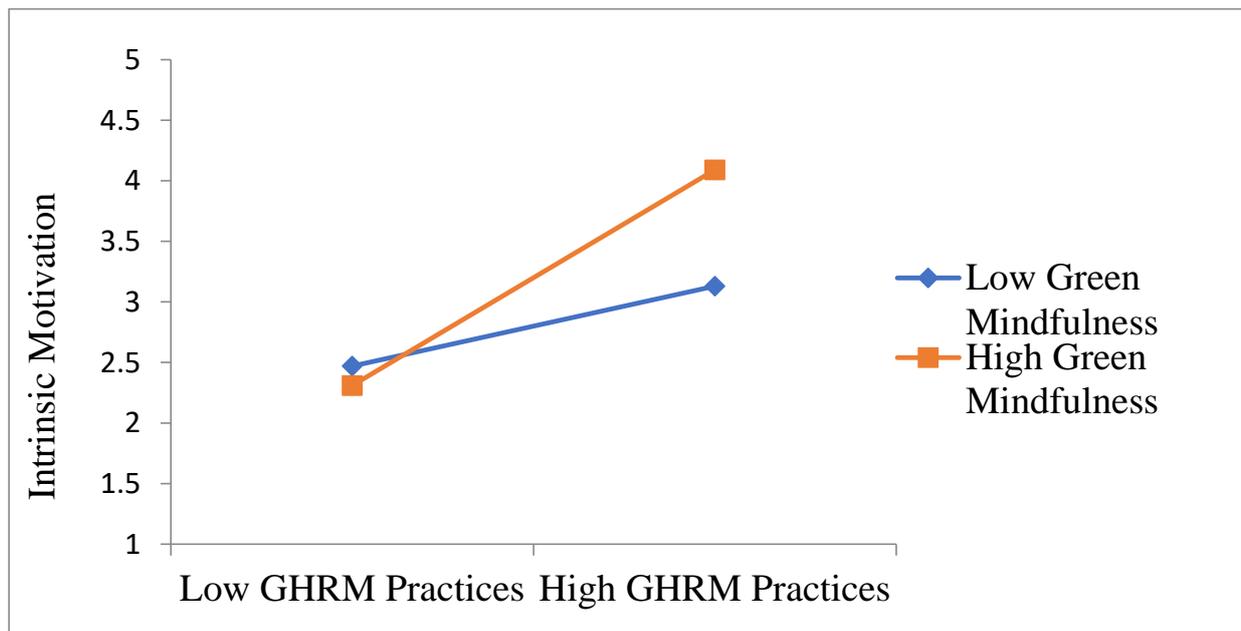


Figure 2. Interactive effect of GHRM practices and green mindfulness on intrinsic motivation.

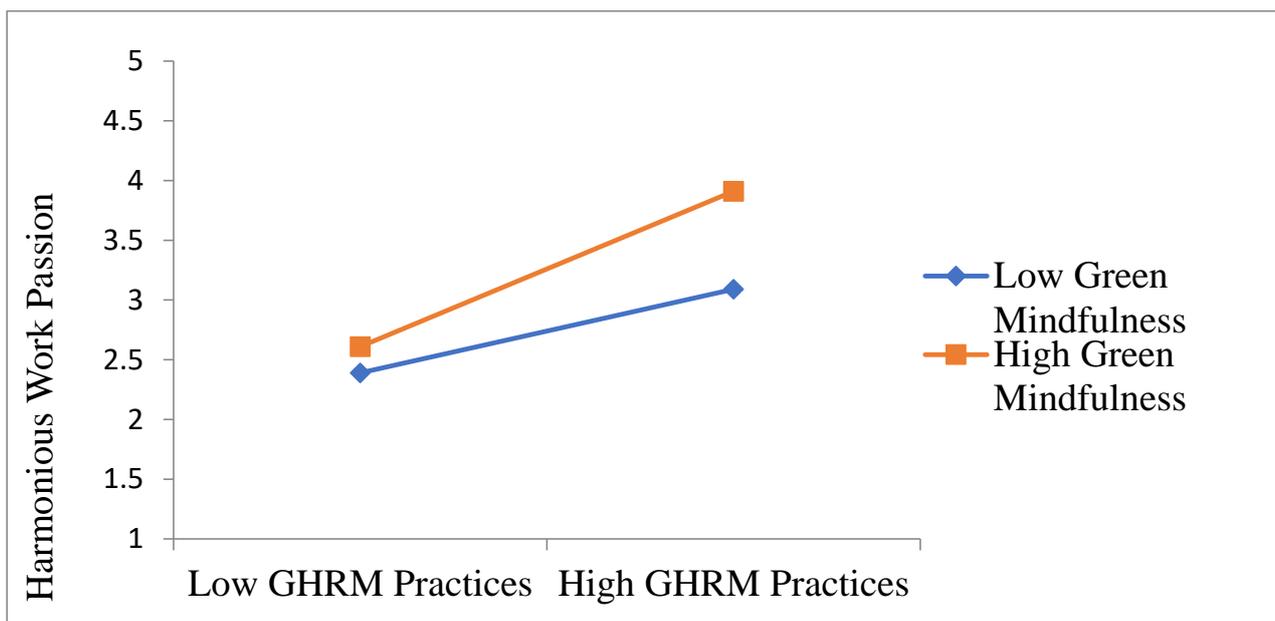


Figure 3. Interactive effect of GHRM practices and green mindfulness on harmonious work passion.

Table 5 reports the moderated mediation effect. The indirect effect of GHRM practices on sustainable environmental performance through intrinsic motivation was significant in the case of high green mindfulness (indirect effect = 0.026, 95% CI (0.018, 0.034)), but not in the case of low green mindfulness (indirect effect = -0.010 , 95% CI (-0.015 , -0.005)), and the indirect difference term was significant (indirect effect = 0.036, 95% CI (0.024, 0.047)) at these different level settings. Accordingly, Hypothesis 6 was supported. Subsequently, the indirect effect of GHRM practices on sustainable environmental performance through harmonious work passion was also significant in the case of high green mindfulness (indirect effect = 0.016, 95% CI (0.036, 0.143)) but not in the case of low green mindfulness (indirect effect = -0.008 , 95% CI (0.016, 0.105)), and the indirect difference term was significant (indirect effect = 0.024, 95% CI (0.013, 0.040)).

Table 5. Bootstrapping results for moderated mediation effects.

Variable	GHRMP-IM-SEP (Indirect Effect)			
	Coeff.	SE	95% LLCI	95% ULCI
Indirect effects (green mindfulness) <i>Green HRM practices</i>				
Indirect low (−1 SD)	−0.010	0.003	−0.015	−0.005
Indirect high (1 SD)	0.026 ***	0.005	0.018	0.034
Difference in indirect effect	0.036 ***	0.007	0.024	0.047
GHRMP-HWP-SEP (Indirect effect)				
Indirect effects (green mindfulness) <i>Green HRM practices</i>				
Indirect low (−1 SD)	−0.008	0.004	0.016	0.105
Indirect high (1 SD)	0.016 **	0.005	0.036	0.143
Difference in indirect effect	0.024 **	0.008	0.013	0.040

Note: $N = 345$; *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$; LLCI: lower limit confidence interval; ULCI: upper limit confidence interval; CI (95% confidence interval for bootstrapping with 10,000 subsamples).

5. Discussion

Our research intended to contribute to the existing literature on GHRM practices, IM, HWP, GM, and SEP by exploring moderated mediation mechanisms in the context of the GHRM-SEP relationship. In line with the social exchange theory, our study primarily explored the undiscovered side of the mediating mechanisms and the boundary conditions in the relationships between GHRM and IM and HWP. Although previous researchers explored the linkage between GHRM practices and SEP [17,21,86], this is the first study to incorporate parallel mediators and their corresponding impacts. This study's findings indicate that intrinsic motivation significantly mediates the relationship between GHRM practices and SEP. Similarly, this study's findings also show that HWP significantly mediates the relationship between GHRM and SEP. The most vital aspects of our research are the parallel mediators, which enable the researchers to highlight the sound theoretical base of small and medium enterprises in Uzbekistan. Our findings delineate that GHRM practices influence IM, which enables employees to effectively contribute to the achievement of SEP. For example, a culture in which encouragement is provided by employers via GHRM practices may energize employees to engage in eco-friendly environment practices for organizational safety. Furthermore, this study found that GM significantly moderates the relationship between GHRM practices and IM. Subsequently, this study also found that GM significantly strengthens the association between GHRM practices and HWP.

5.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study makes various theoretical contributions that extend the existing literature on environmental performance. First, this study extends the scope of previous studies examining GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance by conducting a study on the manufacturing sector in Uzbekistan. Following the lead of previous researchers, our study found that GHRM practices positively influences sustainable environmental performance. Second, our study intended to uncover the parallel mediating mechanisms of intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion in association with GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance. Prior studies explored the effects of individual determinants of GHRM practices on environmental performance under the indirect influences of work engagement and job satisfaction [25]. Therefore, our research findings demonstrate that GHRM practices may help individuals to purposefully contribute and be more ambitious. GHRM practices may help individuals to exercise their emotions in a positive way, for example by achieving excellence in the organization by keeping in view

sustainable environmental performance. Third, the current study explores the moderating mechanism of green mindfulness and its influence on the relationship between GHRM practices and parallel mediators (i.e., intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion). In line with earlier studies, an individual's green values strengthen the effects of GHRM practices on sustainable environmental performance [35]. Our results demonstrate that green mindfulness strengthens the positive association between GHRM practices and parallel mediators (intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion). Given that green mindfulness individuals are actually more inclined to display positive emotions and adapt to ongoing situations by setting rational objectives for themselves, they engage in more environmental practices.

5.2. Practical Implications

Our research provides valuable insights for organizational practitioners. First, this study shows that GHRM practices play a positive role in shaping an individual's mindset to engage in proactive behaviors and take the actions necessary to ensure sustainable environmental performance. Therefore, this study is useful for the practitioners of small and medium enterprises in Uzbekistan, as they are self-motivated to achieve excellence under the presence of fair GHRM practices, given that GHRM practices provide individuals with a platform to be optimistic and feel gratified [25]. Thus, it is essential for practitioners to train employees regarding green organizational culture and its impact on organizational productivity. Second, individuals who are conscious about their self-identity in an organization tend to strengthen their image by focusing on environmental hazards, which directly affect their quality of life. Therefore, higher officials in organizations must give priority to career-oriented individuals, so that they are proactive in eliminating environmental waste. Third, organizations should inject a sense of consciousness into individuals by providing artificial environments to demonstrate unhealthy environmental conditions and to enable them to polish their cognitive abilities. Therefore, individuals who are high in green mindfulness are more aware of situational influences and alleviate their negative impacts through their open minds and flexible attitude.

5.3. Limitations and Direction for Future Research

The present research has numerous limitations. First, this study was only conducted on small and medium enterprises in Uzbekistan only. However, future studies may integrate other corporate sectors to determine their impacts. Further, this study uncovered the cumulative effect of GHRM practices on sustainable environmental performance. Future scholars may study the individual effects of different domains under GHRM practices [9,87,88]. Second, this study investigated the mediating mechanism of intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion. Future studies may incorporate other intervening variables such as organization citizenship behavior [88] and other dimensions of work passion [89]. Third, our study only included green mindfulness as a first stage moderating variable. Future studies may include perceived organization support as a second-stage moderator and highlight its effects on sustainable environmental performance [90]. Moreover, recent studies have tried to use cross-cultural methodology to study the effects in different cultural settings, as well as possible outcomes.

5.4. Conclusions

This study mainly incorporated the social exchange theory to uncover the associations between GHRM practices and sustainable environmental performance via the parallel mediation mechanisms of intrinsic motivation and harmonious work passion. Notably, this study emphasizes that, through fair HR practices, individuals are motivated and work hard to protect their own identity, thereby performing eco-friendly environmental practices. Moreover, this study shows that, under the presence of high green mindfulness, the relationship between GHRM practices and attitudinal variables would be stronger.

Furthermore, this research contributes to the extant literature by integrating the moderated mediation model.

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Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available on a reasonable request from the corresponding author.

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