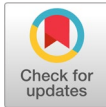


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Impact of Green Hiring on Employer Brand Image with Mediation Role of Perceived Organizational Prestige

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Abstract

The current research aimed to explore as to how Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices attract potential job candidates in Higher Education Institutes (HEI's) in Karachi, Pakistan. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze survey data from 317 faculty and administrative staff members of private HEI's in Karachi. The results revealed that environmentally-focused sustainability initiatives, such as Green Hiring (GH) and Green Work Environment (GWE) in HRM significantly enhance organizational reputation. This improved prestige, in turn, strengthens Employer Brand Image (EBI). This explains how green practices boost organizational identification, send positive messages, and enhance employer brand. This supports a combined theoretical approach that draws from Signaling Theory (ST), Social Identity Theory (SIT), and Reputation Theory (RT). However, some recruitment practices do not contribute directly to employer attractiveness, their direct effect remains limited. The findings highlighted the significance of better planning, execution, and promoting green initiatives for sustainability as well as for enhancing internal organizational standing and external employer attraction. Additionally, the research highlighted the strategic value of integrating sustainability into Human Resource (HR) policies and workplace environments. It contributed to the literature on GHRM by offering empirical evidence from a developing country's private education sector and a replicable framework for future organizational assessments.

Keywords: employer brand image, green hiring, green human resource management, higher educational institutes, perceived organizational prestige

Introduction

The Paris Agreement 2015 is the global treaty to combat climate change by reducing global warming. The Article 6, para 8, of the Paris Agreement

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encourages contributing in sustainable development through inter alia, mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer, and capacity building (*Treaty Series No. 4 (2017) Paris Agreement. Paris, 12 December 2015, 2017*). In the contemporary era, the industrial revolution has increased environmental problems as a challenge for human beings throughout the world. This provoked the businesses to proactively adopt Environmental Management (EM) practices at the workplaces (Khan et al., [2023](#)). The focus on sustainable development has led Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) to emerge as a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). GHRM is an environmentally friendly approach introduced by Walter Wehrmeyer in his book first published in 1996 (*Greening People Human Resources and Environmental Management* Edited by Wehrmeyer ([2017](#))). GHRM is an EM practice in which all the processes of recruiting, hiring, training, compensating, developing policies, and systems follow the green objectives throughout the HRM processes. This benefits the individuals, societies, natural environment, and the businesses (Wehrmeyer, [2017](#)).

The current research explored the nexus of Green Hiring (GH), Green Work Environment (GWE), Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP), and Employer Brand Image (EBI). GHRM has emerged as a significant area of research, focusing on how environmental sustainability practices in HR policies influence organizational performance and employee behavior (Aftab et al., [2023](#)). Various studies have explored the direct and mediated relationships between GHRM practices in various sectors, including Higher Education Institutes (HEIs). GH is one of the major functions of GHRM, which includes eco-friendly practices like a paperless hiring process, reducing travel time for tests and interviews to attract potential employees. Recently, researchers (Masri & Jaron, [2017](#); Yasin et al., [2023](#)) have found Green Recruitment (GR) as an impactful factor of environmental sustainability. GWE is one of the factors which does not only focus on nature but the whole environment. The factors are not limited to renewable energy, energy efficient appliances, and paperless environment within the organization.

POP is typically seen as an individual-level variable that pertains to individuals' interpretations and evaluations of a firm's prestige, influenced by their personal exposure to information about the organization (Smidts et al., [2001](#)). Organizations improve their reputation as forward-looking,

socially conscious companies by using GHRM policies. EBI is the word used to describe the perception that present or potential employees have of a specific employer. In Pakistan, the idea of branding firms or employers has gained a considerable popularity. HRM has replicated the marketing idea of product brand image. By demonstrating the organization's dedication to social and environmental responsibility, sustainable and green HR practices further improve this image.

This study may help in understanding the importance of GHRM practices in private HEIs in Karachi. Furthermore, it may also help in enhancing employer branding for the institutes striving to improve their sustainability profile. Additionally, it also intends to examine the role of POP in the relationship between GHRM practices and employer branding.

Statement of the Problem

Higher education is one of the major sectors in Pakistan, yet theoretically and geographically, it is underexplored in local GHRM literature. The increasing environmental problems have led HEI's to adopt GHRM practices (Asfahani, [2023](#)) but with the challenges, such as attract top talent, enhance employee retention, and improve external reputation (Rodrigues & Sousa, [2025](#)). Few studies have been conducted related to GHRM in the HEI's of Pakistan specifically. However, these studies lack an evidence-based framework to effectively utilize green practices and POP as a mediator to attract and retain talented faculty and staff. This led to focus on the research gap as the primary problem and address the lack of context-specific solutions needed for these institutions to strengthen their sustainability profiles and brand image.

Nexus of Employer Brand Image (EBI)

The recent boom in research on GHRM has revealed the impact of eco-friendly HRM practices on organizational performance and employee attitudes, especially in HEIs that are increasingly prioritizing sustainability (Aftab et al., [2023](#)). This shift finds theoretical support in Social Identity Theory (SIT) which suggests employees draw a sense of personal worth and identity from identifying with institutions that concur with their personal ecological attitudes (Hogg, [2016](#)). By embracing green recruitment, eco-friendly training and sustainability practices, HEIs send definitive "signals" to the job market in line with Signaling Theory (ST) and Reputation Theory (RT), thereby improving their employer brand and attracting

environmentally responsible employees (Wang et al., [2023](#)).

A critical review of the literature suggests that the link between GHRM and environmental performance is not a direct one; rather, it is a complex interaction of psychological and behavioral factors. Green culture, environmental values, and environmental performance are significantly influenced by employee perceptions of their own ability. Variables, such as employees' green commitment, environmentally friendly behaviors, and perceived green self-efficacy explain how and why these relationships take place in organizational settings (Al Doghan et al., [2024](#); Ali & Nisar, [2022](#)). A key variable in this process is environmental leadership, which serves as a catalyst to convert GHRM practices to innovation and enhanced productivity (Bahmani et al., [2023](#); Zahrani, [2024](#)). Studies on Employee Green Behavior (EGB) show that via perceived green self-efficacy and positive attitudes, GHRM has positive effects (particularly green training and employee involvement) on pro-environmental behavior (Fawehinmi et al., [2024](#); Veerasamy et al., [2024](#)).

Moreover, the impact of GHRM goes beyond internal dynamics to affect the corporate image. Green HRM practices enhance attractiveness and intentions by improving Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Damoah, [2025](#); Onur et al., [2024](#)). By increasing employee engagement and perceived organizational support, GHRM enhances not just the environmental performance of the organization but also its positioning strategy (Ahmad et al., [2023](#); Adeel et al., [2024](#); Yasin et al., [2023](#)). GHRM enhances positive feelings of pride and advocacy among pro-environment employees. However, it may create feelings of anger and frustration, job stress or even "cheating" in employees whose personal values are misaligned with their institution's environmental goals (Wang et al., [2025](#)). This implies that for GHRM to succeed, HEIs need to adopt a more democratic, transformational leadership approach to incorporate different employee views. Overall, incorporating GHRM practices from hiring to retirement boosts organizational performance and attraction, as well as corporate branding, in diverse international contexts and firm sizes (Al-Swidi et al., [2024](#); Niazi et al., [2024](#); Zafar & Suseno, [2024](#)).

Green Work Environment and Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)

A GWE is defined as an organizational culture and structure that

practices resource conservation and sustainable practices (using renewable energy sources and paperless office). As far as organizational justice is concerned, such workplace is a symbolic representation of ethical values, justice, and concern for social responsibility. SIT suggests that people derive a sense of identity and self-esteem from the social groups to which they belong, which are regarded as prestigious and liable. By adopting eco-friendly work practices, the status and reputation of the organization increase, as does the pride of the organization's employees. Research shows that GWE positively affects the status of the organization among its employees.

H1: There is a positive relationship between GWE and POP.

Green Hiring (GH) and Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)

GH refers to hiring practices that target potential hires who share a concern for sustainability in the organization; such as using sustainable means of hiring (such as online applications, online interviewing). Based on ST, these practices are "signals" directed towards potential and existing employees about the organization's support for sustainability and progressive values (Spence, [1973](#)). This enhances POP by elevating the status of the socially constructed entity. Studies have shown that the use of sustainable recruitment practices elevates an organization's attractiveness and prestige (Damoah, [2025](#)).

H2: There is a positive relationship between GH and POP.

Green HRM Practices and Employer Brand Image (EBI)

EBI reflects the shared view of an organization as a desirable employer, manifesting in its culture, values, and sustainability initiatives (Deschner-Warner, [2025](#)). The adoption of GHRM practices signals a company's average concern with global environmental issues and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through the development of HR policies in line with environmental sustainability, companies set themselves apart and establish a competitive advantage for attracting talent (Yasin et al., [2023](#)). Although the effect of single green hiring practices may be limited, commitment to a green workplace creates such a workplace that is more attractive to potential employees (Van Waeyenberg & Semeijn, [2026](#)).

H3: There is a positive relationship between GWE and EBI.

H4: There is a positive relationship between GH and EBI.

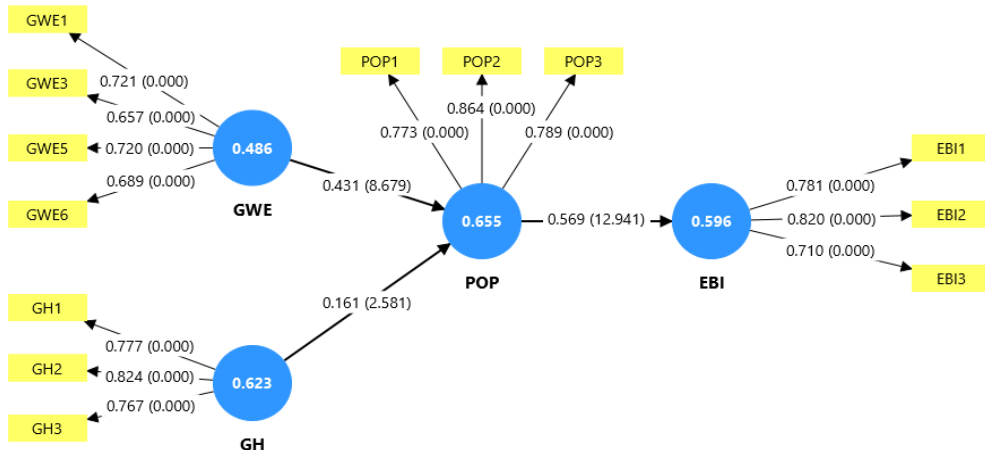
Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)

GHRM practices and EBI are often related in an indirect way, through the process of internal and external reputation. This study used an integrated approach combining ST, SIT, and RT. Here, green practices (GH and GWE) are the signals that are used as indicators that initially increase POP. When the organization is seen as prestigious and green, employees and prospective employers identify with the organization, leading to a stronger EBI (Yasin et al., 2026). Thus, POP is the link between the internal practices of sustainability and the EBI.

H5a: POP mediates the relationship between GH and EBI.

H5b: POP mediates the relationship between GWE and EBI.

Conceptual Framework



Note. Items Removed: GWE2, GWE4, EBI4

Method

The current research used a deductive approach with a post-positivist philosophy which recognizes that although there is an objective reality, it can only be approximately determined by methodical investigation. To analyze the proposed relationships, quantitative data was collected through a survey questionnaire, an effective method to gain measurable insights from participants. Consistency in data collection was maintained by a quantitative mono-method approach. To identify relationships, this study used a cross-sectional study design, collecting data in a single point of time.

As per the website of Sindh Higher Education Commission (SHEC) Pakistan, there are 30 functional private HEIs in Karachi. According to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan, the total faculty and staff in HEIs of Karachi in 2022-2023 was 19,491 (Anonymous, personal communication, March 19, 2025). Assuming a 5% increase in 2023-2024, the estimated population rose to 20,466. A multistage random sampling technique was employed to ensure a diverse and representative sample. In the first stage, systematic random sampling was used to select universities. The list of universities was arranged in alphabetical order to overcome the biasness in the selection of universities. To conduct a survey, a sample size of 378 was determined when the population proportion was unknown (Cochran [1942](#)) with the response rate of 83.86% and with an expectation of 40 responses from each university. Dividing 378 by 40 resulted in the selection of 9 universities. Using systematic random sampling, the selection interval was calculated as $30/9 = 3$. This meant that every 3rd university was chosen from the list. To determine the starting point, the RANDBETWEEN (1,3) function in Excel was used to generate a random starting university, ensuring a fair and unbiased selection process. In the second stage, employees and job seekers within these organizations were randomly chosen to participate in the study.

The scale of measurement was adapted for variables. Perceptions on GWE were assessed by adapting 6 item statements from the scale of Green Organizational Climate (Erbaşı, [2023](#)). For GH, 3 item statements were adapted from Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) scale (Tang et al., [2018](#)). The 3 items for measurement for POP were adapted from the scale of employer's prestige. For EBI, 3 item statements were adapted from the scale of employer branding (Raj et al., [2022](#)). Partial Least Square Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the data. This method is widely used to test the cause-effect relationships in path models with latent variables. Responses were recorded on 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This study adhered to ethical guidelines in order to ensure the rights, privacy, and well-being of all participants. Informed consent was obtained, and participation was entirely voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by securely storing the data and ensuring that personal information remains undisclosed.

Results

Table 1

Profile Analysis

Age Group	Faculty Member	Non-faculty Member/Admin Staff	Total
18 - 28 years	36	30	66
29 - 44 years	97	85	182
45 - 60 years	46	23	69
Total	179	138	317

The sample of the study comprised 317 participants, including 179 faculty members (56.5%) and 138 administrative staff members (43.5%). In terms of age distribution, the 29–44 years' age group represented the largest segment of the sample ($n = 182$, 57.4%), followed by the 45–60 years' group ($n = 69$, 21.8%) and the 18–28 years' group ($n = 66$, 20.8%). In the 29-44 age group, which was the predominant one, the roles were relatively equal with 97 faculty members and 85 administrative staff members. Nonetheless, a significant difference was found in the 45-60 age group where the faculty members ($n=46$) were twice the number of members of the administrative staff ($n=23$). On the other hand, the youngest group (18-28 years) had the nearest parity of roles as there were 36 members of the faculty and 30 members of the administrative group. Comprehensively, the data pointed out a workforce that was mainly in the early-mid career levels with a considerable proportion of faculty members continuing in the workforce to the 45-60 age bracket than their administrative counterparts.

Table 2

Interitem Consistency and Convergent Validity

Concept	Indicator	Outer Loading	Alpha	CR Rho _a	CR Rho _c	AVE
			0.697	0.704	0.813	0.522
Green Work Environment (GWE)	GWE1	0.699				
	GWE3	0.709				
	GWE5	0.762				
	GWE6	0.714				
Green Hiring (GH)			0.696	0.716	0.830	0.621
	GH1	0.773				

Concept	Indicator	Outer Loading	Alpha	CR Rho_a	CR Rho_c	AVE
Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)	GH2	0.824	0.735	0.746	0.850	0.665
	GH3	0.762				
	POP1	0.773				
	POP2	0.860				
	POP3	0.792				
Employer Brand Image (EBI)			0.656	0.667	0.814	0.595
	EBI1	0.782				
	EBI2	0.819				
	EBI3	0.707				

The psychometric analysis of four constructs is summarized in Table 2. These include GWE, GH, POP, and EBI. The outer loadings indicate that GWE2, GWE4, and EBI4 do not load their respective constructs. Thus, these item statements are eliminated in the model, increasing the factor loadings. The construct of GWE shows fair levels of reliability and convergent validity with a majority of the outer loadings over 0.70 with an AVE of over 0.50. Its Cronbach Alpha is, however, a little less than the ideal value, indicating that there is a slight weakness in internal consistency. GH also shows good indicator loadings and reasonable convergent validity. Furthermore, the composite reliability scores are within the acceptable range although, with only slightly lower Cronbach Alpha. POP has a considerable level of reliability and high level of convergent validity in all measures, which confirms the soundness of this construct. Although EBI has adequate convergent validity and good factor loadings, it has a lower internal consistency according to the values of Cronbach Alpha and RhoA. Overall, the measurement models of all four constructs are fairly well-constructed, and POP has the most desirable psychometric properties.

Table 3

Divergent Validity

	1	2	3
1. Green Work Environment (GWE)	0.491	0.663	0.738
2. Green Hiring (GH)		0.463	0.482
3. Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)			0.819

The analysis revealed that all HTMT values fell below the critical

threshold. These results confirm that the constructs are sufficiently unique and do not suffer from multicollinearity, validating their use in the structural model of the study.

Table 4

Variance Inflation Indicator (Outer Model)

	Sample mean (M)
EBI1	1.368
EBI2	1.435
EBI3	1.201
GH1	1.331
GH2	1.439
GH3	1.376
GWE1	1.303
GWE3	1.449
GWE4	1.439
GWE5	1.265
POP1	1.437
POP2	1.667
POP3	1.439

The outer model VIF confirms that multicollinearity is not a concern in the measurement model, ensuring that each indicator contributes uniquely to its respective construct without redundancy.

Table 5

Variance Inflation Indicator (Inner Model)

	POP	EBI
Green Hiring (GH)	1.140	
Green Work Environment (GWE)	1.140	
Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)		1.000

The inner VIF values for all indicators confirm that multicollinearity is not a concern in the structural model.

Table 6*Hypothesis Testing*

	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	t-statistics (O/STDEV)	p- values
Green Hiring (GH) -> Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)	0.193	0.058	3.265	0.001
Green Work Environment (GWE) -> Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)	0.423	0.048	8.700	0.000
Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP) -> Employer Brand Image (EBI)	0.573	0.044	12.925	0.000
Green Hiring (GH)-> Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)-> Employer Brand Image (EBI)	0.111	0.036	3.028	0.001
Green Work Environment (GWE)-> Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)-> Employer Brand Image (EBI)	0.243	0.036	6.669	0.000

The path coefficient ($\beta = 0.423$, $p < 0.001$) shows that the POP is significantly positively influenced by a GWE. This strong t-value (8.700) supports the strength of this effect and indicates that sustainable practices in the workplace setting have a significant impact on the perceptions of the employees regarding the reputation of the organization. POP is also statistically significantly positively related to GH practices ($\beta = 0.193$, $p = 0.001$). Though the influence is not as prominent as that of the GWE, it does show that recruitment strategies oriented on environmental concerns contribute to increasing the internal perception of prestige of the organization. POP shows a considerable impact on EBI of all the paths in the model ($\beta = 0.573$, $p < 0.001$). The exceptionally large t-value (12.925) emphasizes the significance of internal prestige in determining the perception of an organization by the potential and current employees. This result underscores the mediating nature of organizational prestige in changing internal sustainability initiatives into a good employer brand. The

study concludes that there is no negative relationship that is significant in all the direct relationships examined in the model. POP has the strongest effect on EBI, then there is the effect of GWE on POP, and finally the effect of GH on POP. These results emphasize that sustainable workplace and hiring practices help to increase the perceived prestige of an organization, which subsequently helps to improve its employer branding.

Table 7

Adjusted R-squared

	Sample Mean (M)	t-statistics (O/STDEV)	p-values
Employer Brand Image (EBI)	0.328	6.395	0.000
Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)	0.273	5.558	0.000

The analysis indicates that approximately 32.8% of the variance in EBI is explained by the model and 27.3% of the variance in POP is explained by the constructs in the model. This confirms the model's validity and strength in explaining the data.

Table 8

Effect Size

	Sample Mean (M)	t-statistics (O/STDEV)	p-values
Green Hiring (GH) -> Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)	0.050	1.456	0.073
Green Work Environment (GWE) -> Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)	0.223	3.498	0.000
Perceived Organizational Prestige (POP)-> Employer Brand Image (EBI)	0.500	4.181	0.000

GWE has a significant positive influence on POP, which further strengthens EBI. In contrast, GH shows a positive but statistically insignificant effect on POP. The sample mean 0.05 shows positive effect of GH on POP but the effect is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, according to the t-statistics of 1.456 and the *p*-value of 0.073. This suggests that although there is a positive relationship, it is not strong enough to draw firm conclusions. The sample mean 0.223 shows that GWE has a

statistically significant positive impact on POP. The results showed a significant relationship between GWE and employees' perception of the organization's prestige. This is also evident from the t -value of 3.498 and the p -value of 0.000, both strongly confirming the positive effect. The sample mean 0.500 shows the strong positive association between POP and the EBI. Higher POP is a significant driver of a positive EBI, as demonstrated by the statistically significant relationship indicated by the t -statistics of 4.181 and the p -value of 0.000.

Discussion

The current study explained the effects of the key dimensions of GHRM, namely GH and GWE on EBI within the framework of SIT. The results indicated that GH has an indirect positive relationship with EBI via POP. Although the direct relationship between the two was not statistically significant, indirect relationship suggested that environmentally responsible recruitment practices have a positive relationship with organizational prestige. In terms of social identity, these practices are an indication that one is in line with pro-environmental values, and as such they can identify themselves with a socially responsible and reputable organization. All these findings indicate ST as stated by Spence (1973). The theory explains how GH indicates an organization's dedicated behavior to sustainability. In return, it raises the POP and makes the place more attractive as an employer.

This study also represented a strong positive relationship between GWE and POP. Since it also links the effect of GWE on EBI, mediated through POP. The findings of the study corroborate with the recent research conducted by Yasin et al. (2026), and Usman et al. (2024). This suggests that environmentally aware workplace practices increase organizations' prestige, which leads an organization to appear as a strong brand. These findings favor the principles of ST, SIT, and RT. By implementing green practices, institutions show clear signs of responsibility, encourage employees to recognize a value-driven workspace, and enhance their overall reputation, including their influence as an employer. Moreover, the results are perspectives from organizational justice, showing that GWE reflects fairness, ethical behavior, and care for its employees.

The results of this study present a number of important practical implications to the private HEIs in Karachi, Pakistan, and similar organizational settings. The adoption and active promotion of GH practices

by HEIs that are interested in building their employer brand should be strategically applied and actively promoted. The direct impact on perceived prestige may be small but the indirect effect on perceived prestige through the enhancement of organizational image can be significant in the attraction and retention of high-quality faculty and staff. In addition, the creation and promotion of GWE must be prioritized and communicated effectively. This is because the strong positive association of GWE with the POP means that environmentally friendly campuses may be used to improve the internal reputation and, consequently, EBI. Additionally, institutional leadership needs to be aware of the critical mediating role of POP. This is because long-term commitment to sustainability in both recruitment and workplace practices, combined with open communication, strengthens internal reputation and reinforces the branding of external employers. Lastly, HEIs must consider integrating GHRM practices into larger sustainability and branding strategies. This is because showing environmental responsibility may attract environmentally-conscious talent, enhance employee morale and engagement, and ultimately create a more competitive and reputable employer brand.

Future Research Implications

The findings suggest that GHRM practices fit within several UNSDGs, such as SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 12, and SDG 13. By aligning SDG 8, this research suggested that by adopting GH practices, an institution would appeal to sustainability-oriented individuals, encouraging creativity and making a greener economy. Moreover, green workplace practices enhance basic dimensions of decent work, such as working conditions and well-being of employees. These are crucial efforts which would promote stability in the workforce in long-run, sustainable economic growth, and create organizations' infrastructure more resilient. SDG 9 aligns that the creation of a green workplace would always require eco-friendly infrastructure and sustainable technologies within organizations, such as energy-efficient electronics, methods for waste reduction, and green building standards. These practices highlight the role of innovation and sustainable infrastructure in achieving sustainable goals while contributing to organizational status and EBI. Moreover, SDG 12 aligns that the GHRM promotes the use of sustainable resources within organizations. It presents sustainable practices through efficiency of available resources, minimization of waste, and ethical sourcing. On the other hand, GH attracts

individuals with great expertise in eco-friendly practices. These efforts increase the organization's reputation and reinforce the importance of responsible production and consumption. This research aligns with the SDG 13, which reinforces that the execution of GHRM practices empowers organizations to be the main players in coping with climate change. Green office policies and environmentally friendly recruitment not only affect the earth, however, it would also appeal to those employees who are committed to sustainability in promoting a more ecologically-oriented culture. As a result, companies position themselves as proactive participants in climate action efforts which enhance their employer brand through action-oriented environmental control.

Conclusion

The current study aimed to investigate the POP and EBI in private HEIs in Karachi, Pakistan. This was done with reference to GHRM practices, such as GH and GWE. It is a part of the growing, yet an underexplored area of research on GHRM in private higher education sector in Pakistan that provides insights into these relationships.

The analysis revealed that GH positively impacts the EBI of institutions via POP. The indirect analysis results revealed that GH positively affects employees' perceptions of the institution's prestige, even if the effect size did not make the direct relationship between GH and organizational prestige statistically significant. This enhanced visibility is a more favorable employer brand. These results are consistent with ST, which suggests that green recruitment increases the attractiveness of an organization by signaling its values and commitment to sustainability.

The study also found a strong and positive direct relationship between POP and GWE. The results supported that the GWE had a significant indirect effect on EBI, mediated by POP. Such results are clear evidence of how sustainable workplace practices build up an organization's employer brand and internal prestige. They go together with perspectives on organizational justice, which consider a green workplace as an indicant of justice, empathy, and ethical corporate behavior.

An organization's internal reputation is formed by both GH and green environment, which increases its image as an employer, hence the mediating role of organizational prestige is evident in general. This explains how green practices boost organizational identification, send positive

messages, and enhance employer brand. Resultantly, this supports a combined theoretical approach that draws from ST, SIT, and RT. The study also concluded that, in Karachi's private higher education sector, GHRM plays a significant role in boosting EBI and organizational prestige. The findings highlighted the significance of better planning, execution, and promoting green initiatives for sustainability as well as for enhancing internal organizational standing and external employer attraction.

Moreover, this study showed theoretical implications in several ways. Firstly, it aimed to enlarge the use of ST in the context of employer branding and GHRM in Karachi's HEIs. The study also explained an important mechanism through which sustainable recruitment applies influence by offering empirical evidence that GH indirectly strengthens employer branding through perceived prestige.

Secondly, by the development of organizational justice viewpoints, the results showed an increase in the theoretical understanding of the relationship between perceived prestige and a green workplace. Furthermore, the study added to our knowledge as to how environmental initiatives promote internal perceptions. This was done by explaining how green workplace practices are perceived as signals of concern and moral behavior.

Thirdly, the study integrated ST, SIT, and RT and suggested how GHRM practices reflect as signals that raise perceived prestige, reinforce employee identification with an environmentally-responsible organization, and improve EBI. This combined perspective offers a more comprehensive understanding of the perceptual and psychological mechanisms underlying the benefits of green practices.

Lastly, the focus on private HEIs in Karachi led towards filling a significant gap in literature and provided demographic-specific insights. These types of researches are required to understand how GHRM is perceived and implemented in sectors where sustainable practices are still in their infancy.

Study Limitations

There are several limitations of this study. One of the limitations is the reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce participant bias. Additionally, another limitation pertains to restricted generalizability, since this research only focused on private higher education sectors in Karachi.

Subsequently, the applicability of these findings to other contexts, especially those outside the current sample's geographical scope, may be restricted. The use of cross-sectional data also restricts the ability to draw causal inferences.

To understand how contextual dynamics affect these relationships, future research may investigate moderating factors, such as organizational culture, organizational support, leadership, and sustainable policies. While longitudinal designs would help in establishing a stronger causal understanding of how GHRM shapes prestige and employer branding over time, more focused analyses of GH and workplace practices could produce practical insights for practitioners. The scope of generalization could be expanded by expanding the research into other sectors or performing cross-national comparative analysis. Additionally, qualitative investigations could study mechanisms that are not revealed by quantitative methods and could gain deeper insights into how employees and job-seeking candidates perceive and adopt GHRM practices.

Author Contribution

Sadaf Memon: topic selection, literature review, questionnaire design, data collection, data analysis, article writing. **Muhammad Azam:** topic selection, questionnaire design, data analysis, article writing

Conflict of Interest

The authors of the manuscript have no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings of this study will be made available by the corresponding author upon request.

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The authors did not use any type of generative artificial intelligence software for this research.

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