

BUILDING IMAGE, DRIVING PERFORMANCE: THE SYNERGY OF GREEN HRM AND EMPLOYER BRANDING

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ABSTRACT: This study examines how Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) shape employer branding and company performance in Indonesia's digital startups. The contribution lies in extending Resource-Based View and Signaling Theory by positioning green practices and organizational support as strategic resources and credible signals that influence branding pathways rather than direct performance. A survey of 255 employees and driver-partners analyzed with PLS-SEM shows that GHRM builds employer branding but does not directly raise performance, while POS improves both branding and performance. Employer branding emerges as the key mediator that converts internal practices into external outcomes. The findings offer clear guidance for digital startup leaders: invest in green HR and supportive climates not for immediate financial gain, but for the long-term branding strength that sustains competitiveness.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management; Perceived Organizational Support; Employer Branding; Corporate Performance; Digital Startups

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INTRODUCTION

The issues of climate change and environmental sustainability have become significant pressures for companies around the world (Todaro et al., 2020). In the last decade, governments, consumers, and other stakeholders have increasingly demanded that companies operate in a more environmentally friendly manner, not only to comply with increasingly stringent regulations but also to respond to public expectations that are increasingly aware of the importance of sustainability in all aspects of life, including business activities (Oelze et al., 2014; Sugiarto & Gabriella, 2020; Qing et al., 2024). This pressure forces companies not only to minimize their environmental impact but also to create long-term sustainable value (Koseoglu et al., 2024).

For companies, sustainability is now not only a moral obligation but also a strategy to maintain competitiveness and a positive reputation in the eyes of the public and stakeholders (Napathorn, 2021). One approach that has emerged to address these challenges is Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), which integrates environmental values into human resource management (Gupta et al., 2022; Sapna et al., 2021). GHRM practices include sustainability based recruitment, training, development, and rewards that have the potential to improve overall organizational performance (Camilleri, 2017).

In the context of fast-moving digital startups such as Gojek in Indonesia, the application of GHRM is interesting to study not only because of its moral value, but also because of its strategic potential as a valuable internal resource. (Yasin et al., 2022). GHRM is believed to enhance a company's employer branding, which is an effort to build an image as an employer that is responsible for the environment and employee welfare. (Muisyo et al., 2021). Strong employer branding not only attracts the best talent but also increases employee loyalty and performance (Faedah et al., 2024; Kaur & Shah, 2022).

However, the success of GHRM implementation is not only determined by company policy but also by Perceived Organizational Support (POS), which is the extent to which employees feel valued and supported by the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2020). Employees who feel supported usually show higher commitment, including in supporting green initiatives. Previous studies have shown that POS is positively related to individual and organizational performance (Khalid et al., 2021; Saeed et al., 2018). Therefore, POS is an important factor in the effectiveness of GHRM, which in turn affects employer branding and company performance.

Previous literature has highlighted the relationship between GHRM and individual performance, such as employee commitment or engagement in sustainability programs. (Chowdhury et al., 2025; Lawter et al., 2025) However, research on the direct influence of GHRM on company performance through employer branding and organizational support is still relatively limited, especially in the context of digital startups in developing countries such as Indonesia (W. Li et al., 2023; Renwick et al., 2012). Using the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Signaling Theory theoretical frameworks, this study aims to explain how GHRM and POS practices can be strategic resources and positive signals that shape employer branding and ultimately improve company performance.

Gojek was chosen as a case study because, as a leading digital startup in Indonesia, Gojek not only focuses on operational efficiency and technological innovation but also strives to build an image as a company that cares about the environment and employee welfare (Abad Segura et al., 2024; Awawdeh et al., 2021). In Makassar regency, Gojek faces the challenge of combining digital innovation, sustainability, and adaptive HRM in a dynamic and competitive environment. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of GHRM and POS on company performance through employer branding at the digital startup company Gojek. This study is expected to contribute to the development of human resource management and sustainability literature, as well as provide practical insights for policymakers in designing HR policies that not only support short-term performance but also the long-term sustainability of the company.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study integrates two main theories, the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Signaling Theory, to explain how Green HRM (GHRM) and organizational support for sustainability shape employer branding, which in turn affects company performance. According to Wernerfelt and Barney (Mwaura et al., 2022; Karman, 2020), RBV views competitive advantage as the result of

owning and utilizing internal strategic resources. In the context of Green HRM, practices such as green recruitment, environmental training, and sustainability-based performance appraisal have the potential to become strategic resources that enhance competitive advantage (Mirzayi & Motaghi, 2024).

However, in many digital startups, GHRM practices often do not meet the criteria of “rare” and “inimitable” in the VRIO framework. For example, green recruitment policies or environmental training are still relatively common, easily adopted by competitors, and not yet fully integrated into core strategies. This may explain why, in the context of Gojek, GHRM has not had a significant direct impact on company performance despite its long-term potential. (Habib et al., 2021). Thus, GHRM and organizational support need to be viewed not only as environmental compliance but as a unique resource investment that is strategically valuable for building sustainable competitive advantage (Siburian & Sugiarto, 2022).

Signaling Theory

Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973; Spence, 2002) explains that companies communicate their internal quality through observable signals. Employer branding is the main channel for conveying positive signals about HRM practices and support for sustainability to internal stakeholders (employees and prospective employees) and external stakeholders (customers, investors, the community) (Bravo et al., 2017; Connelly et al., 2024). In a highly competitive digital startup environment, the risk of signal distortion is also high. Green practices that are merely symbolic or external campaigns without real implementation can result in weak or even negative signals to critical stakeholders (Li et al., 2023). Therefore, the real integration between GHRM practices and organizational support with employer branding is crucial so that the signals sent are consistent and credible, thereby truly enhancing the company's image as a responsible and innovative workplace (App et al., 2012; Chaudhary & Chaudhary, 2023; Yong et al., 2019). This study identifies indirect influence pathways between GHRM, organizational support, and employer branding that collectively enhance company performance. GHRM and organizational support can be viewed as strategic resources (RBV) and positive signals (Signaling Theory) that strengthen employer branding. Strong employer branding then functions as a mediating mechanism that enhances company performance.

Hypothesis Constructions

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is the integration of sustainability values into human resource management, covering the recruitment, training, development, and environmental based reward systems (Gupta et al., 2022; Sapna et al., 2021; Camilleri, 2017). According to the Resource-Based View (RBV) framework (Barney, 1991; Mwaura et al., 2022), these green-oriented practices have the potential to become valuable, rare, inimitable, and organized (VRIO) strategic internal resources, thereby enhancing the company's competitive advantage (Mirzayi & Motaghi, 2024). In the context of digital startups, such green practices can also strengthen the company's reputation and encourage pro-environmental employee behavior that contributes to operational efficiency, loyalty, innovation, and company reputation (Siburian & Sugiarto, 2022). However, the suboptimal implementation of GHRM in many digital startups means that its effect on company performance is not always significant (Renwick et al., 2012), suggesting this potential exploration.

H1: Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has a positive effect on company performance.

Employer branding is the image or reputation of a company as an attractive place to work in the eyes of employees and prospective employees (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). In the context of Signaling Theory (Spence, 2002; Connelly et al., 2024), employer branding functions as a signaling channel that conveys the internal quality of the company to stakeholders. Green HRM practices such as green recruitment, environmental training, and sustainability-based reward systems are clear signals that the company cares about the environment and employee welfare (Guerci et al., 2016; Ansari et al., 2020). These signals increase the company's attractiveness in a labor market that is increasingly sensitive to sustainability values (Kaur & Shah, 2022; Faezah

et al., 2024). Within the Resource-Based View (RBV) framework, consistent implementation of Green HRM can strengthen intangible competitive advantages in the form of corporate reputation and values that are difficult for competitors to imitate (Mirzayi & Motaghi, 2024). This advantage is accumulated through credible and sustainable employer branding. Thus, GHRM practices not only improve internal efficiency but also strengthen the company's external image as a responsible workplace.

Although international literature has shown that green-oriented HRM practices increase a company's attractiveness (Zhao et al., 2023), research on the context of digital startups in developing countries is still limited. Most studies on Green HRM and employer branding focus on large companies or the public sector in developed countries (Renwick et al., 2012). However, in a digital startup environment such as Gojek Makassar, conditions such as intense competition, limited resources, and high HR dynamics can affect the effectiveness of Green HRM in shaping employer branding. This gap is what this study aims to address for the hypothesis.

H2: Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has a positive influence on employer branding.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) is employees' perception of the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2020; Chandhika & Saraswati, 2019). This concept is often seen as an important foundation in explaining employee motivation and commitment within an organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). When employees feel supported by the organization, they tend to show higher motivation, loyalty, and work engagement, which in turn has a positive impact on individual and organizational performance (Hanifia & Ratnaningsih, 2020; Siahaan et al., 2023; Simatupang & Salendu, 2019). Within the Resource-Based View (RBV) framework, tangible organizational support (e.g., through training, rewards, work facilities) is a valuable and rare internal resource. It reflects an organizational culture that supports employee welfare and is difficult for competitors to imitate. This support can enhance human resource capacity as a strategic asset to drive company performance (Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2013). From the perspective of Signaling Theory, concrete organizational actions in supporting employees (e.g., welfare programs, career support) become internal signals that reinforce employees' positive perceptions of the company. These signals shape more productive work behavior and high commitment, which ultimately improve company performance (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021; Khalid et al., 2021).

However, previous studies have shown varying results. Some studies found that POS had a positive and significant effect on performance (Afzali et al., 2014; Arshadi & Hayavi, 2013; Susmiati & Sudarma, 2015), but others report that the effect is insignificant depending on the industry context and employee demographic characteristics (Chiang & Hsieh, 2012; Putranti et al., 2021). This gap is important because in digital startups such as Gojek Makassar, high work pressure, flexible organizational structures, and limited resources can influence how POS affects performance.

H3: Perceived Organizational Support (POS) has a positive effect on company performance.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) not only influences employee work behavior and performance, but also plays an important role in shaping internal and external employer branding. POS reflects the extent to which the organization truly cares about the welfare and contributions of its employees (Eisenberger et al., 2020). When employees feel a high level of support, this positive perception becomes part of the company's identity as a caring and responsible workplace (Chandhika & Saraswati, 2019; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Within the framework of Signaling Theory, tangible organizational support (e.g., welfare programs, awards, development opportunities) acts as an internal signal that reinforces the company's positive image. These signals are disseminated not only internally (through employees' daily experiences) but also externally through stories and testimonials shared with the public, thereby forming credible employer branding (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021; Khalid et al., 2021). Meanwhile, according to the Resource-Based View (RBV), consistent and employee-oriented organizational support is an intangible asset that is valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate. This support becomes a competitive advantage that strengthens the company's reputation as an employer of choice (Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2013; Estifo et al., 2019).

H4: Perceived Organizational Support (POS) has a positive influence on employer branding.

Employer branding is the image or reputation of a company as an attractive place to work in the eyes of employees and prospective employees (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Within the framework of Signaling Theory (Spence, 2002; Connelly et al., 2024), employer branding acts as a signaling channel that conveys the company's values, culture, and internal qualities to stakeholders. This positive image can influence employee behavior through increased motivation, commitment, and identification with the organization (Bhasin et al., 2019; Xia & Yang, 2010).

As in RBV, a company's reputation as an employer of choice is an intangible asset that is valuable, rare, and difficult for competitors to imitate (Karami et al., 2004; Mirzayi & Motaghi, 2024). Strong employer branding increases attractiveness to quality talent and retains competent employees, thereby supporting sustainable improvement in company performance (Citta et al., 2019; Chawla, 2019; Russell & Brannan, 2016; Srivastava & Bhatnagar, 2010). Although previous studies have shown a positive relationship between employer branding and organizational performance, some studies have found different or insignificant results. For example, Windayanti et al. (2016) showed that employer branding did not affect employee performance in the context of a specialized hospital in Jakarta due to low work-life balance. This shows that industry context and organizational characteristics influence the effectiveness of employer branding in improving performance (Aldousari et al., 2017; Sharma et al., 2025).

H5: Employer branding has a positive influence on company performance.

Previous studies have shown that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) practices do not always have a direct impact on organizational performance, but can influence it indirectly through the formation of strong employer branding (Renwick et al., 2012). Within the framework of Signaling Theory (Spence, 2002; Connelly et al., 2024), both GHRM practices and tangible organizational support serve as positive signals that reinforce the company's image as a responsible and innovative workplace. Green practices such as environmentally friendly recruitment, sustainability-oriented training, and environment-based reward systems, as well as organizational actions that demonstrate concern for employee welfare, result in positive experiences that strengthen internal and external employer branding (Guerce et al., 2016; Mishra, 2017; Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021; Khalid et al., 2021).

Within the Resource-Based View (RBV) framework, employer branding formed from high-quality GHRM and POS practices is a valuable, rare, and difficult-to-imitate intangible asset, thereby enhancing the company's competitive advantage. Credible employer branding not only strengthens employee motivation and engagement but also increases the company's attractiveness to quality talent that supports long-term performance (Mirzayi & Motaghi, 2024; Estifo et al., 2019; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2013). However, research on the mediation pathway of employer branding is still limited, especially in developing countries' digital startups. Hence these hypotheses are proposed, and combined into Figure 1 model presentation.

H6: Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has a positive effect on company performance through employer branding.

H7: Perceived Organizational Support (POS) has a positive effect on company performance through employer branding.

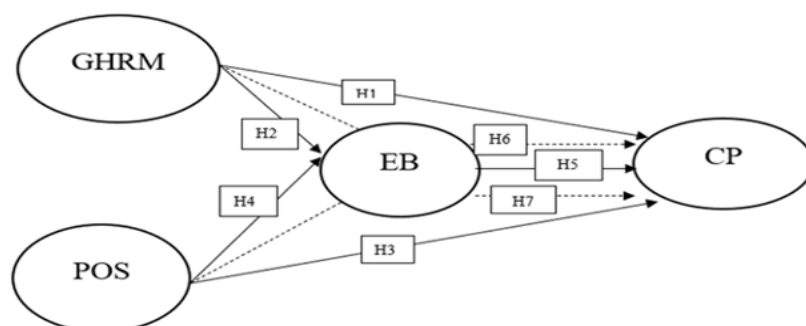


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative approach using a survey method. The main objective of the study is to examine the direct and indirect relationships between variables (Creswell et al., 2019), including the mediating role of employer branding, within the ecosystem of the on-demand service startup company Gojek. The population in this study consists of Gojek startup employees spread across Indonesia, with an estimated number of approximately 3,000 people. However, the research location is focused on the city of Makassar, South Sulawesi. The selection of Makassar is based on the argument that this region has experienced rapid growth in Gojek services outside of Java, as reflected in the growing user base and number of driver partners. (Sulawesi Bisnis., 2022) This claim is reinforced by literature and statistical data showing that Makassar is one of the main centers of digital economic growth outside of Java.

1. Regional Economic Contribution: Previous studies highlight Gojek's central role as an economic driver. For example, the Gojek ecosystem (including GoFood and GoPay services) is estimated to have made a significant contribution to Makassar City's Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP), reaching around Rp 4.6 trillion or 3% of Makassar's GRDP in 2021 (Fajar SulSel, 2022). This figure is strong evidence of Gojek's operational expansion and deep market influence.
2. Digital Acceleration and Employment: The presence of these services also correlates positively with employment and the acceleration of digital transformation of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Makassar (Kilay et al., 2022; Trianto et al., 2023).

The total number of research respondents was 255 people, selected using purposive sampling. This technique was chosen because only respondents who had direct experience related to human resource (HR) policies and corporate sustainability relevant to the research variables involved were included. The sample size of 255 respondents was based on two strict methodological considerations:

1. PLS-SEM Analysis Criteria: This study used Partial Least Squares Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). With a total of 20 evenly distributed indicators (5 indicators per variable), the minimum sample size recommended based on the 10-Times Rule is 10 times the number of indicators, which is $10 \times 5 = 50$ respondents. With 255 respondents, this sample size far exceeds the minimum required by PLS-SEM, ensuring adequate estimation stability and statistical power (Cheah et al., 2018; Hair et al., 2019).
2. Representation of Key Groups: The number 255 was divided to ensure adequate representation of two groups of internal stakeholders with different roles and experiences, namely, 55 Office Staff. This number represents the perspectives of management and GHRM policy implementation. Driver Partners: 200 people. This larger number was chosen to capture the diversity of experiences in the field, as driver partners are the largest population and direct recipients of employer branding and company policies. This separation of proportions was done to maintain construct validity and avoid bias due to the combination of heterogeneous populations.

The research instrument is a questionnaire developed based on Green HRM indicators, Perceived Organizational Support (POS), employer branding, and company performance sourced from previous literature. Variable measurements use a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) (Hair et al., 2019). The instruments were developed through a process of adaptation from tested scales and adjusted to the operational context of Gojek:

1. Green HRM & POS: Adapted from standard scales and adjusted to measure employee/partner perceptions of environmentally friendly HR practices and perceived support in the gig economy ecosystem. (Yong et al., 2022; Asfahani et al., 2023)
2. Employer Branding & Company Performance: Adapted based on functional, economic, and psychological value dimensions, with items tailored to measure business attractiveness and success in a tech startup environment (Hollstein et al., 2024; Kashyap & Verma, 2018).

These adjustments ensure that the measurements are relevant and capable of accurately capturing the constructs among Gojek employees and partners. The questionnaire was tested (pilot test) on a separate sample ($n=30$) prior to the main data collection to test the accuracy and

consistency of the measuring instrument. Before the main survey, the questionnaire was pilot-tested on 30 respondents to ensure accuracy and consistency. Validity checks using item-total correlations confirmed that all 20 items exceeded the critical r value, indicating sound construct validity. Reliability tests using Cronbach's Alpha showed strong internal consistency, with all variables scoring above the 0.70 threshold (GHRM = 0.851; POS = 0.880). These results establish that the instrument is both valid and reliable for the main study.

RESULTS

As indicated in method section, this study test in the validity measures how good or valid the relationship between indicators and latent variables is in a pilot study. We then proceed to the final model as in Table 1.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Tes

Variables	Item	Loading	AVE	Alpha	CR
Green Human Resource Management	X1.2	0.873	0.685	0.844	0.896
	X1.3	0.703			
	X1.4	0.809			
	X1.5	0.909			
	X2.1	0.889			
Perceived organizational support (POS)	X2.2	0.838	0.766	0.923	0.942
	X2.3	0.907			
	X2.4	0.862			
	X2.5	0.876			
	Y1.1	0.881			
Corporate Branding	Y1.2	0.903	0.764	0.897	0.928
	Y1.4	0.891			
	Y1.5	0.818			
	Z1.1	0.866			
	Z1.3	0.913			
Company Performance	Z1.4	0.917	0.708	0.856	0.905
	Z1.5	0.635			

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

The measurement model shows clean psychometric properties. All factor loadings are above the minimum threshold, with AVE values above 0.50, confirming convergent validity. Internal consistency is strong, as Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability scores for each construct comfortably exceed the 0.70 benchmark. Together, these statistics signal that the instruments are statistically sound and suitable for testing the hypothesized relationships. This foundation strengthens the credibility of the subsequent structural model, ensuring that any causal inferences rest on reliable measurement as in Figure 2.

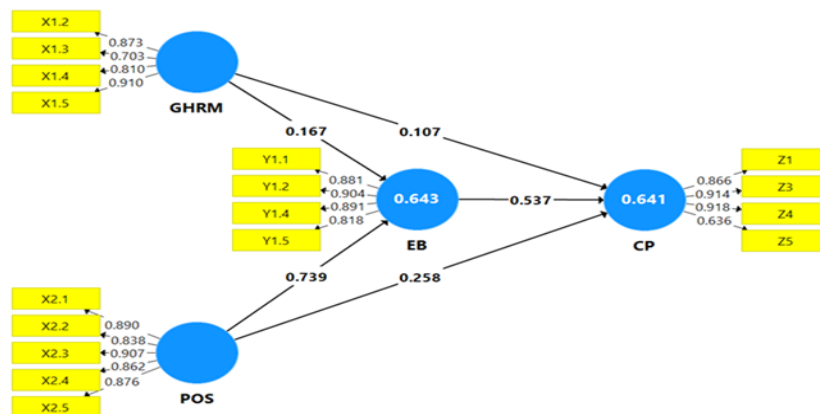


Figure 2. Outer Model Presentation
Source: Smartpls 3 Output

The outer model in the figure above shows the structural model resulting from PLS analysis. The model shows that GHRM has a positive but relatively small effect on employer branding (0.167) and company performance (0.107). In contrast, POS has a strong effect on employer branding (0.739) and a moderate effect on company performance (0.258). Employer branding itself has a positive effect on company performance (0.537). The R^2 value for employer branding = 0.643 and R^2 for company performance = 0.641 indicate a moderately high predictive ability of the model. These findings support the role of employer branding as a mediator of the influence of GHRM and POS on company performance in accordance with RBV and Signaling Theory.

To evaluate the structural model, predictive relevance (Q^2), effect size (f^2), and explained variance (R^2) were examined. Q^2 values were calculated using the blindfolding procedure, f^2 assessed the contribution of each exogenous construct to the endogenous constructs, and R^2 captured the overall variance explained. These statistics collectively ensure the robustness of the model beyond simple path significance tests.

Table 2. Predictive Validity, Effect Size, and Explained Variance

Construct	Q^2	$f^2 \rightarrow$ CP	$f^2 \rightarrow$ EB	$f^2 \rightarrow$ GHRM	$f^2 \rightarrow$ POS	R^2 (Endo.)
Corporate Branding (CP)	0.433	–	0.287	–	–	0.641
Employer Branding (EB)	0.483	–	–	0.027	0.071	–
GHRM	–	–	0.072	–	–	–
POS	–	–	–	–	1.411	–
Company Performance	0.433	–	–	–	–	0.643

Note. Following Hair et al. (2019), Q^2 values greater than zero confirm predictive relevance; f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively; and R^2 values of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 reflect weak, moderate, and substantial explained variance.

The results demonstrate that employer branding ($Q^2 = 0.483$, $R^2 = 0.641$) carries the strongest predictive relevance, confirming its central mediating role in the model. The f^2 values show that POS exerts a large effect on employer branding, while GHRM contributes only modestly. Meanwhile, corporate branding explains a moderate share of variance in company performance ($R^2 = 0.643$), indicating that internal human resource practices and perceived support drive outcomes largely through their branding effects rather than direct performance gains.

Table 3. Results of Direct and Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis & Path	Effect	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1: GHRM $\rightarrow$ Company Performance	0.112	1.661	0.097	Rejected
H2: GHRM $\rightarrow$ Employer Branding	0.172	3.036	0.003	Accepted
H3: POS $\rightarrow$ Company Performance	0.253	2.864	0.004	Accepted
H4: POS $\rightarrow$ Employer Branding	0.738	14.805	0.000	Accepted
H5: Employer Branding $\rightarrow$ Comp. Performance	0.539	6.277	0.000	Accepted
H6: GHRM $\rightarrow$ Comp. Performance (via EB)	0.092	2.983	0.003	Accepted
H7: POS $\rightarrow$ Company Performance (via EB)	0.399	5.163	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smartpls 4 Output (2025)

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) does not directly enhance company performance, contrasting with earlier studies that identified a positive link between the two (Yong, Yusliza, & Fawehinmi, 2019; Zhao et al., 2023). This divergence reflects the developmental stage of digital startups. From the Resource-Based View (RBV), GHRM in firms such as Gojek has yet to meet the VRIO standards of value, rarity, inimitability, and organization. Unlike manufacturing companies with tangible environmental impacts, GHRM in the digital sector remains peripheral and underdeveloped (Cristofaro, 2019; Heeks et al., 2021). Resource allocation in startups prioritizes immediate growth drivers—technology, customer acquisition, and market expansion—over HR systems that lack short-term visibility (Belousova et al., 2022). Consequently, GHRM has not matured into a distinct, performance-enhancing

capability. However, the results demonstrate that employer branding serves as a full mediator in this relationship (Yasin et al., 2022; Muisyo et al., 2021). Green HRM does not drive performance directly but builds perceptions of environmental responsibility that strengthen the company's reputation, which in turn fosters performance through enhanced attraction, engagement, and loyalty (Sharma et al., 2025). GHRM should thus be viewed as a long-term strategic investment that generates performance gains by reinforcing the firm's identity as a responsible employer.

The analysis further underscores employer branding as the central conduit linking both GHRM and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) to company performance (Muisyo et al., 2021). In line with Signaling Theory, authentic green initiatives and visible organizational support act as credible signals that shape perceptions among employees and potential recruits (Elshaer et al., 2024). These perceptions translate into stronger motivation, commitment, and retention, all of which elevate firm outcomes (Sarwar & Shahzad, 2024). Employer branding, therefore, functions as more than an image-building tool—it transforms internal managerial practices into competitive advantage within the digital startup context (Yasin et al., 2022). The evidence supports the argument that reputation as an “employer of choice” constitutes a sustainable strategic resource (Zihan & Makhbul, 2024; Connelly et al., 2024).

Moreover, POS exhibits significant direct and indirect effects on employer branding and company performance (Yongxing et al., 2017; Labrague et al., 2018). Tangible organizational support—expressed through fair treatment, recognition, and resource availability—represents a valuable and inimitable intangible asset (Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2013). Under Signaling Theory, such support conveys authenticity that enhances employee trust and external credibility, strengthening the company's brand as a caring and ethical employer (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021). This finding aligns with prior studies emphasizing that a strong employer reputation, once established, sustains long-term organizational success (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Connelly et al., 2024). In digital startups, where competition for skilled labor is intense, being recognized as a green and supportive workplace becomes a decisive differentiator (Eisenberger et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2016). From both RBV and Signaling perspectives, such a reputation is not merely communicative—it is a strategic asset that secures sustained competitive advantage.

The findings call for digital startups in Indonesia to institutionalize GHRM more deeply and distinctively, embedding environmental principles in recruitment, evaluation, and partner management. Organizational support must be visible and integrated into branding messages, while employer branding strategies should target digital-native talent through sustainability training, participatory green campaigns, and inclusive communication. Theoretically, this study extends RBV and Signaling Theory to the digital startup context of developing economies, demonstrating that neither GHRM nor POS directly guarantees performance improvements. Their value emerges when organizations leverage them to build credible employer brands that embody responsibility and care—intangible assets that anchor sustainable performance.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STUDY

This study concludes that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) influence company performance in digital startups primarily through employer branding. GHRM alone does not directly raise performance but strengthens the firm's image as a responsible employer, while POS enhances both branding and performance through visible organizational care. Employer branding thus acts as the strategic channel that translates green and supportive practices into tangible outcomes. Theoretically, these results extend the Resource-Based View and Signaling Theory by demonstrating that intangible resources—such as environmental commitment and perceived support—gain value when converted into a credible reputation as an employer of choice rather than through direct operational impact.

This study is limited by its single-context, cross-sectional design, which constrains generalization and causal inference. Future research should adopt longitudinal and multi-sector approaches while examining moderating factors such as culture, innovation, or leadership. Practically, startups should embed environmental principles and consistent support within HR systems, integrate these into employer branding communication, and treat reputation as a strategic asset to sustain long-term competitiveness.

ETHICAL DISCLOSURE

Research ethics were ensured by obtaining informed consent from respondents before completing the questionnaire and maintaining the confidentiality of their personal data. This research has also obtained ethical approval from the Lasharan Jaya School of Management with decision letter number 465/STIM-LJ/VI/2025.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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