

# Understanding the Dynamic Nexus between Green Human Resource Management and Environmental Performance: The Moderating Role of Green Leaders' Emotional Intelligence in the Pharmaceutical Sector of Bahrain

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## ABSTRACT

The current study attempted to examine how green HRM factors can help enhance environmental performance in the pharmaceutical sector of Bahrain. The study also investigated the direct and moderation of leaders' emotional intelligence on these direct relationships. Structural equation modelling was used to test the hypothesized relationships on the data obtained from managers and supervisory level employees working across the three major pharmaceutical companies in Bahrain. The results underlined a significant relationship between green ability and environmental performance. Similarly, green opportunity and environmental performance also posed a significant correlation. However, green motivation failed to pose any significant impact on environmental performance in the pharmaceutical sector. Importantly, leaders' emotional intelligence also resulted a significant relationship with environmental performance. In connection moderation, leaders' emotional intelligence moderated the relationship between green opportunity and environmental performance. On the contrary, it did not show any moderating role on the relationship between green ability, green motivation, and environmental performance. The study forwards discussion on the results and implications for theory and practice.

**Keywords:** Green HRM, green ability, green motivation, green opportunity, environmental performance, emotional intelligence, leadership.

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## INTRODUCTION

There are growing concerns for sustainability for businesses across the globe. Organizations are pushed by environmentalists and social pressure groups to showcase responsible behaviours. Hence, businesses are expected to showcase more profound behaviours and outcomes pertaining to environmental wellbeing (Schaefer, 2004). Today, businesses have been made to learn that it is not just enough to give better performance outcomes but also to return back to society through showcasing environment-friendly behaviours. Resultantly, how businesses are doing in terms of environmental performance has become equally important (Repar et al., 2017). Here, a lot of pressure is being put on human resource management to work on developing green prospects and attitudes to help organizations in enhancing its environmental performance (Roscoe et al., 2019; Singh et al., 2020). More importantly, more scholarly significance has been denoted towards green leaders' role (Wang, Wang, Zhang & Zhao, 2018) and their emotional intelligence (Miao, Humphrey & Qian, 2018) in this regard. However, to what length, they can interplay effectively to help address the global issue of environmental performance is a major question and a scholarly gap. The present study has therefore attempted to investigate these issues to make objective contribution towards knowledge on the topic and better implications

## Green HRM

Prominent literature in the domain of human resource management suggests that the role and contribution of employees have furthered, thus resulting in more requirement for participation and involvement.

Businesses today do not merely hire employees to work for them as per the requirements. They recruit them with a strategic eye to develop their skills, intellect and attitude to assist organizations in surviving and sustaining for long (Abdulrab et al., 2018). This, in other terms, indicates the need and demand for more increased focus on green prospects of the business. (Singh et al., 2020). Green HRM denotes to human resource management activities that are focused on the environmental influences of the business and the green behaviours of the employees (Renwich et al., 2013). It is argued that green HRM is strategically integral for the business for sustainable business practices. Therein, green HRM can serve as a stage for firms to focus on their environmental concerns and work to enhance green activities and outcomes (Masri & Jaaron, 2017). Therefore, it can be asserted that green HRM can have a long-term impact on businesses, thus indicating as an element that should have top priority in the eyes of top management of businesses in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Green HRM looks into environmental elements through which organization can make a monumental impact on how it operates and what prominent developments it can make in those for responsive outcomes. Typically, based on extant literature, what has more translation towards pro-environment behaviours for businesses from green HRM includes recruitment and selection, training, performance evaluation, rewards and recognition. (Ahmed, AlZgool & Shah, 2019; Singh et al., 2020). An organization's ability to recruit and select green staff and trains them on green prospects refers to its green ability whereby when an organization places performance measures that appraise employees on green initiatives, practices and outcomes and recognizes them through rewards is referred to

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green motivation. Lastly, when an organization provides platform to practices green behaviours and work individually as well as in teams for green practices and appreciates such efforts this refers to green opportunity (Singh et al., 2020).

## **Green HRM and Environmental Performance**

Iqbal and Hassan (2018) have indicated green recruitment as organization's ability to attract and recruit individuals that have willingness and dedication for green behaviours. This requires an organization to look into different elements that could help businesses in improving their overall work in terms of obtaining the right pool of candidates who have the passion for pro-environmental behaviours (Mandip, 2012).

Businesses can go green in terms of their HRM through starting with green recruitment and selection (Singh et al., 2020) thus highlighting the significance of green ability. Therein, an organization is expected to take efforts to hire the right person with right mindset with pro-environmental behaviours. Equally, when employees are given the significance to enhance their environmental awareness and how they can work with a green approach through training and development, this helps them to improve their pro-environmental performance which ultimately enhances organization's environmental performance (Guerci, Longoni & Luzzini, 2016). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

### ***H1: Green Ability will be positively related to environmental performance***

Similarly, scholars have underlined that there is a need for developing an array of research that indicates the role of green motivation towards harnessing pro-environment behaviours (Paillé, Chen, Boiral, & Jin, 2014). This typically refers to performance appraisal, reward and recognition from the businesses toward employees. This outlines when organizations are considering green initiatives and work activities of employees during performance appraisal and rewards them for performance appraisals accordingly, it can help organizations to encourage them to reduce cost, work efficiently and minimize waste thus enhancing environmental performance (Odeyale, 2014).

Milliman and Clair (2017) have asserted that when businesses strive to establish measures through which they can work to enhance on how they appraise employees on green matters and whether or not, there are any rewards on them, it helps them to boost their employee outcomes for better environment friendly efforts thus, enhancing the organization's environmental performance.

Rewarding employees on green behaviours is essential to ensure they remain motivated to exploit the environmental performance of the business. This in a way, works to energize them to boost their efforts towards developing a sense of wellbeing for the business, which brings passion for working for the greater good of the business (Renwick et al., 2008). Thus, we speculate the following:

### ***H2: Green Motivation will be positively related to Environmental performance***

An organization aiming to be green to enhance and improve its pr-environment behaviours need to look into a variety of different things. One of them refers to how

employees are enabled to implement or apply environmental behaviours (Singh et al., 2020). In other terms, organizations need to consider looking at ways through which, they could engage (Ahmed, 2019b) them in environment friendly behaviours and activities; helping them to both individually as well as in teams work to discuss and resolve environmental issues and challenges faced by the business and above all, offer platform for them to objectively work on such elements (Rothenberg, Pil & Maxwell, 2001). This component as per Saha and Darnton (2005) is critical since it there are many organizations that showcase that they are green and appreciate green behaviours, yet still, they do not apply practically provide opportunities for employees to work accordingly. This hence leads us to understand that, under the umbrella of green HRM, an organization need not to just develop and establish policies but also offer action-based platforms so that employees can work in the same manner. Therefore, we speculate that when organizations are giving opportunities to employees to work on green matters, share knowledge and ideas, it will help them to enhance the environmental performance of the company. Thus, the following is proposed:

### ***H3: Green Opportunity will be positively related to environmental performance***

## **Moderation of Green Leader's Emotional Intelligence**

Green leadership is defined as mechanisms that enable individuals to serve as key decision-makers to influence and transform an organization's environmental objectives (Tan, Ling Pan & Zou, 2011). Green leaders work to help organizations achieve its pro-environment behaviours, thus energizing the sense of environment-friendly attitude towards every aspect of the business. Kane (2012) explained that green leaders have a bigger corporate responsibility, which requires them to work for better organizational reforms that could help businesses to elevate to the next level in terms of performance and competition. The author further suggests that what matters also is how these green leaders can connect to individual employees to make them get a better sense of what things they need to do and how they ought to work for better in-role and extra-role behaviours. This in other words, highlights the role of green leaders in energizing employees. Notably, what Groves et al. (2008) suggest that these green leaders need to do something that is at times, missing in all leaders. This caters to their emotional intelligence. Emotional leaders can work and help develop more profound green behaviours and help further the enhancement of organizational and individual outcomes (Caruso, Mayer & Salovey, 2002). Emotional intelligence of leaders where they work to understand individual potential, limits, interests and ideas and facilitates them accordingly with honesty and integrity, will be able to further employee performance (Wong & Law, 2002).

Similarly, the current study speculates that green leaders with emotional intelligence will be equally capable of enhancing the capitalization of green HRM factors to further environmental performance. Although this link has not been tested before thus, the present study aims to address a major gap in this regard, some empirical evidence can be discussed to understand this link, however. Rego et al. (2010) underlined the significance of

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emotional intelligence in enhancing caring behaviours. Accordingly, emotional competencies of leaders can boost performance-based behaviours at the team and organizational levels (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). Notably, Latem (2008) indicated towards the potential interplay of leaders' green behaviours, emotional intelligence, and green HRM. Lastly, there have been evidences in the domain of social sciences whereby, studies have tested moderation of different variables to examine the interplay among endogenous and exogenous variables (e.g., Shaikh et al., 2019; Ahmed, Kura, Umrani & PAhi, 2020). Thus, we speculate about testing the following:

**H4: Green Leaders' emotional intelligence will be positively related with environmental performance**

**H5: Green Leaders' emotional intelligence will moderate the relationship between green ability and environmental performance**

**H6: Green Leaders' emotional intelligence will moderate the relationship between green motivation and environmental performance**

**H7: Green Leaders' emotional intelligence will moderate the relationship between green ability and environmental performance**

## Methodology

### Sampling

Pharmaceutical sector in Bahrain was targeted in the present study due to growing improvements and efforts being made in the sector to improve their environmental footprint (c.f., Deraman et al., 2017; Robin, Pedroche & Astorga, 2017). Therein, the three major pharma companies were chosen for the current study where managerial and supervisory staff members were chosen to respond. This selection was done due to the fact that managers and supervisory staff members can give a

better outlook for how an organization is doing in terms of its activities since being engaged in a wider responsibility pool. A total of 354 respondents were handed questionnaires through using a self-administered approach during the month of November 2019. Frequent calls and contact point personnel were approached to ensure on-time data collection. Finally, 311 questionnaires were received back out of which 9 were discarded; hence, 302 were taken for final analysis and interpretation. Overall, the final response rate turns to be 85.3 %.

### Data Analysis

Structural equation modelling using Smart PLS 2.0 was used in the present study (Ringle et al., 2005). In this, a two-stage approach was used based on the recommendation (Hair et al., 2016). The first stage refers to the measurement model assessment where the conceptual model of the study is assessed. The second stage refers to the structural model, which undergoes an examination of the significance of the hypothesized relationships.

### Measurement Model Assessment

In the first stage, the psychometric properties of the conceptualized framework were tested. This stage looks into assessing the individual item reliability, convergent reliability, and internal reliability consistency. For this, as Table 1 and Figure 2 depicts that individual item loadings higher than 0.5 were maintained, thus omitting items lower than the recommended threshold (Chin, 1998). Similarly, the average variance extracted for each construct was also found higher than the suggested cut-off of 0.50 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). In the same line, the composite reliability scores also exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2016). Conclusively, these assessments confirmed the reliability and validity of the constructs.

**Table 1.** Loadings, AVE, Composite Reliability and R<sup>2</sup>

Construct	Loadings	AVE	Composite Reliability	R <sup>2</sup>
<b>Environmental Performance</b>		0.809177	0.962065	0.614761
EP1	0.802564			
EP2	0.907811			
EP3	0.89573			
EP4	0.910555			
EP5	0.894649			
EP6	0.977238			
<b>Green Ability</b>		0.544773	0.876435	
GA1	0.865817			
GA2	0.721913			
GA3	0.744757			
GA4	0.786561			
GA5	0.67406			
GA6	0.608395			
<b>Green Leader Emotional Intelligence</b>		0.541152	0.87411	
GLE11	0.849009			
GLE13	0.842608			

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GLEI4	0.626034			
GLEI5	0.632913			
GLEI6	0.791813			
GLEI7	0.629797			
<b>Green Motivation</b>		0.604917	0.859217	
GM1	0.816671			
GM2	0.73114			
GM3	0.730287			
GM4	0.827545			
<b>Green Opportunity</b>		0.619327	0.829313	
GO1	0.817265			
GO2	0.827752			
GO3	0.710554			

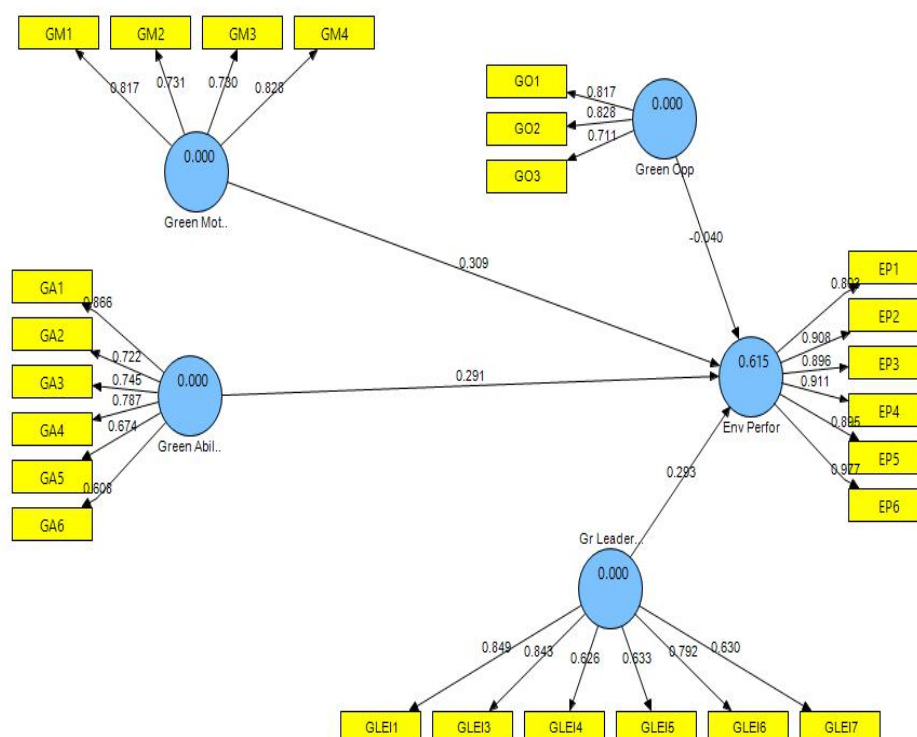


Figure 2. Measurement Model

### Structural Model Assessment

On the effective assessment of the psychometric properties of the model, the present study proceeded with the examination of the significance of the hypothesized relationships through applying 5000 bootstraps. The findings detailed in Table 2 and Figure 3 suggest a significant relationship between green ability and environmental performance ( $\beta = 0.228034$ ;  $t = 4.193$ ) hence supporting hypothesis 1. Accordingly, the current study tested the relationship between green motivation and employee performance but failed to report and significant relationships ( $\beta = -0.044$ ;  $t = 0.389$ ) hence rejecting hypothesis 2. On the flip side, the present study finds a significant relationship between green opportunity and environmental performance ( $\beta = 0.231939$ ;  $t = 1.751$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 3 is accepted. The present study tested the direct as well as the

moderating role of green leaders' emotional intelligence. The study reported a significant relationship between green leaders' emotional intelligence and environmental performance ( $\beta = 0.380715$ ;  $t = 5.144$ ). thus, hypothesis 4 is accepted. In connection to moderation, the present study found no moderating effect of green leaders' emotional intelligence on green ability and environmental performance relationship ( $\beta = -0.16861$ ;  $t = 1.14646$ ); hence hypothesis 5 is rejected. Similarly, green leaders' emotional intelligence failed to moderate the relationship between green motivation and environmental performance relationship ( $\beta = 0.248693$ ;  $t = 1.468952$ ) thus; hypothesis 6 is also rejected. Nonetheless, green leaders' emotional intelligence posed a significant moderating effect on green opportunity and environmental performance relationship ( $\beta = 0.4562$ ;  $t = 1.914005$ ); therefore, hypothesis 7 is accepted. Overall,

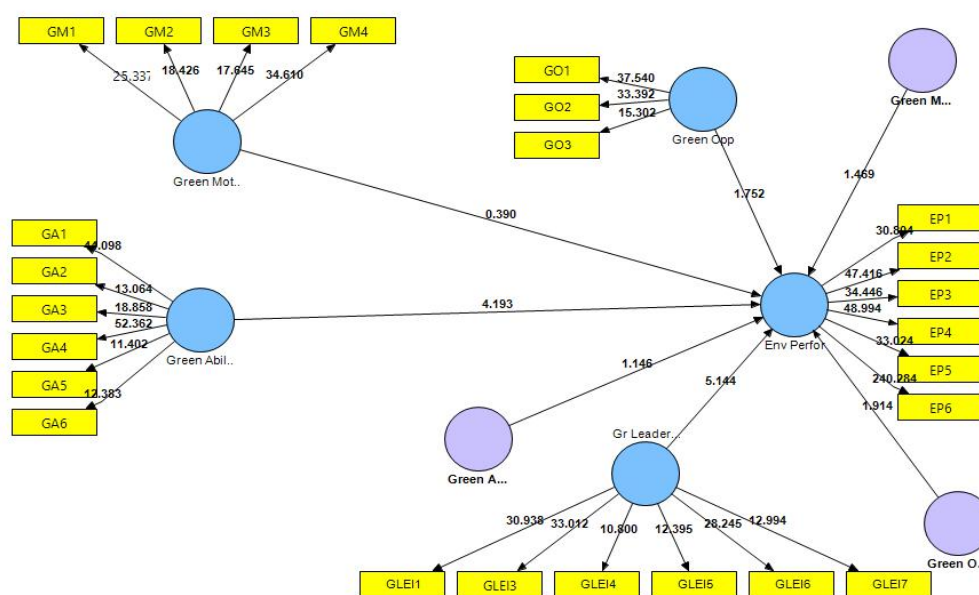
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the study found support for 4 out of the 7 hypothesized relationships.

**Table 2.** Summary of the Results

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Original Sample (O)</b>	<b>Standard Error (STERR)</b>	<b>T Statistics ( O/STERR )</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>H1</b>	<b>Green Ability -&gt; Env Perfor</b>	0.228034	0.054383	4.193088	Supported
<b>H2</b>	<b>Green Motivation -&gt; Env Perfor</b>	-0.04477	0.114891	0.389691	Not Supported
<b>H3</b>	<b>Green Opp -&gt; Env Perfor</b>	0.231939	0.132395	1.751873	Supported
<b>H4</b>	<b>Gr Leader E Intl -&gt; Env Perfor</b>	0.380715	0.074011	5.144039	Supported
<b>H5</b>	<b>Green Ability * Gr Leader E Intl -&gt; Env Perfor</b>	-0.16861	0.147073	1.14646	Not Supported
<b>H6</b>	<b>Green Motivation * Gr Leader E Intl -&gt; Env Perfor</b>	0.248693	0.169299	1.468952	Not Supported
<b>H7</b>	<b>Green Opp * Gr Leader E Intl -&gt; Env Perfor</b>	0.4562	0.238346	1.914005	Supported

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**Figure 3.** Structural Model

### Discussion

The present study attempted to examine the role of green HRM towards boosting environmental performance, followed by the direct and moderating role of green leaders' emotional intelligence. As discussed earlier, the study reported a significant relationship between the organization's green ability and environmental performance. This suggests that when an organization puts efforts in hiring the right person whilst considering the environmental values of the candidates; gives importance to green recruitment and selection procedures; offers them environmental training once hired and provides them the opportunity to practice the learning at the workplace; this significantly help the organization to reduce overall cost, lead times, improve process quality, company reputation and waste in the supply chain, thus resulting in enhancing environmental performance. The findings support the assertion of [Das and Kumar Singh \(2016\)](#) who indicated the important contribution of the green ability of an organization to hire and train employees for environment-friendly behaviours to towards numerous organizational outcomes. However, organization green motivation which included performance appraisal considering the environmental performance of an individual, incorporation of environmental policies in appraisals, rewarding employees for environmental performance along with special awards to employees showcasing environmental competencies failed to correlate with environmental performance. The plausible reason behind this could be the possibility of employees viewing environmental performance as an extra role behaviour, thus not aligning it with the environmental contribution for the organization.

On the contrary, the study reported significant results for green opportunities provided to employees and environmental performance. The findings are parallel to the results of [Singh et al. \(2020\)](#) and asserts that employees who were involved in environmentally friendly practices and are given opportunity to work in

teams to resolve environmental issues in the business followed by meetings and discussions on environmental issues can significantly help enhance organization's ability to reduce cost, minimize waste, work efficiently, improve overall performance and image thus enhancing environmental performance.

Notably, the results also reported a significant relationship between green leaders' emotional intelligence and environmental performance. The findings suggest that when a leader showcases green behaviours and expresses emotional inclination towards employees' green practices, it enhances the environmental performance of the organization. The finding indicates that green leaders with emotional intelligence at the core can motivate employees to come up and proactively work for green initiatives, share ideas and provide room in the business to implement environment-friendly activities. This ultimately results in enabling organizations to enhance their ability in cost minimization, improving efficiency, reduce waste, thus boosting environmental performance. The findings lend support to the assertion of [Rockstuhl et al. \(2011\)](#), who expressed the promising role of leaders' emotional intelligence in green practice nexus.

Pertaining to moderation, green leaders' emotional intelligence did not moderate the relationship between green ability and environmental performance of the organization. In other words, emotional attachment of green leaders did not pose any energy on the direct link of green ability and environmental performance. One plausible reason could be the distinction of green leaders' emotional intelligence as a construct from green ability relates to organization's recruitment, selection and training of employees on environment friendly skills and practices. The findings hence suggest that green leaders and their emotional touch may not necessarily be vital in boosting green staffing practices contribution towards environmental performance since their role and contribution has more to do with inspiring employees once they are hired and start working objectively.

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Similarly, the study found no empirical support for green leaders' emotional intelligence moderation on the relationship between green motivation and environmental performance. The reason could be the distinction of green leaders' EI and green motivation. Green motivation relates to green performance appraisals and rewards for green practices; hence it may not necessarily accept energy from all types of factors (Renwick, Redman & Maguire, 2008).

Importantly, the findings suggest that green leaders EI significantly moderated the relationship between green ability and environmental performance. The finding suggests that green leaders can significantly facilitate employees to engage in environmentally friendly practices, show them emotional attachment when they do so and help them work in teams towards environmental issues of the business to enhance environmental performance. In other words, an organization can make the most of green leaders' emotional intelligence through harnessing its individual as well as team-based work on green issues to boost environmental performance. The findings help to understand what Galbreath (2019) underlined pertaining to the role of green leaders.

### Implications for Theory and Practice

The findings forward notable implications for both theory and practice. Theoretically, the findings suggest that green HRM practices could be vital for furthering the environmental performance of a business, thus lending support to the literature highlighting the role of green practices towards pro-environment behaviour of the organization (Pinzone et al., 2019; Ojo & Raman, 2019). On a practical note this hence implies organizations with encouragement to implement green HR practices with special focus on enhancing its green ability of hiring and developing employees with green behaviours and green later providing them with green opportunities to work both individually as well as in teams to help resolve environmental issues of the business. This also implies organizations to consider ways for harnessing a business wide culture of green working to bring strategic benefits to the companies in particular and organizations at large. Accordingly, the results of green leaders' emotional intelligence and environmental performance correlation suggest that businesses need to work on developing leaders who are emotionally intelligent and not just pro-environmentalists. Such a blend of characteristics in a leader will enable them to effectively inspire employees and lead the company to adopt green practices by touching their souls with affection. The findings the general assertions about leaders' role in enhancing employee outcomes (e.g., Khalid, Pahi & Ahmed, 2016; Pahi, Hamid, Ahmed & Umrani, 2015) and support the meta-analysis results of Miao, Humphrey, and Qian (2016) thus implying that leaders with emotional intelligence can make a great contribution towards furthering employee behaviours and outcomes. Training interventions may be considered for the businesses in this regard to help develop leaders such capabilities and characteristics. The findings also imply businesses to help employees make the most of green HR practices through engaging green leaders to utilize their emotional intelligence to further environmental performance. Organizations may attempt to develop teams to work closely on specific areas of the business to focus on

specific processes for enhanced environmental performance.

The findings also imply businesses to consider revising their policies to make them more pro-environment, thus motivating employees to engage in green practices.

### Limitations and Scope for Future Research

The current study has forwarded notable results. Yet still, it has some limitations. At first, the study was conducted with a cross-sectional research design using a self-administered questionnaire, which may result in common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Therefore, future studies may consider using applying research design incorporating multiple method data collection strategies. Accordingly, the study catered to one particular business sector in Bahrain, thus limiting the generalization of the results. Future studies, therefore, may consider examining a similar model across different business sectors. Similarly, longitudinal research designs may also be a healthy option for future researchers to consider. In the same way, studies also try to attempt to consider other variables such as transformational leadership (Afsar, Masood & Umrani, 2019, Alkasash, 2020) for moderating role on the relationship of green HR and environmental performance relationships. Accordingly, studies may also consider looking at ways variables that could potentially mediate these relationships, such as engagement (Ahmed, 2019).

### Conclusion

The present study attempted to examine one of the crucial topics of the 21st century (environmental performance) through the lens of green HRM. The study attempted to examine the relationship between green ability, motivation, and opportunity towards environmental performance followed by the direct and moderating association of green leaders' emotional intelligence. The study has reported the significance of the hypothesized relationships followed by implications for theory and practice.

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