



The Contribution of Green Leadership to Enhancing Organizational Sustainability: A Case Study of Najaf Municipality Directorate

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Abstract

This research addresses the variable of green leadership as an independent variable with its three dimensions (self-enhancement, openness to change, and environmental and ethical and eco motives) and the organizational sustainability variable as a dependent variable with its dimensions (environmental, social, and economic sustainability). The research starts from a problem representing the following question: (What is the effect of adopting green leadership practices in enhancing the organizational sustainability level in Najaf Municipality Directorate?) The research aimed to determine the level of achieved practices of the studied organization concerning green leadership practices, as well as to determine the interest level in organizational sustainability's dimensions. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of administrative and technical



personnel. The research tested four hypotheses to verify the impact of green leadership and its dimensions on organizational sustainability. The research yields a series of outcomes, including that the organization under study employs green leadership approaches, although to a minimum, and it needs to increase real interest in these practices. The study demonstrated that green leadership, in all three dimensions, has a positive significance impact and an effective contribution in boosting enhancing organizational sustainability.

Keywords: green leadership, self-enhancement, openness to change, ethical and eco motives, and organizational sustainability.

Introduction

Sustainability has developed into a managerial behavior that is critical to contemporary organizational strategy. Organization may respond more easily to changes in the business environment by incorporating sustainability into management strategies in a more dynamic and integrated manner. In addition, sustainability means economic support and development, organization status and reputation, and maintaining customer relationships, increasing the products and services quality, adopting and encouraging practical functions, .Sustainability is also the totality of practices taken by organizations to include social and environmental measures in economic decisions and to improve relations with investors (Neacșu, & Georgescu, 2023:101). Building stronger social, economic, and environmental systems within organizations is the foundation of the organizational sustainability principle. Due to the fact that sustainability promotes organizational growth while maintaining the potential to meet future needs, this the



principle is essential to company management (Zawawi & AbdWahab, 2019: 397). Organizational sustainability practices (OSP) have gained prominence in organizational strategy due to the positive outcomes they promote (Demastus, & Landrum, 2024:708). Sustainable development is a novel interdisciplinary field. Before incorporating sustainable development into a company's strategy, the company's senior executives must first integrate sustainability into daily operations, To attain sustainability in organizations, high-level leadership support is needed to solidify this understanding and turn it into a habit that officials and individuals alike follow on a regular basis while performing their daily tasks (Beena et al, 2024:248).In light of this, the green leadership philosophy, which consistently upholds the values of eco-friendly policies and training, has emerged as a crucial strategic management model for organizational performance with significant implications for addressing a wide range of social issues on a worldwide scale.

As people and organizations around the world continue to confront social, economic and environmental challenges, climate change, resource depletion and biodiversity loss, indicators of sustainability in societies remain a growing topic , especially in regulatory frameworks of business, government and citizens .The challenges, goals and different countries in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals mean the need for new shifts in the leadership and management model that actively supports environmental safety, social responsibility and economic sustainability. Organizations can gain from effective green leadership by increasing stakeholder satisfaction, boosting brand reputation,



and improving performance. Furthermore, the Sustainable Development Goals, a series of international objectives endorsed by the United Nations, can be achieved by organizations with the support of green leadership. (Pathirana, et al., 2022:39-32). Green leadership encourages and motivates others to take activities that will save the environment and enhance fairness in both society and economy and. Green leaders can create a common vision for a better future and build partnerships with others to achieve their aims (Khalid, et al, 2024:66).Accordingly , the problem of the current research was formulated with the following question (what is the effect of adopting green leadership practices in enhancing the organizational sustainability of Al-Kafeel Company).

Green Leadership and Organizational Sustainability

Green leadership is incorporating green values into core identity and demonstrating how these values can assist organizations acquires a competitive advantage. These leaders must have a positive mindset in order to direct their organizations toward a more environmentally friendly future (Al-Ghazali,et al,2022:2).Furthermore, these organizations must participate in novel types of centralized environmental management and leadership in order to accomplish environmental sustainability objectives. As a result, a green organization differs from a non-green organization, and leaders must promote and enhance their personal principles while also incorporating them into environmentally friendly internal operations within their organizations. In other words, leaders should have the capability of influencing their subordinates and guiding organizations toward achieving the long-term organizational vision of environmental sustainability (Lee, et al 2014:1485). Green



leadership can indirectly influence employees' environmental behaviors through adaptation green practices and putting them into practice. Leaders that place a high priority on environmental issues help their staff members become environmentally conscious and exhibit traits like humility, acceptance of oneself, and a commitment to improving green performance. It also plays a role in disseminating green information to employees as part of developing both employee growth and green goals (Khalil, & Abdullah, 2023:317). Organizational sustainability includes three dimensions: organizational sustainability in its dimensions (environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and economic sustainability) (Al-Faouri, 2023:2). The environmental sustainability dimension represents an ecosystem ability to maintain its structure and functional characteristics when exposed to external and internal factors (Skripnuk, et al., 2019:4). The dimension of social sustainability is defined as being concerned with achieving a fair degree of social harmony, fair distribution of income, employment that allows creating decent livelihoods, and fair access to resources and social services (Koning, 2001,:8). The economic dimension of sustainability refers to organizational position to create value and achieve a balance between costs and revenues in production and distribution process of goods and services in organization (Braccini& Margherita, 2018:3). In addition, it also increases subordinates' interests in environmental issues by building good relationships with them and thus increasing subordinates' green values (Lusiani, et al., 2020:1353). A green leader is a transformational leader who has green values and motivates his subordinates through their actions for the environment, and these leaders will influence their green identity and



improve their green creativity (Jamshed, et al 2022:67).Green leadership inspires and motivates the workforce to achieve the organization's environmental goals while supporting their development needs at the same time. Employee learning and knowledge acquisition are promoted under green leadership.

Additionally, green leadership boosts the workforce in environmentally friendly operations and product innovation activities so that organization can provide green products and services to the market and improve its environmental performance (Dahinine, et al., 2024:4).Green leadership is defined as a leadership style which can emphasize environmental responsibility and sustainability in processes and practices related to organizational decision-making .Green leaders encourage and incorporate ecologically friendly policies, programs, and principles into their operational procedures, organizational culture, and strategic goals. This leadership style can emphasize the significance of decreasing environmental impact, boost sustainable practices and preserve natural resources within organization. The green leader have the capability of motivating and encouraging employees to adopt environmentally friendly behaviors, taking part in internal and external environmental stewardship programs and developing sustainable solutions. The green leader can create sustainable solutions, inspire and support environmentally friendly behavior in staff members, and take part in internal and external environmental stewardship programs. Organizations seek to integrate environmental objectives with more general strategic goals and public expectations in order to integrate environmental sustainability with long-term financial success through green leadership (Juniarti, et al., 2024:590).Furthermore,



green leadership refers to a leader's capacity to motivate their team members and advance the organization's long-term sustainability vision .Green leadership includes four goals, which are: (1) inspiring a common environmental vision; (2) Environmental management approach; (3) creating partnerships with stakeholders for solving environment problems; and (4) assuming responsibility for environment- education activities by influencing subordinates in environmental management initiatives (Gultom, 2022:19903). Based on a review of previous studies related to green leadership, it became clear that it includes three dimensions: (self-enhancement, openness to change, and ethical and environmental motivation (Lee, et al 2014:1487).

H1: Green leadership has a positive, significant effect on organizational sustainability.

Self-Enhancement And Organizational Sustainability

In theoretical, sociological, and psychological research, self-enhancement is an important phenomenon that is taken into consideration when making decisions about how we assess ourselves in relation to various environmental circumstances. (Hohman & Brown, 2020) Leaders have an innate need for evaluating high self-esteem and boosting self-enhancement when feeling threatened, meaning that green –oriented leaders are powerfully committed to the values of self-esteem and achieving organization's environmental goals (Lee, et al 2014:1487). A green leader should adhere to value of self-enhancement for achieving these environmental goals (Nging & Yazdanifard, 2015:1137). Self-enhancement is the concept that brings green leaders an efficient and effective vision and works to



gain and maintain a competitive advantage and incentive to achieve self-enhancement .Through the ability to assess and interpret data and information proactively in facing environmental threats to create sustainability and success for organizations, the self-enhancing leader is credited with attaining numerous successes in the work environment, whether external or internal.

H2: The self-enhancement dimension has a positive, significant impact on organizational sustainability.

Openness to Change and Organizational Sustainability

Employees must think about environmental challenges flexibly, comprehensively and persistently(Al-Hadrawi, et al., 2023:4).Openness to change means that leaders should be open to making significant changes in organization's existing social and organizational green values or environmentally unsustainable practices (Lee, et al 2014:1487). Moreover, openness to change is a key role for achieving successful transformations in organizations , as it refers to employees' readiness to support and comprehend the positive effects that can be produced from these changes, and there are many other concepts, such as the organization's change readiness, commitment to change, and the urgent necessity for companies to be able to adapt to internal and external changes (Ihsan,et al., 2024:899). Openness is the basic value that functions to create major changes in community and serves as a basic condition for achieving actual development in organizations. It requires a great effort to create a system accepting change and interconnecting with surrounding framework. Organization can adopt different strategies for enhancing its openness to change, and each organization should integrate openness as an

administrative concept. Because it not only fosters positive progress but also is essential in fostering an environment where organization's employees can cooperate and communicate with one another (BanyIssa, et al, 2024:1). Additionally, the openness of employees to adapt to planned changes is a necessity for their success and is "the most important element of organizational culture that leaders should look to build during change. On the other hand an unpleasant indicator that may predict the failure of the planned change" is the lack of openness to change. "Although being open to change can be a personal quality marked by adaptability and modernity, as the positive impact is mirrored in workers' views that embrace change and think that it will benefit them(Yue, et al, 2024:3) .

H3: Openness to change dimension has a positive, significant impact on organizational sustainability.

Ethical and Eco Motives and Organizational Sustainability

It is important to note that the word ecology refers to the concept of interconnection between elements within a system, whereas the word environment is more commonly understood and used in relation to human impact on natural systems. Environmental sustainability refers to meeting human needs without compromising the health of ecosystems (Morelli ,2011:5).A social and political concern as much as a scientific one ultimately defines what environmental sustainability is. Indeed, achieving an environmentally sustainable organization would require not only an understanding of ecosystems and resources but also the ability to bring about significant changes in desirable values, technologies, and lifestyles, as well as the advocacy for these changes to be realized and



used (McKenzie, 2004:10). Environmental sustainability is ecosystem ability of maintaining its structure and functional characteristics when exposed to external and internal factors (Skripnuk, et al, 2019:4). Ethical and eco motives mean that leaders should make ethical decisions, as top- management -teams and leaders who are ethically motivated to engage in green business (Lee, et al 2014:1487). Ethical and eco motives mean that green leaders should make ethical decisions mixed with an ethical nature, as top- management leader's involvement that have these motives in green business (Nging & Yazdanifard, 2015:1138). Enhancing the work environment with moral motivations so that leaders can accomplish green initiatives by talking to others about their environmental views and by making subordinates aware of their moral values in order to promote positive green behavior, this would create institutional value. Green leadership is an example in which green behavior influences an organization's sustainable development through its ethical commitment to the environment. It also participates in expanding its commitment to environmental ethics, and the organization's environmental management also practices green behaviors to influence individuals to achieve sustainable development for the environment (Li, et al., 2021:2).

H4: The dimension of ethical and eco motives has a positive, significant impact on organizational sustainability.

Research Scale

The research scale is developed based on previous scientific studies, the research uses metrics to measure the green leadership variable used earlier in a study of (Lee, et al 2014:1487), which includes dimensions (self-enhancement, openness to

change, and ethical an eco-motives). the environmental sustainability variables measured based on the study (Al-Faouri, 2023:2) with its dimensions (environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and economic sustainability).

The Research Population and Sample

In order to gather the necessary data and information, a random sample of administrative and technical employees is chosen for the research at the Najaf Municipality Directorate, and 180 forms of the questionnaire are delivered to them, of which (171) forms were recovered, and after checking them, it became clear that the valid ones for statistical analysis were (163) forms, which represents the research sample, Of the original population of (283) employees.

Results and Discussion

To verify the consistency of the research scale, with its main variables and their sub-dimensions, with the required degree of reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated, as in Table (1), descriptive statistics indicators were calculated in Table (2), and the main and sub impact hypotheses were tested in Tables (3, 4).

Table (1) Reliability Coefficients

variables	item No	Cronbach Alpha
self-enhancement	3	0.812
openness to change	3	0.831
ethical and ecomotives	3	0.798
Green Leadership	3	0.934
Environmental Sustainability	12	0.864
Social Sustainability	4	0.788
Economic Sustainability	4	0.876
Organizational Sustainability	4	0.911

Source: prepared by researchers based on (Spss.V.22)

According to the outputs of Table (1), the main and sub-research variables contain the required consistency and reliability , as Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of the green leadership variable is (0.934), and as for its sub-dimensions, their reliability indices ranges between (0.798-0.831), which are percentages that indicate high reliability. The organizational sustainability variable also achieves high levels of reliability in its dimensions, ranging from (0.788-0.911).

Table (2): Statistical Description of the Research Variables

Items	the mean	standard deviation	percentage
self-enhancement	3.12	0.912	0.624
openness to change	3.050	0.933	0.61
ethical and ecomotives	3.066	0.901	0.613
Green Leadership	3.077	0.877	0.615
Environmental Sustainability	3.100	0.876	0.62
Social Sustainability	2.788	0.987	0.557
Economic Sustainability	2.833	0.976	0.566
Organizational Sustainability	2.907	0.894	0.581

Source: prepared by researcher based on (Spss.V.22)

Based upon results presented in Table (2) that arithmetic mean of the green leadership variable is (3.077), which is higher than the hypothesized mean of (3) because the research adopts a five-point Likert scale, with a standard deviation of (0.877) and a significance level of 61%. The arithmetic mean of the organizational sustainability variable is (2.907), which is less than the hypothesized mean and a standard deviation of (0.894), with a significance level of 58%.

Table (3) shows the test results of the first impact hypothesis, H1, which states: Green leadership has a positive, significant impact on organizational sustainability

Table (3): Testing the Impact of Green Leadership on Organizational Sustainability

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R ²	t	Sig.	F	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
(Constant)	1.035	.5440	.7870	0.62	3.771	.0050	22.014	.0000
Green Leadership	.7110	.2030			5.22	.0000		

Source: prepared by researchers based on (Spss.V.22)

The results in Table (3) show that green leadership has a positive, significant impact on the organizational sustainability variable, as the standard impact factor is (0.787). This means that when green leadership practices increase by one unit, it would lead to an increase in organizational sustainability by 78.7% as well. This value is within a significance level (0.000), which is less than the standard score of (0.05). Based upon these results, the sub- impact hypothesis is accepted. Also, the R2 value of the green leadership variable reaches (62%), which is a great value that can be relied upon in explaining the reasons for the increase or decrease in levels of organizational sustainability in the Najaf Municipality Directorate. When the first hypothesis is verified, the hypotheses will be tested on the green leadership dimensions, as in Table (4) .

Table (4): Testing the hypotheses of the impact of green leadership dimensions on organizational sustainability.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R ²	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	.4330	.365	0.413		2.921	.0050

Self-enhancement	1.013	.1050		0.67	3.855	0.000
Openness to change	1.124	.0870	0.585		4.116	0.000
Ethical and ecomotives	1.001	0.092	0.613		5.123	0.000

Source: prepared by researcher based on (Spss.V.22)

First: Testing the second impact hypothesis H2, which states: there is a positive significance impact of the self-enhancement dimension on organizational sustainability? The data in Table (4) illustrates that the self-enhancement dimension has a positive significant impact on the organizational sustainability variable of (0.413). Moreover, the T value reaches (3.855) with a significant level of (0.000), which is less than the specified significance level of (0.05). This means that the values of self-enhancement can be used and well –grown among the understudied organization employees, which will lead to increased levels of organizational sustainability.

Second: Testing the third impact hypothesis, H3, which states: there is a positive significance impact of the openness to change dimension on organizational sustainability. It is clear from the data in Table (4) that the openness to change dimension has a positive significant impact on the organizational sustainability variable by (0.585), and also the value of T value is (4.16) with significant level (0.000), which is less than the specified significant level (0.05). This means that if employees are prepared to support and understand the positive impacts that can result from changes in the understudied organization, it will lead to increased levels of organizational sustainability.

Third: Testing the fourth impact hypothesis, H4, which states: there is a positive significance impact of the dimension of ethical and eco motives on organizational sustainability. The data in Table (4) shows that the dimension of ethical and eco motives has a positive significant impact on the organizational sustainability variable of (0.613), and also the T value is (5.123) with a significant level (0.000), which is less than the specified significant level (0.05). Accordingly, there will be higher levels of organizational sustainability when organization's leaders are motivated to support programs aimed at protecting the environment and conserving its resources and they also encourage employees to voice their ideas and engage in dialogue about them.

In addition, the coefficient of determination value (R^2) of the all green leadership dimensions is (67%), which is a high value that can be relied upon in explaining the reasons for the increase or decrease in levels of organizational sustainability in Municipality Directorate of Najaf province .

Conclusion

1. The research is applied in Najaf Municipality Directorate, which is in charge of picking up rubbish and processing it in them in a safe and healthy manner. It is also in charge of maintaining green spaces throughout the province of Najaf. This is why a sample of administrative and technical staff that operates in the cleaning and gardening fields is chosen at random as they are acquainted with the nature of the work. It became clear that there is interest at limited levels in green leadership and its dimensions in this directorate, as its officials practice the contents of green leadership, but at its lower levels, and these levels do not



correspond to the magnitude of the great challenges required to achieve environmental, social and economic sustainability.

2. Obviously, the interest levels of the surveyed directorate concerning the organizational sustainability variable were not at the required level, as the arithmetic mean of the organizational sustainability variable is (2.90) and with an interest level of (58%), which is a very modest level. This explains the reason for the significant and clear decline in the services provided by the researched directorate.
3. That green leadership practices can increase levels of organizational sustainability. Moreover, the dimension of ethical and eco motives is the most influential dimension in organizational sustainability. it means that top-management in this directorate can increase the levels of organizational sustainability primarily by relying on the dimension of ethical and eco motives and then the dimensions of oneness to change and self-enhancement, respectively, as they contribute to enhancing organizational sustainability, but with less contribution than ethical and eco motives.
4. The concerned top-management of the Najaf Municipality Directorate are required to increase attention to green leadership practices and incorporate them in work behaviors in order to create an institutional culture that will enable the organization to reach high levels of sustainability in the future.
5. Considering the significance of the subjects of organizational sustainability and green leadership, more research is required, particularly in the Iraqi environment, and the findings should be compared to those of the current study.



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