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Enhancing organizational commitment through adopting the human resources change leadership role and managing human resources attribution in sustainable enterprises in Vietnam

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CITATION

Huynh TL, Diem PT. (2024). Enhancing organizational commitment through adopting the human resources change leadership role and managing human resources attribution in sustainable enterprises in Vietnam. *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development*. 8(10): 8953.
<https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd.v8i10.8953>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 2 September 2024
Accepted: 19 September 2024
Available online: 29 September 2024

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Abstract: Despite many investigations concerning antecedents of organizational commitment in the workplace, very few studies so far have analyzed the direct or indirect impact of HR change leadership role on organizational commitment via HR attribution. Therefore, given the reciprocal principle of social exchange theory, attribution theory and signal theory, this study formulated hypotheses and a model to test the relationships between included variables by employing the mixed-method approach. In-depth interviews were initially conducted to develop questionnaires to collect quantitative data. Employing PLS-SEM to analyze the data collected from 1058 employees working in 24 sustainable enterprises in Vietnam, the findings show that the degree of adopting HR change leadership role was positive, directly affecting organizational commitment. Also, both well-being and performance HR attribution play partially mediated roles in the relationship. The findings suggest that the organizational commitment depends on not only how the degree of adopting HR change leadership role is executed, but also how employees perceive and interpret the underlying management intent of these practices. In a sustainable context, adopting HR change leadership role plays a critical role in shaping employees' interpretations of sustainable HR practices and their subsequent attributions. Besides, employees' belief on why are sustainable HRM practices implemented has an influence on the organizational commitment that in turn contributes to the overall sustainable performance.

Keywords: human resources management; HR leadership; organizational commitment; performance HR attribution; well-being HR attribution

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Working towards sustainability potentially creates corporates' competitive advantages, because they may benefit economically from incorporating responsibility and sustainability principles into their strategies and core business processes (Stahl et al., 2020). However, competitive advantages can only be achieved if the members of the human capital pool individually and collectively choose to engage in behavior that benefits the firm (March and Simon, 1958). Organizational commitment is known as a strong belief in and acceptance of an organization's goals and values, a willingness to try employees' best effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Mowday et al., 1979). Previous research has found that organizational commitment is a predictor of job satisfaction (Bashir and Gani, 2020), organizational performance (Steyrer et al., 2008), and turnover (Guzeller and Celiker, 2020). Given the mentioned benefits, sustainable enterprises may be

highly motivated to enhance organizational commitment for their sustainability and competitive advantages, because such an outcome is essential for retaining and attracting well-qualified employees who can be satisfied, have strong commitment and are willing to continue their association with their organization as well as make considerable effort towards achieving its goals (Nagar, 2012).

Previous studies found organizational commitment is indirectly enhanced by HRM practices through employee satisfaction with HRM practices (Kinnie et al., 2005), or job satisfaction (Renwick et al., 2013); by green HRM via green human capital (Shoab et al., 2021); or by high-performance HRM practices in moderating role of hierarchy culture (Alqudah et al., 2022). Other studies pointed out that transformational leadership highly affects organizational commitment (Chai et al., 2017). For example, a study by Mwesigwa et al. (2020) confirmed that the employed leadership styles, job satisfaction, the age of the academic staff, length of service, and position level are influential to organizational commitment. While, Shoab et al. (2021) employed the ability-motivation-opportunity theory and data from 287 respondents of dairy companies in Pakistan to conclude that organizational commitment would be promoted through green recruitment-selection, and green training-development practices directly or indirectly through green human capital. Although such, there is a limited understanding of the impact of the degree of adopting HR change leadership role, which is a kind of specific sustainable HR practices on organizational commitment.

Moreover, organizational commitment is not only affected by various HR practices but also differently influenced by employees' beliefs on why special HR practices are implemented (Nishii et al., 2008). Nishii and his colleagues demonstrated that internal HR attribution, which consists of commitment HR attribution and exploitation HR attribution differentially affect employees' commitment and satisfaction. While the external attribution inferring the designed HR practices to respond to outside situational pressures (i.e., legal compliance) is none. Similarly, Van De Voorde and Beijer (2015) argued that well-being HR attributions are associated with higher levels of commitment and lower levels of job strain, while performance HR attributions are associated with higher levels of job strain. Furthermore, commitment-focused HR attributions enhance the client organization-to-affective commitment via the outsourcing company-to-affective commitment, while control-focused HR attributions negatively affect such commitments (Fontinha et al., 2012). Thereby, it concluded that the external attribution inferring the designed HR practices to respond to outside situational pressures is not related to organizational commitment (Koys, 1991; Nishii et al., 2008). However, in a sustainable context, legal compliance (e.g., human rights, labor law, environmental protection law, etc.) is a crucial objective that organizations need to implement voluntarily and should be under the organization's control, because of doing it well is not only beneficial to employee and other stakeholders, but also contribute to organization's sustainable performance. Thus, when employees make an external attribution, whether it enhances employee organizational commitment in a sustainable context or not, has not been explored yet.

The article aims to address these knowledge gaps by investigating the direct and indirect impact of the degree of HR change leadership role on organizational commitment via HR attribution by using a mixed method. Guided by the reciprocal

principle of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), attribution theory (Weiner, 1985), and signal theory (Spence, 1973), the study builds the research model (see **Figure 1**) and explains the relationships. This study makes two distinct contributions to the literature. Firstly, the study contributes a deeper understanding of employees' reactions to situations, in which they make many HR attributions, which in turn affect to level of their organizational commitment in a sustainable context. Employees can make well-being or performance HR attribution as the outcome of their different interpretations of how the organization takes care of them from the signals of the degree of adopting HR change leadership role. Secondly, it also expands the signal theory (Spence, 1973) that explores the degree of adopting HR change leadership role as signals and HR professionals as signalers.

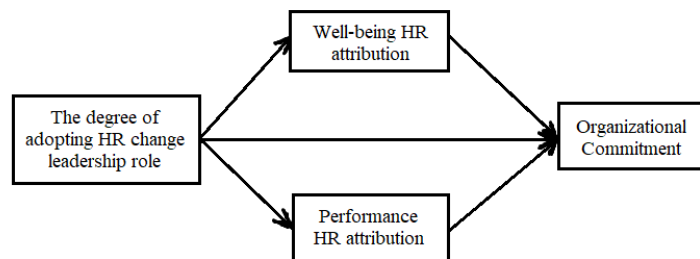


Figure 1. The research model.

1.2. Development of hypotheses and research model

HR change leadership role is broadly defined as the actions taken by HR professionals, maybe being individuals or a group, to identify opportunities in both internal and external organizational conditions; leverage resources such as skills, knowledge, and social capital as well as HR system to change organizational norms, rules, routines, values corresponding to sustainability-objectives (Ren and Jackson, 2019); and control harmful activities to socialism and ecology (Stahl et al., 2020). Ren and Jackson suggested the HR role in a sustainable context as the role of HRM institutional entrepreneurs through the lens of the institutional theory of DiMaggio (1988), wherein institutional entrepreneurs are defined as actors who dislodge existing practices, introduce new ones, and then ensure that these become widely adopted and taken for granted by other actors in the field. However, the construct of the HRM institutional entrepreneur role has not fully yet included a controlling mechanism that prevents harmful activities to society and the environment, as well as maintains the new organizational logic in the long term. Stahl et al. (2020) argued that HRM practices are irresponsible or unsustainable if they harm social, environmental, and economic well-being; therefore, they introduced a multidimensional framework reflecting both doing good and avoiding harm, which HRM department need to do to enhance positive outcomes and restrict negative outcomes in the economic, environmental and social domains. Similarly, Lam and Khare (2010) suggested the role of HR in CSR development involving monitoring and feedback (CSR/CS Audit). Therefore, the study argues the construct of the HR change leadership role consists of identifying opportunities, creating a vision, leveraging resources, re-institutionalizing, and controlling change.

Firstly, identifying opportunities includes discovering and evaluating inconsistencies between the organization's current approach to managing human resources and the objective of sustainability as well as facilitating the introduction of new logic legitimizing sustainability and enabling them to mobilize resources for change (Ren and Jackson, 2019). Secondly, creating a new vision includes developing a sustainability vision that frames a sustainability-oriented-change project in terms of the sustainable problem that HR professionals help to resolve, as preferred to current arrangements and as motivated by convincing reasons; and sharing the sustainability vision of the changing necessity with followers to make the case for change (Ren and Jackson, 2019). Thirdly, leveraging resources requires forming alliances and gaining support from all involved actors via substantial resources in the forms of cognitive, social and material support in order to expand the available resources for sustainability-oriented change and improve communication effectiveness when persuading others of the need for sustainability-oriented changes. Fourthly, re-institutionalization involves establishing new systems to ensure that the institutional logic of sustainability becomes taken-for-granted (Ren and Jackson, 2019). Finally, controlling changes consists of regularly auditing, reviewing and institutionalizing to maintain sustainable institutional logic (Lam and Khare, 2010) and setting up a controlling mechanism of harmful activities to society and the environment (Stahl et al., 2020).

HR attributions are defined as causal explanations that employees attach meaning to management's motivations for HR practices (Nishii et al., 2008). In a sustainable context, HR attributions are known as causal explanations that employees attach meaning to managements motivations for sustainable HR practices. It consists of well-being attribution and performance attribution. Well-being attribution is described as employees' beliefs about sustainable HR practices designed to pursue financial value (i.e., enhance the organization's reputation), social value (i.e., value and respect employees), environmental value (i.e., improving a living environment better), motivated by caring on employees' happiness and healthiness. Performance attribution is employees' beliefs that the underlined purpose of sustainable HR practices is to maximize their performance and efficiency, which hides a preference for economic benefit only. Unlike Nishii's (2008) HR attribution, the HR attribution of this study is built on the standpoint that the implemented HR practices mainly focus on philosophical values about the importance of employee well-being. Both internal and external attribution are under the organization's control because external attribution such as legal compliance (e.g., human rights, labor law, environmental protection, etc.) or sustainable practices compliance with outside stakeholders are a basic mandatory requirement to pursue triple lines in a sustainable context.

According to the reciprocity principle of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), an individual will respond to a beneficial action by returning a benefit and a harmful action by returning a harm. Therefore, employees tend to exchange their loyalty and effort for material and social rewards from the organization as well as their commitment to an employer's support as a reciprocity (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Employment relation starts when employer and employee agree on the benefits exchange and continues growing with a balance offering benefits for both sides (Boxall, 2013). This relationship is tied by values, beliefs, aspirations, and

expectations of both employers and employees (Smithson and Lewis, 2000) that raise reciprocally mandatory obligations between them (Rousseau, 1989). The exchange relations between employees and their employers form two types of exchanges: social exchange and economic exchange (Blau, 1964). Economic exchanges lead to specific benefits exchanges and social exchange focuses on the emotional aspects of interactions to create long-term relationships between the employees and the employer (Wang et al., 2019). Therefore, as reciprocity in a mutual relationship, high-commitment HR practices focus on the extensive benefits in the form of rewards and recognitions; selective hiring; training and development; career opportunity; participation; and teamwork would create and maintain an interdependent, mutual and reciprocal relationship between employees and the organization (Rubel et al., 2021).

The degree of adopting an HR change leadership role is known as the extent to which HR professionals perform the roles of identifying opportunities, creating vision, leveraging resources, re-institutionalizing and controlling change. Material resources (e.g., salary schemes and bonus schemes) or social rewards (e.g., public and widespread honor programs) developed by HR professionals in the role of leveraging resources, restructuring organizations or others are the rule of exchange to motivate organizational commitment because employees would exchange their commitment for an employer's support as a reciprocity when receiving material and social rewards from the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In addition, when HR professionals highly apply these roles, it creates more favorable organizational conditions to engage employees in sustainable objectives, which makes employee feels high support from the organization; because the effective implementation of high-performance HRM practices leads employees to perceive a supportive environment (Wright et al., 2003). Perceived support would make employees reciprocate in kind and commit to the organization as the output of that exchange (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). Previous research also found that high-performance HRM practices positively affect both affective commitment and readiness for change in Jordan (Alqudah et al., 2022). Moreover, green HRM practices that are related to green recruitment, and green training development (Shoaib et al., 2021) or HRM practices that increase employee satisfaction (Kinnie et al., 2005) would promote organizational commitment. Hence:

Hypothesis 1: The degree of adopting HR change leadership role is positively influential to organizational commitment.

Attribution theory which holds attribution for behaviors and/or events, ultimately shapes the emotional and behavioral responses (Weiner, 1985) and HR attributions are developed as causal explanations that employees attach the meaning of management's purpose to special HR practices (Nishii et al., 2008). The attribution theory posits that people continuously search to explain events that they encounter in their lives (Hewett et al., 2017). Their assessment of the reasons for which certain events happen leads them to respond affectively and subsequently modify their behaviors (Alfes et al., 2020). They can attach different meanings to social stimuli, and their behavioral and attitudinal responses to that information may differ based on the way that they infer these stimuli (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). In such a way, employees also make different attributions for the same HR practices (Alfes et al., 2020; Katou et al., 2020; Nishii et al., 2008; Van de Voorde and Beijer, 2014). Employees develop positive attitudes in response to HR practices when interesting the organization's motives for

implementing HR practices to benefit employees (i.e., quality and well-being HR attributions) (Nishii et al., 2008). A high commitment HRM practices are positively relative to enhancing performance quality and promoting well-being HR attribution (Rimi, 2013; Sanders and Yang, 2015) and high-performance work systems (HPWS) are positively associated with well-being HR attribution (Alfes et al., 2020; Van De Voorde and Beijer, 2014). By contrast, they induce unfavorable attributions when perceiving HR practices as having adverse effects on them (i.e., cost reduction and exploiting employees HR attributions) (Nishii et al., 2008). Employees infer negatively, when they attribute a specific HR practice (teamwork) to economic and political factors because its nature mainly focuses on managers' self-interest and ultimately emphasizes shareholders above other stakeholders (Bacon and Blyton, 2005).

While signaling theory by Spence (1973) focuses on communication among actors in terms of information asymmetries via the roles of the signaler, the signal and the receiver. To reduce this asymmetry, organizations send signals to their various stakeholders; receivers interpret these signals into the organization's intentions and actions, and they rely on the underlying, unobservable and attributive signals to make decisions. The degree of adopting an HR change leadership role is a kind of specific sustainable HRM practice applied as a signal that discloses management's purpose, while HR professionals act as signalers and employees are receivers. Therefore, the extent of coverage of their change leadership role would disclose the organization's management intent, and employees will develop their interpretation based on their experiences and observations of sustainable HR practices implemented by HR professionals in their roles (Yang, 2014). Through the implementation of sustainable HR practices, HR professionals transmit their actual meaning and make them outstand to employees to elicit desired attitudes and behaviors. If the outcome of implementing the HR change leadership role creates a lot of favorable organizational conditions that are beneficial to employees, employees perceive sustainable HRM activities motivated positively by a concern for them and make the well-being attribution. By contrast, the low degree of adopting HR change leadership role could lead to shortcomings, such as unclear sustainable vision and goals; unreasonable organizational restructuring; lack of incentive and stimulus policies; or so on, that induce employee's not-good experiences or disclosure of incorrectly management intent. Such bad experiences are likely to develop employees' negative interpretation that they perceive the sustainable HRM activities motivated negatively by exploiting their performance and make a performance attribution. Indeed, Katou et al. (2020) explored that line manager's HR implementation has a positive influence on commitment attributions (quality enhancement, employee well-being) and negative affects to control attribution (cost reduction, employee exploitation). Hence, Hypotheses 2a and 2b are developed as follows:

Hypothesis 2a: The degree of adopting HR change leadership role positively correlates with well-being HR attribution.

Hypothesis 2b: The degree of adopting HR change leadership role negatively affects to performance of HR attribution.

An individual would respond to a beneficial action by returning a benefit and to a harmful action by returning a harm as a reciprocal principal (Blau, 1964). Therefore,

when making a well-being attribution means that employees perceive that management intent is motivated by a concern for employees (Nishii et al., 2008). Such intent can be considered as a beneficial action of the organization toward employees, as a result, employee exchanges their commitment to the organization as a reciprocity. By contrast, when making a performance attribution means that employee perceives that management intent is motivated by maximizing employee performance (cost reduction, employee exploitation) and these are considered as a harmful action to them, in exchange, they return a low commitment to the organization.

Previous studies found attitudes that an employee is towards their organizations are influenced by their interpretations or attributions about the reasons under-lying the HR practices (Nishii et al., 2008; Sanders et al., 2008; Van De Voorde and Beijer, 2014). Therefore, employee outcomes are differently influenced by HR attributions that are described as employees' beliefs on why HR practices are implemented. Concretely, organizational commitment is positively affected by fairness attribution (Koys, 1991), distinctiveness, and consistency HR attribution (Sanders et al., 2008); by well-being HR attribution (Nishii et al., 2008; Van De Voorde and Beijer, 2014); and negatively by control-focused HR attributions (Fontinha et al., 2012). Furthermore, commitment-focused HR attributions enhance the client organization-to-affective commitment via the outsourcing company-to-affective commitment, while control-focused HR attributions negatively affect such commitments (Fontinha et al., 2012). Hence, it is timely to formulate Hypotheses 3a and 3b as follows:

Hypothesis 3a: Well-being HR attribution positively links with organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 3b: Performance HR attribution negatively correlates with organizational commitment.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Sample

Data were collected from 1058 employees (technical staff, office staff, HR staff, frontline supervisors, middle managers and senior managers) by deploying a non-probability method of purposeful sampling from 24 pre-selected sustainability enterprises consecutively honored from a period from 2018 to 2020 in Vietnam. Such sample size obtains an accurate solution in exploratory factor and regression analysis, because researchers noted that the lowest sample size should have the ratio of observed items to be 5:1 (Bollen, 1989); or the sample size should be 10 times the number of independent variables in the most complex regression in the structural model (Barclay et al., 1995). Although this sampling method has low representativeness, many researchers have argued that collecting data quickly and cheaply is more important than generalizability (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

2.2. Data collection tools and procedure

Both employees and HR professionals were guided to rate the extent to which they agree on the items of measuring five forms of HR change leadership role, two forms of HR attribution and organizational commitment. The questionnaire was

distributed to different categories of employees to avoid the common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To avoid the duplication that an employee implementing the survey more than once, the questionnaire was designed with a note at the top “Please do not answer the questionnaire if you have taken this survey before”. The process of data collection is executed through two main strategies as follows:

Depending on the surveyed objects’ preference, the researcher sent questionnaires to the target respondents either directly or indirectly, via email in the form of a Google link after getting their agreement. The content of the questionnaires and responses way are guided to supervisors and each employee by face-to-face or telephone. In addition, the study asked for supervisor’ support to re-explain the questionnaire content to their subordinates if having any points that were not clear during their answering. After removing the poor-quality responses, 385 qualified samples were chosen.

The support from the professional survey team: the team consists of 5 staff who have at least one-year of working experience for their market research company and 1 leader who has more than ten years of working experiences in surveying and has good relationships with many enterprises were employed to perform the survey. All team members are trained at least two hours before surveying in order to ensure the team clearly understands the survey objectives and the questionnaire’s contents. Firstly, they contacted to get the interviewee’s permission who work in 24 pre-selected sustainable enterprises. Then, the face-to-face interviews at their offices coffee shops or restaurants by reading each question and asking respondents to choose the right option that is true to the actual situation of their working enterprises. Finally, after sifting, 673 qualified samples are chosen to analyze in the next steps.

HR change leadership role (CLR) is measured by five dimensions with 38 items of identifying opportunities, creating a new vision, leveraging resources, re-institutionalizing and controlling changes, which originated by Ren and Jackson (2019), Stahl et al. (2020) and qualitative research. To validate scales, the study utilized in-depth interviews with 5 experts to add and refine items and a study with 51 experts to assess the content validity. In addition, it conducted an exploratory factor analysis on CLR items by using Principal-Axis-Factoring extraction and Promax-rotation method to assess convergent, discriminant validity. The rotated solution showed that all items for the CLR scale loaded onto five factors and achieved good internal reliability (Cronbach’s α range in 0.899–0.937). Similarly, procedures as above were also applied to test the scale of well-being HR attribution scale with 7 items and performance HR attribution scale with 9 items, which were adjusted and supplemented from five original items of the HR attribution scale of Nishii et al.’s (2008) article. All items for well-being HR attributions were loaded onto one factor with good internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.916$), and all items for performance HR attributions were loaded onto a second factor with a good value of Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.908$). The study used an organizational commitment scale with 13 items of Mowday et al. (1979); reliability (internal consistency) of these items was good (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.942$). The items were measured on a five-point scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to facilitate evaluation and analysis with SPSS20 and PLS-SEM 4.0.

2.3. Data analysis

The study interpreted the data through Excel 2020, SPSS 20 and PLS-SEM 4.0 software for Windows, which Microsoft Excel 2020 was used to code the data; IBM SPSS 20 software was employed to analyze the descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and the scales' reliability. PLS-SEM 4.0 software was employed to develop a measurement scale and test the hypothesis and research model. Concretely, analysis activities are proceeding as follows:

2.3.1. Assessing the reliability of the scales

To ensure reliability, a scale must meet the three standards (Hair et al., 2006): (i) Corrected Item—total correlation coefficient of each observed variable in the scale must be greater than or equal to 0.3; (ii) The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the scale must be greater than 0.6; and (iii) Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted of each observed variable must be smaller than the Cronbach's Alpha of the scale. In case the first or third standard is violated, the failed items are rejected, and the scale reliability with the remaining items is re-analyzed.

2.3.2. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

EFA with Principal-Axis-Factoring extraction and Promax-rotation method is proceeded to assess convergent, discriminant validity of scales, because it reflects the data structure more accurately than EFA with Principal-Components-extraction method and Varimax-rotation method (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The evaluation criteria for exploratory factor analysis: (i) KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) coefficient must value in [0.5, 1.0], satisfying this criterion is indicative of appropriate factor analysis; (ii) Bartlett's test of sphericity with $\text{sig} < 0.05$ is used to consider whether the observed variables in the factor are correlated with each other or not (Hair et al., 2006); (iii) Eigenvalue value of 1 or more are used to determine the number of factors in EFA analysis and total-Variance-Explained must reach a value of 50% or more is used to assess the suitability of the model; (iv) Factor loading shows the correlation level between observed variables and factors. With a sample size of greater than 350, the study chose to use the factor loading of 0.3 as suggested by Hair et al. (2010).

2.3.3. Assessment of reflective and formative measurement model

To assess the validity of a reflective measurement scale, the study used composite reliability ($0.70 < CR < 0.95$) to evaluate internal consistency (Nunally and Bernstein, 1994); the outer loadings of the indicators (> 0.708) and average variance extracted (AVE > 0.5) to evaluate convergent validity (Hair et al., 2018); HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait) criterion (< 0.85) to assess discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). To assess the validity of a formative measurement scale, the study used VIF of 3 (variance inflation factor) to identify collinearity issues and outer weight coefficient that close to +1 (or -1) indicated strong positive (or negative) relationships, whereas reaching to 0 indicates a weak relationship to examine the significance and relevance of the formative indicators (Hair et al., 2018).

2.3.4. Assessment of structural model

For the assessment of the structural equation model, the study used four criteria (Hair et al., 2018): (1) VIF values of lower than 3 are used to assess the multicollinearity among the explanatory variables of the component model; (2)

coefficient of determination (R^2) and adjusted R-squared (R^2 adj) of 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 that are respectively substantial, moderate, and weak to assess the predictive degree of independent variable on the dependent variable; (3) Q^2 value (Geisser, 1974) to assess the forecasting efficiency; and (4) the path coefficients of structure models within range of -1 and $+1$ and p value of less than 0.05 to assess their significance.

3. Results

3.1. Profile of survey respondents

The respondents' features are with a ratio of 52.8 female and 47.2% male; young (25 to 40 age, 65.2%), married with a ratio of 71.9%; high qualification (64.4% of degree and postgraduate; 31.5% of college; only 4.2% of other level); and at least one year working experience in sustainable enterprises (over 10 years of experiences, 66%). In which, the ratio of 8% HR staff, 65.4% of office staff, 16.8% of technical staff and 8.7% of management positions.

3.2. The exploratory factor analysis and scale reliability

The results in **Table 1** show the scales meet the reliability; the EFA of CLR ($0.5 \leq KMO = 0.972 \leq 1$; Bartlett's Test with sig of $0.000 < 0.05$) and HRA ($0.5 \leq KMO = 0.888 \leq 1$; Bartlett's Test with sig of $0.000 < 0.05$) fit to analyze the exploratory factor. There are 05 extracted factors for CLR with the eigenvalue of 1.552 (> 1); its variance of 62.761% ($> 50\%$) and its items with high loading (> 0.5). Similarly, there are 02 extracted factors for HRA with the eigenvalue of 2.260 (> 1); its variance of 56.501% ($> 50\%$) and its items with high loading (> 0.5). Finally, CLR includes 05 factors with 38 items (IO, 9 items; CV, 5 items; LR, 7 items; RI, 9 items; CC, 8 items) and HRA includes 02 factors with 16 items (HRAwb, 7 items; HRApf, 9 items) used for executing CCA process.

Table 1. Summary of EFA and CCA.

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha	Outer loadings	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
HR change leadership role (CLR)	EFA (KMO = 0.972; BTS, Sig = 0.000; Cumulative % = 62.761; Eigenvalues = 1.552)			
IO	0.937	0.752–0.860	0.947	0.665
CV	0.922	0.851–0.900	0.942	0.763
LR	0.899	0.758–0.825	0.920	0.623
RI	0.934	0.757–0.867	0.945	0.657
CC	0.932	0.759–0.888	0.944	0.678
HR attribution (HRA)	EFA (KMO = 0.888; BTS, Sig = 0.000; Cumulative % = 56.501; Eigenvalues = 2.260)			
HRAwb	0.916	0.758–0.869	0.933	0.667
HRApf	0.908	0.728–0.802	0.924	0.576
Organizational commitment (OC)	0.942	0.716–0.852	0.949	0.590

Note: EFA: Explore Factor Analysis; KMO: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy; BTS: Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

3.3. The measurement model

Assessing the validity of CLR involves assessing the reflective lower-order construct and the formative higher-order construct. For the assessment of reflective lower-order construct, the results at **Table 1** show that HR change leadership role achieved the item reliability (outer loadings of IO, CV, LR, RI and CV > 0.708); satisfied the composite reliability (CR of IO, CV, LR, RI, CC fall in the range of 0.920 to 0.947); had high convergence (AVE values of IO, 0.665; CV, 0.763; LR, 0.623; RI, 0.657; CC, 0.678 > 0.5). In addition, **Table 2** demonstrated cut-off differences because the values of HTMT are smaller than 0.85.

Table 2. The correlation matrix of the CLR, HRAwb, HRApf, OC.

	CC	CV	HRApf	HRAwb	IO	LR	OC	RI
CC	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CV	0.642	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
HRApf	0.499	0.466	1	-	-	-	-	-
HRAwb	0.461	0.522	0.596	1	-	-	-	-
IO	0.647	0.691	0.549	0.511	1	-	-	-
LR	0.641	0.651	0.470	0.446	0.670	1	-	-
OC	0.536	0.564	0.634	0.686	0.551	0.525	1	-
RI	0.618	0.679	0.505	0.536	0.676	0.655	0.581	1

Assessing the validity of HRAwb and HRApf involves assessing the reflective lower-order construct. The results in **Table 1** show that HRAwb and HRApf achieved the item reliability (outer loadings of HRAwb, HRApf > 0.708); satisfied the composite reliability (CR of HRAwb= 0.933 < 0.95; CR of HRApf = 0.934 < 0.95); had high convergence (AVE values of HRAwb = 0.667 > 0.5; HRApf = 0.577 > 0.5). In addition, **Table 2** shows that it was discriminatory because the values of HTMT are smaller than 0.85.

Assessing the validity of organizational commitment (OC) involves assessing the reflective lower-order construct. The results in **Table 1** show that OC achieved the item reliability (outer loadings of OC > 0.708); satisfied the composite reliability (CR of OC = 0.949 < 0.95) and had high convergence (AVE values of OC, 0.590 > 0.5). In addition, **Table 2** shows it was discriminatory because the values of HTMT are smaller than 0.85.

For the assessment of the higher-order construct of CLR, the results in **Table 3** show no collinearity among five formative indicators (VIF of IO, CV, LR, RI, CC < 3). Finally, the results in **Table 4** indicate the outer weight of four formative indicators of CLR are loaded significantly (IO = 0.300, $p < 0.05$; CV = 0.218, $p < 0.05$; RI = 0.349, $p < 0.05$; CC = 0.230, $p < 0.05$). Except for LR is not significantly loaded with $\beta = 0.096$, $p > 0.05$; therefore, it is deleted from CLR.

Table 3. VIF of CLR.

	VIF
CC	1.994
CV	2.206
IO	2.273
LR	2.031
RI	2.144

Table 4. Outer weight of CLR.

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	p values
CC → CLR	0.230	0.229	0.053	4.305	0.000
CV → CLR	0.218	0.219	0.058	3.755	0.000
IO → CLR	0.300	0.300	0.056	5.356	0.000
LR → CLR	0.096	0.095	0.053	1.794	0.073
RI → CLR	0.349	0.346	0.062	5.607	0.000

In this study, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and normed fit index (NFI) are used to assess the model fit. SRMR is a measure of approximate fit for the study model and measures the difference between the observed correlation matrix and the model-implied correlation matrix (Garson, 2016). SRMR was introduced as a GoF measure for PLS-SEM to prevent model misspecification (Henseler et al, 2016). A model has a good fit when SRMR is less than 0.08 (Hu et al., 1999; Sanchez, 2013). While, the NFI was used to evaluate the model by comparing the chi-square value of the model and the same null model or independence model (Bentler and Bonett, 1980). The range of the NFI value is between 0 and 1. The larger the value of NFI, the better performance it obtains. A threshold value of 0.90 and above suggests a good model fit. Results in **Table 5** show SRMR = 0.071 (< 0.08) and the NFI value for this model was 0.849 (< 0.9), which implies that this model improved the fit by 84.9% relative to the null or independence model. Although the NFI value of 0.849 was less than 0.9, it is not much different. Therefore, the model in this study was generally reasonably well-fitted.

3.4. Structural equation model

The findings in **Table 5** demonstrate that VIF values are all less than 3, meaning that no collinearity among the predictive variables in the research model. The results in **Table 6** reveal the R² and R² adjusted of OC were statistically significant (0.552/0.550), within the range [50%–75%] of substantial level. The R² and R² adjusted of HRAwb (0.313/0.312) and HRApf (0.309/0.308) with a statistically significant range in [25%–50%] of moderate level. In addition, the Q² values of OC (0.206), HRAwb (0.321) and HRApf (0.175) were higher than 0, indicating a predictive accuracy of the path model for these variables.

Table 5. VIF of path models and model fit.

	VIF	Model fit
CLR → HRApf	1.000	
CLR → HRAwb	1.000	
CLR → OC	1.673	SRMR = 0.071
HRApf → OC	1.638	NFI = 0.849
HRAwb → OC	1.648	

Table 6. The results of path analyses.

Relationships	β value	<i>P</i> values	R^2	<i>P</i> values	R^2 adj	<i>P</i> values	Q^2 (= 1-SSE/SSO)	Conclusion
H1: CLR → OC	0.300	0.000	0.552	0.000	0.550	0.000	0.206	Support
H2a: CLR → HRAwb	0.560	0.000	0.313	0.000	0.312	0.000	0.321	Support
H2b: CLR → HRApf	-0.556	0.000	0.309	0.000	0.308	0.000	0.175	Support
H3a: HRAwb → OC	0.343	0.000	0.552	0.000	0.550	0.000	0.206	Support
H3b: HRApf → OC	-0.241	0.000	0.552	0.000	0.550	0.000	0.206	Support
CLR → HRAwb → OC	0.192	0.000						HRAwb, HRApf play mediated role
CLR → HRApf → OC	0.134	0.000						

Note: β = Path Coefficient; R^2 = R Squared; R^2 adj = R Squared adjusted; CLR = HR change leadership role; HRAwb = well-being HR attribution; HRApf = performance HR attribution.

Figure 2 shows the results of the path analyses, and results of the conditional path analysis following the process recommended by Zhao et al. (2010) and Nitzl et al. (2016). PXY is the path from X (CLR) to Y (OC). PXM is the path from X to M (HRAwb/HRApf), PMY is the path from M to Y and PXMPMY is the indirect effect of X on Y via M. CLR has a positively influential on OC ($\beta = 0.300, p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis H1. CLR has a positive influence on HRAwb ($\beta = 0.560, p < 0.001$) and negatively to HRApf ($\beta = -0.556, p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis H2a, H2b. In addition, HRAwb positively affects OC ($\beta = 0.343, p < 0.001$), and HRApf negatively affects OC ($\beta = -0.241, p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis H3a, H3b. The results revealed a significant positive indirect effect of CLR on OC via HRAwb (PXMPMY = 0.192, $p < 0.001$) and HRApf (PXMPMY = 0.134, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, it concluded that HRAwb, HRApf play a mediated role in the relationship between CLR and OC.

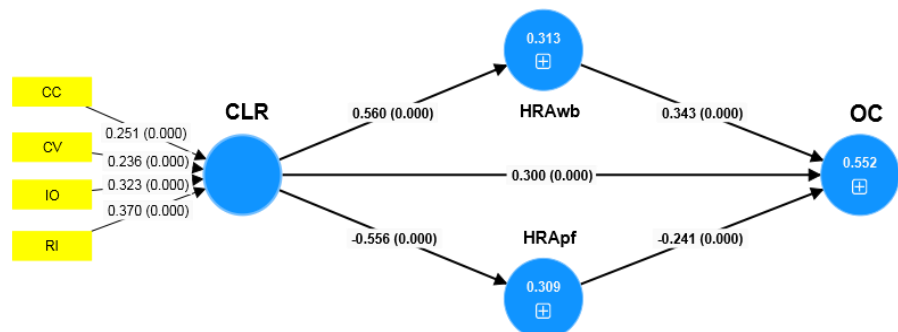


Figure 2. PLS-SEM model.

4. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to advance the understanding of how organizational commitment is promoted in sustainable enterprises. To do so, the study built and tested a model to demonstrate the direct impact of HR change leadership role on organizational commitment and the mediated role of HR attributions in this relationship by employing the reciprocal principle of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) and signal theory (Spence, 1973). The result indicated that the degree of adopting HR change leadership role positively, and significantly affected organizational commitment. It implies that sustainable enterprises adopted the change leadership role of HR professionals, which aimed to change organizational norms, rules, routines, and values corresponding to sustainable objectives, would see a significant increase in employee's organizational commitment. When employees perceive that their organization is actively investing in their development and well-being via material resources (e.g., salary schemes and bonus schemes) or social rewards (e.g., public and widespread honor programs; sustainable training programs) and favorable organizational conditions (e.g., clearly sustainable vision and objectives; resolved institutional conflicts; meaningful work environment or so on), they are more likely to reciprocate this investment with commitment. The reciprocity principle of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) explains the positive relationship between adopting an HR change leadership role and organizational commitment, which confirms that when employees perceive that the organization is providing valuable resources, such as improved working conditions, support for work-life balance, recognition of their contributions and opportunities for personal growth, they feel obliged to reciprocate with positive behavior, such as increasing commitment.

The current findings are consistent with the previous research, which demonstrated organizational commitment is enhanced when HR practices are designed to meet the needs of employees and to be perceived as supportive (Kinnie et al., 2005); or by green HR practices focus on training and development (Shoaib et al., 2021) or CSR HR practices focus on the ethical and philanthropic dimensions (Mohammed et al., 2021). All of these studies support the notion that HR practices focused on well-being, development and support positively influence to organizational commitment; therefore, they confirm the positive impact of HR change leadership role in fostering a committed workforce. However, this study highlights the direct impact of adopting HR change leadership role on organizational commitment in a sustainable context, it marks a notable difference from previous studies that investigated general HR practices or specific green and CSR HRM practices. The degree of adopting an HR change leadership role is considered as a special sustainable HRM practice that its goal is to support sustainability development beneficial for many various stakeholders; therefore, its nature is fully different from the strategy context. Besides, its finding is demonstrated within sustainable enterprises, where it is characterized by implementing new management practices that aims at balancing tripartite sustainability (economic, environmental, and social dimensions) and taking place significant institutional changes. The focus on sustainability introduces a new perspective to understand organizational commitment, because adopting of change leadership role of HR professionals involves aligning broader sustainability goals that

adapt to evolving institutional demands, besides managing traditional employee relations.

In addition, the study also indicates HR attribution, which is employees' perception about the motivations and intentions behind sustainable HR practices, partially mediates the relationship between HR change leadership and organizational commitment. This means organizational commitment is not only enhanced by the adoption of HR change leadership directly but also by the way that employees attribute intent management behind these sustainable practices (e.g., genuine concern for employees' happiness and healthiness vs. maximization of their performance and efficiency). Positive HR attributions enhance the impact of HR change leadership on organizational commitment, whereas negative attributions may weaken this effect. In a sustainable context, where sustainable enterprises have been undergoing significant institutional changes and involving in adopting new management practices, these perceptions influence to how employees respond to sustainable HR practices, in turn affects their commitment to the organization. This relationship is explained by attribution theory (Weiner, 1985), which focuses on how employees interpret the motivations behind HR practices (Nishii et al., 2008); and signaling theory (Spence, 1973), which suggests that organizations send signals through their practices and policies, which employees interpret to form beliefs about the organization's values and intentions. Adopting HR change leadership role serves as a signal of the organization's commitment to sustainability and employee welfare. When employees perceive these sustainable HR practices that are aligned with sustainability goals and are genuinely concerned about their happiness and healthiness, they are likely to enhance organizational commitment. Positive attributions amplify the effectiveness of these practices, leading to stronger commitment. Besides, the partially mediated role of HR attribution posits that while signals from sustainable HR practices are important, the employees' interpretations of these signals (HR attribution) further affect their organizational commitment.

The result is consistent with previous studies that emphasize employees would make a positive attribution when management's purpose is beneficial to themselves; by contrast, they make a performance attribution as a response to management intent motivated by employee exploitation (Katou et al., 2020; Nishii et al., 2008; Sanders et al., 2008; Van De Voorde and Beijer, 2014). However, the inferred signals in this study are the degree of doing HR change leadership role and the signaler is HR professionals, it is completely different from previous studies that their signals are the high commitment HRM practices or high-performance work system (Alfes et al., 2020; Van De Voorde and Beijer, 2014) or line manager's HR implementation (Katou et al., 2020). Furthermore, it is also similar to previous studies that emphasize the positive impact of well-being HR attribution on organizational commitment (Nishii et al., 2008, Koutiva et al., 2014, Van De Voorde and Beijer, 2014), which demonstrates employees tend to make positive attributions when they perceive that HR practices are implemented with their well-being, leading to enhanced commitment. The finding also aligns with previous research that indicates negative effects on organizational commitment when employees interpret HR practices driven by performance, which are aimed at cost reduction or employee exploitation, leading to lower commitment levels (Nishii et al., 2008). Regarding to external dimension, some external attributions

such as complying with the requirement of the union contract or comply with the convention with outside stakeholders that is beneficial for employees are demonstrated to promote organizational commitment in this study, while such factors do not significantly impact on commitment in the study of Nishii et al. (2008). Moreover, this study indicates performance HR attribution negatively affects commitment, while Van De Voorde and Beijer (2014) found no significant relationship between them. These inconsistency suggests that the impact of HR attribution on organizational commitment may be different depending on the specific context of the HR practices, particularly the sustainable framework of the current study may influence how employees interpret sustainable HR practices, leading to different outcomes of organizational commitment. Another difference is that the study demonstrates the partially mediated role of HR attribution in the relationship between the degree of adopting HR change leadership role and organizational commitment in a sustainable context.

5. Conclusion

The study demonstrated a direct impact of HR change leadership role on organizational commitment and the mediated role of HR attributions in this relationship. This implies that organizational commitment not only depends on the degree of adopting HR change leadership role but also employees' perception and interpretation of the under-lying management intent of sustainable HRM practices. Therefore, sustainable enterprises need to plan combined solutions to enhance organizational commitment through executing HR change leadership role, promoting positive HR attribution and minimizing negative HR attribution. Enhancing organizational commitment would reduce the turnover rate and help the organization stabilize resources for sustainable development.

5.1. Theoretical contribution

Firstly, the results extend the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which demonstrate the degree of adopting HR change leadership role is used as an exchange rule to earn employee's organizational commitment. SET focuses on reciprocal relationships between employers and employees, where beneficial actions (e.g., rewards) induce employee's positive reactions (e.g., commitment). This study highlights how HR change leadership role serves as a conduit for creating both material resources (e.g., compensation packages) and social resources (e.g., sustainable training programs, recognition and positive work conditions). These resources are generated by interventions of HR professionals in doing their change leadership role of identifying opportunities, creating a vision, leverage resources, restructuring and controlling changes, which deepen the exchange relationship among HR professionals and employees within an organization. Besides, it supplements to the literature of HR attribution by positioning the degree of HR change leadership role as an important antecedent of HR attribution in sustainable context. This element plays a critical role in shaping employees' interpretations on sustainable HR practices and their subsequent attributions, thus expanding the understanding on how sustainable HRM is perceived by the workforce. Finally, by introducing the sustainable HRM

framework into the discussion, this study contributes to development of literature that links sustainable HR practices to employee outcomes of commitment. It goes beyond the traditional view of HR practices, which broadens the scope to include the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability.

5.2. Practical implications and recommendations

The result makes a meaningful contribution because it reveals that organizational commitment not only depends on how the degree of adopting the HR change leadership role is executed, but also how employees perceive and interpret the underlying management intent of these practices. Therefore, in order to promote organizational commitment in sustainable enterprises, the HR department needs to have the combined solutions to increase employees' positive perceptions and minimize negative attributions, besides implementing a change leadership role. Firstly, HR professionals need to be trained to perform the change leadership roles in the right and professional manner, in turn, to contribute to enhancing employee's organizational commitment. Furthermore, they should perceive deeply that the way and content of performing these roles has a strong impact on employees' perceptions of the organization's management intent. The better they perform, the more inclinable employees are to attribute that implementing sustainable activities is a benefit to them. Thereby, it motivates employees to bond with the organization. By contrast, poor implementation of the change leadership role can send inaccurate information about management intent, which makes employees perceive sustainable practices aim to exploit them, thus leading to less commitment. Secondly, employees often make very different attributions for the same implemented policy/program/project, depending on their personal characteristics, qualifications, understanding, or their attitude towards the organization. Such different interpretations have a strong influence on their commitment to the organization. Therefore, HR professionals need to help employees clearly and deeply understand the sustainable programs/policies as well as organizational orientations to avoid the wrong attribution. For example, they can organize formal mentorship programs to share sustainable knowledge or build trust in employees to reduce cynical views of sustainable management's intentions.

Finally, the results imply that employees' positive or negative attribution not only affects their organizational commitment but also the enterprises' sustainable performance indirectly. Normally, employees who express positive views on their organization's activities, they would engage in many positive behaviors such as giving a constructive voice, proactively participating in work, praising their organization and are more loyal to the organization than those who have negative attributions about the organization. Regarding sustainable HR activities, the majority of employee do not clearly understand the benefit of sustainable development; or only see short-term benefits; or say that do not do their tasks; therefore, they often do not participate in or support the valuable sustainable programs actively. Therefore, the managers need to have action plans to enhance employees' positive awareness through internal communication practices, a two-way feedback system, or enhancing HR professionalism. Positive attribution will contribute to increasing employees'

commitment to the organization and improving overall sustainable performance and vice versa.

5.3. Limitations

This study has some limitations. Firstly, the role of leveraging resources did not work when the instruments were tested. Therefore, HR change leadership role and HR attribution continuously tested experimentally in countries where sustainable developing programs have been launched sooner than in Vietnam. Secondly, the data were collected using a questionnaire at a single point in time, thus it does not allow for dynamic causal inferences. Thirdly, the data is collected from 24 sustainable enterprises in Vietnam by the sampling method of non-probability. Therefore, future research should use the sampling method of probability and expand the research scope to other contexts.

Author contributions: Conceptualization, PTD; methodology, PTD; formal analysis, PTD; investigation, PTD; resources, PTD; data analysis, PTD and TLH; writing—original draft preparation, PTD; writing—review and editing, PTD and TLH; visualization, TLH. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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