

Leadership for sustainability: A study of the impact of sustainable leadership on sustainable performance in the textile industry

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ABSTRACT – REZUMAT

Leadership for sustainability: A study of the impact of sustainable leadership on sustainable performance in the textile industry

The textile industry is under increasing pressure to implement sustainable practices because of its labour-intensive operations and substantial environmental impact. This study looks into how sustainable leadership affects the economic, environmental, and social facets of sustainable performance for textile sector workers. Based on theories of organisational behaviour and sustainable leadership, the study looks at how leaders who put sustainability first affect social well-being, eco-friendly practices, and worker productivity. Through surveys and interviews with employees and leadership representatives, data was gathered from workers in different textile organisations in the Indian states of Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir union territory. The results show that sustainable leadership improves social performance by encouraging employee involvement and well-being, improves environmental performance through green practices, and increases economic performance by promoting productivity and innovation. The study emphasises how important leadership is in coordinating organisational objectives with sustainability, and it provides managers and policymakers with practical advice on how to include sustainable leadership frameworks for sustained performance enhancements in the textile sector.

Keywords: sustainable leadership, sustainable performance, textile industry, economic performance, environmental performance, social performance

Leadership pentru sustenabilitate: Un studiu al impactului leadership-ului sustenabil asupra performanței sustenabile în industria textilă

Industria textilă este supusă unei presiuni tot mai mari de a implementa practici sustenabile din cauza operațiilor sale care necesită multă forță de muncă și a impactului substanțial asupra mediului înconjurător. Acest studiu analizează modul în care leadership-ul sustenabil afectează aspectele economice, de mediu și sociale ale performanței sustenabile pentru angajații din sectorul textil. Bazat pe teorii ale comportamentului organizațional și ale leadershipului sustenabil, studiul analizează modul în care liderii care pun sustenabilitatea pe primul loc influențează bunăstarea socială, practicile ecologice și productivitatea angajaților. Prin intermediul sondajelor și interviurilor cu angajați și reprezentanți ai conducerii, au fost colectate date de la angajații din diferite organizații textile din statele indiene Punjab și Jammu & Kashmir. Rezultatele arată că leadership-ul sustenabil îmbunătățește performanța socială prin încurajarea implicării și bunăstării angajaților, îmbunătățește performanța de mediu prin practici ecologice și crește performanța economică prin promovarea productivității și inovării. Studiul subliniază cât de important este leadership-ul în coordonarea obiectivelor organizaționale cu sustenabilitatea și oferă managerilor și factorilor de decizie sfaturi practice despre cum să includă practici de leadership sustenabil, pentru îmbunătățiri sustenabile ale performanței în sectorul textil.

Cuvinte-cheie: leadership sustenabil, performanță sustenabilă, industria textilă, performanță economică, performanță de mediu, performanță socială

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. National Centres for Environmental Information estimates that in 2017, extreme weather and climate change combined to generate \$306.2 billion in damages [1]. Environmental information reports from 2017 and 2018 also indicated that the intensity of climate change has increased, requiring the implementation of appropriate measures to address this concerning scenario [2]. The increasing amount of damage caused by climate change

emphasises how urgently comprehensive solutions for mitigating and adapting to climate change are needed. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has emphasised how critical it is to cut greenhouse gas emissions to keep global warming to 1.5°C over pre-industrial levels. To meet this aim, all facets of society must act immediately and consistently (IPCC, 2018).

According to a recent research by Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) titled “The Future of

Sustainable Business”, firms worldwide will be impacted by climate change [3]. Consequently, companies are under pressure to adapt their traditional business methods to tackle environmental issues. Companies are implementing sustainable practices more often to reduce their environmental impact in light of these developments. This entails making investments in waste reduction, energy efficiency improvements, and renewable energy sources. For instance, a lot of businesses are aiming high to reach net-zero carbon emissions, which calls for major adjustments to supply chains, operations, and product design.

Organisational leaders must keep a careful eye on local and global environmental situations in light of climate change. The United Nations developed the “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs) in response to the difficulties posed by climate change. These goals apply to organisations globally in all sectors. To address several global concerns, such as climate action, renewable energy, and sustainable economic growth, the SDGs offer a comprehensive framework. These objectives motivate organisations to implement policies that support social justice, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. Businesses may improve their resilience and competitiveness while simultaneously contributing to the fight against climate change by integrating the SDGs into their strategy.

Businesses must incorporate their social, economic, and environmental objectives into their operations in a way that protects resources for future generations to comply with sustainable development standards [4–10]. To do this, companies need to take a comprehensive strategy that strikes a balance between purpose and profit. This entails putting into action strategies that lessen their negative effects on the environment, like cutting back on waste, water use, and carbon emissions. For example, in an effort to lessen their dependency on fossil fuels and their environmental impact, many businesses are now investing in green technologies and renewable energy sources.

Leaders who can promote sustainable practices in their communities and organisations and stimulate economic growth are essential to sustainability [4]. According to this perspective, effective leadership can take the shape of sustainable leadership [5]. The goal of sustainable leadership is to increase an organisation’s short- and long-term financial gains while also enhancing the lives of all stakeholders [6]. Integrating sustainability into the fundamental strategy and day-to-day operations of their organisations is a crucial responsibility of sustainable leaders. They make ethical decision-making, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship a priority, making sure that their companies run in a way that benefits both the environment and society. This strategy not only fits in with the objectives of global sustainability, but it also responds to the rising demands of workers, investors, and customers for ethical business practices.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the idea of sustainable leadership in relation to the textile sector. The data for the study were gathered from employees who worked in a variety of textile firms. The study looks at how sustainable leadership affects sustainable performance. The results show that sustainable leadership has a positive and significant effect on many different aspects of sustainable performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this day and age, the human way of life is greatly impacted by technological progress, unpredictable weather, political unrest, and financial integration. This entire situation increases the pressure on the public, non-governmental organisations, and the government to prioritise environmental issues by incorporating sustainable elements [7, 8]. Sustainability has become a major concern for companies because it provides potential for development, long-term growth, competitive advantages, and financial viability, according to [9–11]. The leaders and top-level management of organisations are beginning to understand that addressing challenges related to sustainable development can improve the quality of their relationships with stakeholders and potentially help them stand out in the market [12–15]. Also, top-level managers in an organisation can play a central role among distinct stakeholders because they are responsible for acquiring and implementing essential resources, mounting suitable strategies, and pointing out the best way to accomplish sustainable development [16].

Rubel et al. [17] conducted a study that found that to improve sustainable performance, an organisation must be able to achieve valuable high performance in both financial and societal aspects. This can be accomplished through the use of an appropriate leadership style and the ability to instil a sense of responsibility, mutual learning, and norms to encourage employees to engage in voluntary environmental behaviour [18–20]. Dey et al. [21] and Moreno-Monsalve et al. [22] state that leadership style is important for achieving sustainable development. This is because employees act like frontline soldiers when they receive positive and fair vibes from their supervisors, playing an active role in developing and implementing the ideas and values of their leaders. This can have a significant impact on the performance of the organisation. According to the study by Xuecheng et al. [23], an organisation’s sustainable performance may be described as the entire performance of the organisation for all stakeholders and in all dimensions. This definition is based on three factors: environmental performance, social performance, and economic performance. The current research is based on the idea that responsible leadership can be a catalyst and a booster of sustainable development within an organisation.

Sustainable leadership

According to Metcalf and Benn [4], leaders in the sustainability space must be able to create plans, regulations, and programs that advance sustainable organisational and social practices while fostering financial success. Sustainable leadership is highly valued by a wide range of stakeholders who see it as an essential component of the green economy [7]. According to Afsar et al. [7], sustainable leadership entails actions and methods that produce long-term benefits for a variety of stakeholders, such as the environment, society, and future generations. It gives businesses a competitive edge by providing chances for long-term success, innovation, continuous improvement, and a sustained competitive edge [6]. Sustainable leadership is essential for green initiatives and ecological performance at the organisational level because it fosters an environmental vision through cultural shifts and builds networks with various stakeholders to address climate change [8]. Furthermore, through reducing expenses and increasing prospective revenue, sustainable leadership improves organisational performance. Proactive in their approach, sustainable leaders build long-lasting relationships with internal and external stakeholders while also continuously monitoring the environment to track changes in the external market [9]. When it comes to internal operations, sustainable leaders develop a long-term strategy, give green projects top priority, deal with sustainability issues, put green management systems in place, and promote both gradual and radical innovation [7]. These leaders concentrate on attaining the best possible results for society and the environment from the outside [7]. Organisations benefit greatly from sustainable leadership in many ways, including the preservation of natural resources and the economic use of resources.

Sustainable performance

There's been a discernible change in how corporate organisations evaluate their performance lately. In the past, businesses evaluated their success using measurable criteria, including their market position, assets, and liabilities [10]. But the idea of sustainable performance has emerged as a result of a developing trend in which financial performance is being integrated with social and environmental factors [11]. This adjustment reflects a wider understanding that the capacity to produce favourable social and environmental results is just as important to long-term success as financial measures. Employing triple bottom line strategies, which strike a balance between profit and the environment and human well-being, helps companies better connect their objectives with global sustainability agendas. Stakeholder demands for accountability, openness, and moral behaviour have fuelled this growth in performance assessment, which in turn has improved business reputation and resilience in a world that is changing quickly.

The recognition of sustainability as a crucial business strategy that is strongly associated with corporate social responsibility (CSR) is growing. Sustainable methods frequently result in positive outcomes that benefit organisations, the environment, and society as a whole. Organisations obtain a major competitive advantage when they successfully incorporate ecological, environmental, and social performance into their operations [11, 12]. This all-encompassing strategy promotes innovation, resource efficiency, and long-term viability in addition to improving a company's reputation. Companies can better satisfy the increasing demands of stakeholders that place a high value on morality and responsibility by coordinating corporate objectives with sustainable practices. Additionally, by reducing the risks connected to social and environmental challenges, this alignment enables businesses to create more flexible and resilient business models. Businesses that implement these strategies are better positioned to prosper over the long run in a world where investors and customers are becoming more and more concerned about sustainability. According to Blind and Heß [13], organisations can attain sustained success by reducing the adverse effects of their activities on the environment and society.

To secure long-term success, organisations are being compelled more and more to embrace sustainable practices as a fundamental business strategy [14]. Currently, a diverse array of stakeholders is exerting pressure on companies to reconcile their environmental and social goals with their overarching business objectives, regarding these as essential components of their purpose [10]. This change represents a growing understanding that sustainability is a strategic necessity that can result in competitive advantage, increased brand loyalty, and stronger stakeholder relationships, rather than just a legal mandate or a moral obligation. Businesses can enhance their ability to meet market needs, draw in socially conscious investors and customers, and lower the dangers of social inequity and environmental degradation by integrating sustainability concepts into their operations. This all-encompassing approach to business strengthens an organisation's resilience and adaptability in a constantly changing global market, in addition to making a positive impact on a more sustainable future.

Organisations measure sustainable performance by concurrently analysing their effects on the environment, society, and economics. This all-inclusive method takes into account the interests of all stakeholders while measuring and assessing a company's performance from a variety of angles. Organisations function without boundaries in this domain by involving stakeholders from both upstream and downstream in their assessments [16]. Similarly, Pureza and Lee [20] claim that in addition to enhancing their financial performance, sustainable organisations place a high priority on minimising resource consumption, lowering petrol emissions, supporting environmental activities, and producing value for a variety

of stakeholders. Furthermore, the achievement of sustainable performance is contingent upon sustainable leaders who prioritise long-term outlooks, systemic thinking, and continuous management growth [7].

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable leadership and sustainable performance

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) concept, which prioritises profit, people, and the planet, is centred on sustainable leadership and performance [1, 17].

Performance is improved by sustainable leaders who inspire workers, foster a happy work environment, and match company objectives with worker goals [18]. According to Tariq et al. [19], sustainable leadership encourages sustainability at all levels and secures financial gains through environmentally friendly methods, community support, and the production of sustainable value [20]. It emphasises long-term gains and capacity growth, both of which significantly improve organisational performance.

Several benefits come with being sustainable for business organisations [21, 22]. These include acquiring a competitive advantage, strengthening financial performance, and improving corporate governance and social responsibility. Sustainable business strategies, according to Xuecheng et al. [23], have a favourable impact on performance by encouraging employee dedication and corporate citizenship behaviour. Furthermore, sustainability initiatives support the development of an ethical climate within the company by assisting employees in aligning with ethical conduct. Companies that prioritise sustainability generally use both financial and non-financial measures, have longer-term goals, and more comprehensive stakeholder involvement methods. In terms of accounting and stock market performance, they gradually beat businesses with low sustainability [24–28].

According to Golgeci et al. [8], sustainable leadership (SL) is a beneficial approach for long-term success and a persistent competitive advantage since it creates value for all stakeholders and encourages innovation and continual improvement. Organisations that use SL practices also benefit in other ways, such as increased productivity, decreased expenses, better organisational image, decreased employee turnover, increased energy and resource efficiency, and increased community engagement. Thus, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H1: Sustainable leadership has a significantly positive impact on economic performance.

H2: Sustainable leadership has a significant impact on environmental performance.

H3: Sustainable leadership has a positive and significant impact on social performance.

Research Gaps

The majority of current research on sustainable leadership is centred on the manufacturing, retail, or

service industries in general, with little focus on the textile industry. The textile industry faces several distinct environmental and social concerns, including high water consumption, chemical waste, and labour issues. More research that is specific to the industry is needed to understand how sustainable leadership may effectively handle these challenges. There is a lack of study on the impact of cultural and regional differences on the implementation and effectiveness of sustainable leadership in the textile sector. In nations with major textile centres, leadership styles and sustainability practices might differ greatly because of socio-cultural norms and legal frameworks, both of which are especially important in these countries.

EMPIRICAL SETTING AND PROCEDURE OF TESTING

With a focus on migrant women workers, this study mainly investigates how sustainable leadership (SL) promotes sustainable performance (SP) in the ready-made clothing industry. Additionally, it seeks to verify the suggested theories empirically. The study is motivated by several important factors. Migrant labourers, many of whom are women from underprivileged backgrounds, are a major component of the ready-made clothing industry. Assuring ethical standards and social responsibility through fair labour practices, equal pay, and safe working conditions is consistent with sustainable leadership values. The study emphasises the significance of SL in addressing concerns of exploitation and promoting fair treatment by concentrating on migratory women workers. Because of its resource-intensive production methods and waste creation, the apparel sector is regularly examined for its effects on the environment. Initiatives aimed at lessening environmental impact, like promoting eco-friendly behaviours, cutting waste, and maximising resource utilisation, can be fueled by sustainable leadership. This strategy responds to the increased demand from consumers for ecologically friendly practices and is in line with more general sustainability objectives.

Sample and data description

Any research must have a thorough, accurate, and current sampling frame. Convenience sampling was used in the absence of such a sampling frame. By maintaining an audit record throughout the data collecting phase and consciously choosing samples with uniform characteristics, care has been taken to guarantee representativeness and minimise bias. 358 workers from the ready-made garment industry in the Indian states of Punjab and J&K Union Territory were given a well-structured questionnaire to complete throughout the six months from March 2024 to August 2024 to collect the primary data.

For the sampling unit, the study employed the following inclusion criteria.

- Women who are not permanent residents of J&K and Punjab but work in factories that produce ready-made clothing.
- Contract, temporary, and permanent female employees who are older than eighteen.
- Depending on the type of question, the instrument uses a five-point Likert scale with 5 representing “strongly agree” and 1 representing “strongly disagree”. It is a non-comparative, detailed rating scale. The cross-sectional approach serves as the foundation for the data gathering process, and Smart PLS-4.0, a second-generation data analysis program, is used.

Measures

With a reliability value of 0.93, the 14-item sustainable leadership measuring scale created by McCann and Holt [6] was used in this study [29]. With a reported reliability value of 0.83, a 15-item scale developed by Khan and Quaddus was used to evaluate sustainable performance across economic, environmental, and social aspects [30-36].

Research design and analysis

The study used a descriptive research approach to examine how sustainable leadership affects sustainable performance. To analyse the data, the study used partial least squares structural equation modelling, or PLS-SEM. The study was conducted in two primary steps using SmartPLS Version 4.0: assessing the measurement model and examining the structural model. Examining convergent and discriminant

validity was the main goal of the measurement model evaluation. Discriminant validity measures how distinct things are across constructs, whereas convergent validity measures how related items are within constructs.

The study’s methodology largely examined the proposed connections between the constructs to assess the structural model. This evaluation included looking at the relationships in the structural model’s collinearity, significance, and applicability. The evaluation also looked at factors including the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2) to better comprehend the model’s performance.

FINDINGS

Measurement model assessment

The metrics used to assess the measurement model, such as factor loading, composite reliability (CR), and average extracted variance (AVE), are displayed in table 1. A factor loading of 0.700 is typically considered average, while values as low as 0.4, 0.5, and 0.6 can be acceptable in some circumstances. Due to extremely low factor loadings, a few items on the Sustainable Leadership scale (SL10, SL11, SL12, SL13, SL15, and SoP01) were removed. The results in table 1 demonstrate that all of the conditions have been met, with AVE and CR benchmarks being 0.5 and 0.7, respectively. This implies that the measurement model’s convergent validity is appropriate. Figure 1 displays the measurement model evaluation’s SmartPLS output.

Table 1

FACTOR LOADING, COMPOSITE RELIABILITY, AND AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED				
	Item code	Factor loadings	Composite reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Economic performance	EP01	0.683	0.855	0.545
	EP02	0.78		
	EP03	0.839		
	EP04	0.776		
	EP05	0.588		
Environmental performance	EnP01	0.748	0.858	0.548
	EnP02	0.706		
	EnP03	0.725		
	EnP04	0.776		
	EnP05	0.746		
Social performance	SoP02	0.665	0.82	0.533
	SoP03	0.713		
	SoP04	0.759		
	SoP05	0.777		
Sustainable leadership	SL01	0.696	0.914	0.514
	SL02	0.747		
	SL03	0.738		
	SL04	0.711		
	SL05	0.665		
	SL06	0.756		
	SL07	0.732		
	SL08	0.73		
	SL09	0.685		
	SL14	0.708		

Table 2

HTMT assessment of discriminant validity				
Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4	Column5
	Economic performance	Environmental performance	Social performance	Sustainable leadership
Economic performance				
Environmental performance	0.718			
Social performance	0.85	0.894		
Sustainable leadership	0.845	0.842	0.822	

The heterotrait–monotrait correlation ratio (HTMT) was endorsed by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt as a criterion for evaluating the discriminant validity of the measurement model. Gold, Malhotra, and Segars suggested a criterion of 0.9, whereas Kline said that it should not be higher than 0.85. Table 2 indicates that all of these conditions were satisfied, indicating that the measurement model did, in fact, exhibit discriminant validity.

Structural model assessment

To ascertain whether multicollinearity was present in the model, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was employed. Every VIF value was comfortably below 3.3, indicating that the model did not have any issues with multicollinearity. According to table 3's results, which were derived by bootstrapping the structural model analysis, the hypotheses are supported when $p < 0.001$ ($t > 1.645$), $p < 0.05$ ($t > 1.96$), or $p < 0.001$ ($t > 2.58$). The results unequivocally demonstrate that

each hypothesis is validated. Additionally, according to Cohen, R^2 must be at least 0.35 for significance; the calculated model for this study's R^2 of 0.566 is regarded as significant.

A blindfolding procedure with a distance omission of $D=7$ was used to evaluate the predictive significance. PLS-SEM analysis criteria are well-aligned with the Q^2 value computation, which is based on a cross-validated redundancy technique. According to the data, all endogenous factors have predictive importance, as indicated by the Q^2 value of 0.541. The degree to which an endogenous variable influences an exogenous variable is referred to as its effect size. According to Cohen, an f^2 value of 0.35 or higher indicates a large influence, $0.15 < f^2 \leq 0.349$ indicates a moderate effect, and $f^2 \leq 0.03$ indicates a modest effect. Every connection shows either a minor or moderate effect size, based on the results shown in table 3.

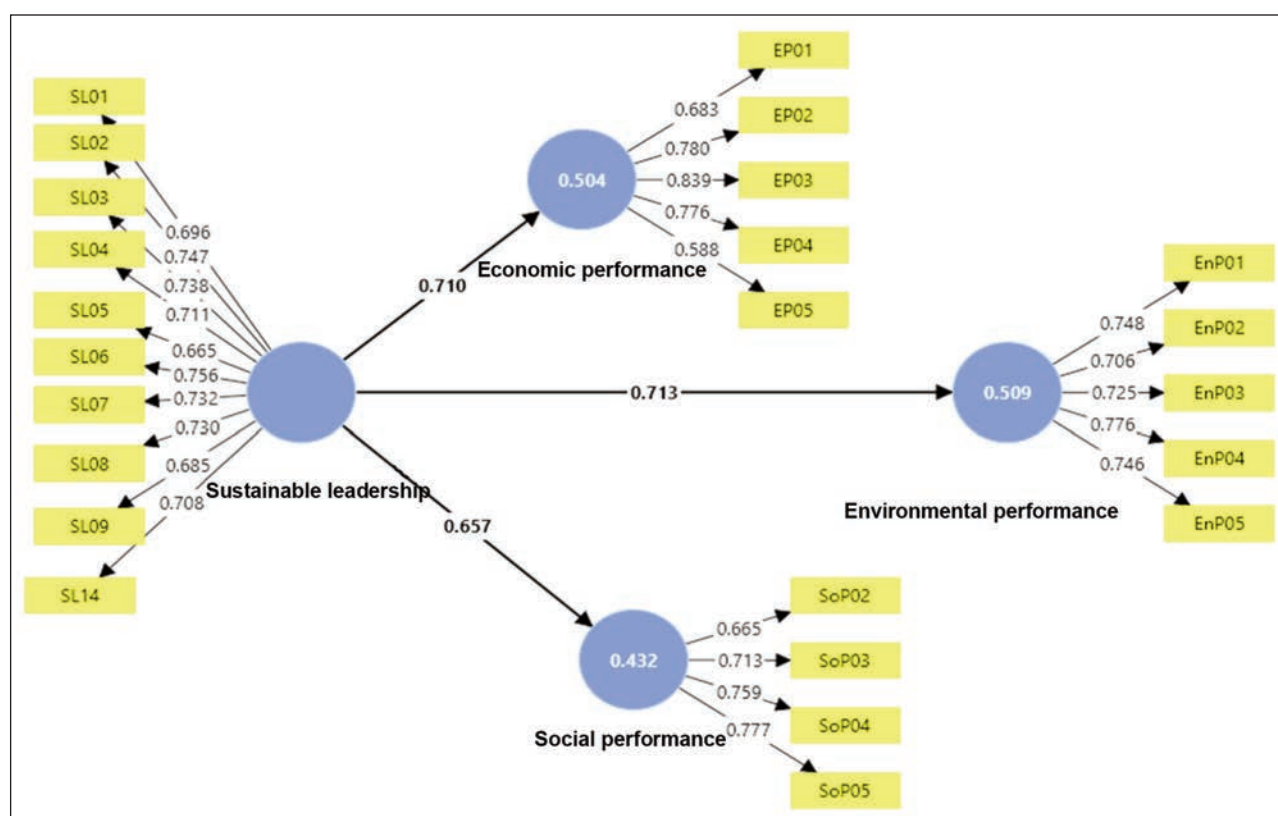


Fig. 1. SmartPLS output of the measurement model

RESULTS OF PATH ANALYSIS, VIF, f^2 , R^2 , AND Q^2									
Column1	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	VIF	f^2	R^2	Q^2
Sustainable leadership > Economic performance	0.71	0.713	0.037	19.255	0.000	1	1.061	0.054 0.509	0.495
Sustainable leadership > Environmental performance	0.713	0.717	0.038	18.835	0.000	1	1.037	0.43	0.499
Sustainable leadership > Social performance	0.656	0.66	0.039	16.878	0.000	1	0.754		0.418

ADDRESSING RESPONSE BIAS

Researchers have put several techniques into place to ensure that the data is reliable and legitimate to address response bias. When anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed, social desirability bias is reduced, which encourages people to respond honestly. The surveys used neutral language and balanced response scales to prevent participants from being led or influenced. In addition, the inclusion of reverse-coded questions and the randomisation of the order of items helped to reduce automatic answering tendencies and order effects.

DISCUSSION

Three hypotheses were established for the present study. Since the P values are less than 0.05, all three hypotheses have been accepted. The findings of this investigation are consistent with other earlier research carried out in various fields. Businesses play a significant role in advancing sustainable development, and contemporary businesses are shifting from a strategy that prioritises increasing short-term shareholder value to one that recognises the interdependence of the economy, business, society, and environment. SL takes into account how business, society, and the environment are interconnected, and value is generated through long-term strategic decision-making. The study looked at how SL affected textile companies' SP. Indicators of the economy, society, and environment were employed to gauge sustainable performance. The findings showed a strong positive correlation between FP and SL. The study's first hypothesis is validated.

Maintaining positive labour relations, training personnel, succession planning, and social responsibility through positive community interactions are all skills that a sustainable leader should possess.

Additionally, the results offer empirical evidence in favour of a favourable correlation between SL and EP. The study's third hypothesis is validated. A sustainable leader must minimise pollution, use resources like energy and water effectively, and practice environmental responsibility, claim [7]. According to Liao and Zhang [18], a sustainable leader implements a plan for long-term sustainable performance

and generates value for all stakeholders. According to Iqbal and Ahmad [16], organisational learning mediates the link between SL and SP. Iqbal and Ahmad discovered in another investigation that SL indirectly and favourably affects SP through psychological safety.

The current research builds on prior studies by investigating the mediating function of knowledge integration in the relationship between sustainable leadership and sustainable project performance. Previous studies have failed to investigate how sustainable leaders combine sustainability principles with their management style [25]. In large-scale construction projects, the success of the project often depends on the team's capacity to integrate and absorb knowledge and techniques linked to sustainable development goals (SDGs). Our research helps to improve the understanding of sustainable management by examining a variety of methods for integrating information that connect sustainable leadership directly to the results of the project. Our research indicates that sustainable leadership practices can improve the performance of sustainable projects by encouraging the integration of information.

This is especially significant because achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) demands an awareness of different types of knowledge to ensure that projects are sustainable. Our research highlights the importance of knowledge integration as a mediating component, which provides insight into how sustainable leadership practices can result in sustainable project performance.

The findings of this study suggest that the value of top management knowledge is essential for improving the working relationships between sustainable leadership and the integration of staff knowledge. This finding is in agreement with prior research conducted by Thakhathi et al. [27], which indicates that the value of top management knowledge is determined by a variety of novel techniques and procedures that promote sustainable leadership and knowledge integration. This is especially crucial in the context of building projects because of the frequent occurrence of unexpected situations, such as changes to the design, code outcomes, and growing client needs during the project. Top management

knowledge value enables employee participation and encourages speedy solutions for new challenges, which is different from old systems, where only elite decision-makers can update or adjust the job that has been assigned. Our research shows that the value of knowledge possessed by top management has a strong interaction with sustainable leadership and knowledge integration. This emphasises the need for businesses to prioritise the knowledge value of top management to promote sustainability practices and achieve sustainable project performance [26, 37–44].

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The relationship between SL and the performance of textile organisations was examined in this study. To gauge sustainable performance, financial, social, and environmental metrics were employed. The findings showed a strong positive correlation between SP and SL. The study theoretically connected business, financial, and nonfinancial factors with SL. The study connected SL not just to financial performance but also to sustainable performance (financial, social, and environmental metrics). This provides a comprehensive view of how SL may affect business performance. Therefore, the study's conclusions demonstrate that a sustainable leader will enhance a company's social and environmental performance in addition to its financial performance. A CEO who is sustainable will be able to generate value for more than just shareholders, but also for other parties involved. The study contributes empirically to the limited research on SL and firm performance, particularly when it comes to developing-nation textile firms. The study offers several suggestions for how textile businesses might enhance SL.

While evaluating success, textile companies ought to employ both financial and nonfinancial metrics. The operation and performance of textile businesses should incorporate sustainability reporting and practices. Leaders ought to create sustainability rules and policies for their companies. Textile companies' incentive programs ought to emphasise long-term performance and leadership. There are several restrictions on the study. First, it prioritised subjective metrics for sustainable performance over objective ones. The survey's respondents are primarily small and medium-sized businesses, and achieving their desired outcomes is frequently challenging. Second, sampling bias may have resulted from the survey's convenient sampling of participants.

Third, the survey was only completed by 358 employees; thus, caution should be used when extrapolating the study's conclusions. Fourth, the survey was conducted using a cross-sectional approach, which restricts the capacity to identify the cause and impact. A longitudinal technique can be used in other investigations. The employees of textile companies were the study's main focus. The McCann and Holt [6] 15-item sustainable leadership questionnaire can be used to find out how textile company employees feel

about sustainable leadership. It is also possible to look into the moderating influence of the employee's age, gender, and educational attainment.

Implications of the study

By linking sustainable leadership with sustainable performance metrics in a labour-intensive industry like textiles, the study will add to the growing body of research on the topic. It might offer a theoretical foundation for comprehending how employee performance and behaviour are influenced by leadership styles in sectors with significant social and environmental consequences. Managers in the textile sector should use sustainable leadership techniques to match employee performance to the organisation's long-term sustainability objectives. In textile factories, sustainable leadership frequently promotes worker engagement, well-being, and satisfaction, which boosts output and lowers turnover. Employees who are inspired by sustainable leadership are more likely to increase quality control, use resources more efficiently, and implement eco-friendly practices.

Companies could achieve Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) standards and enhance their brand image by utilising sustainable leadership methods. In the hierarchical structure of textile companies, trust and improved communication are essential, and sustainable leadership can help to cultivate both.

This study may help legislators create labour and environmental regulations that support eco-friendly textile sector practices. It might promote the establishment of industry-wide standards for long-term worker performance and leadership. Textile companies that effectively adopt sustainable leadership models may be eligible for incentives from governments or trade associations. Employee involvement in sustainability initiatives may result in decreased waste and enhanced environmentally friendly procedures as a result of sustainable leadership in the textile sector. It backs the global agenda for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those about responsible consumption and production (SDG 12) and decent work (SDG 8).

Recommendations

Textile firms need to take a comprehensive approach to their operations to effectively implement sustainable leadership practices. This means integrating environmental, social, and economic sustainability into their business models. This includes accepting responsibility for the environment by lowering carbon emissions, making the most of available resources, and using renewable energy sources. Businesses should put closed-loop systems in place for recycling garbage and conserving water to minimise their influence on the environment. Leaders should promote a culture of employee involvement by promoting active participation in sustainability projects, offering skill development programs, and creating venues for workers to voice creative ideas. It is important to develop clear and verifiable sustainability goals that are in line with global standards, such as the UN

SDGs. Leaders must also set an example by publicly practising and prioritising sustainability. It is essential to manage the supply chain in an ethical manner, which includes working with suppliers who follow fair labour practices and environmental standards. Businesses need to put money into innovation, which includes the creation of biodegradable materials, low-impact colours, and smart production methods that minimise energy use. Regular sustainability reporting and certifications improve transparency, which helps to create trust with stakeholders like as consumers, investors, and staff. Textile firms can also make community engagement a priority by starting programs that assist local economies,

improve working conditions, and empower underprivileged groups in the industry. In addition, using digital tools such as blockchain for supply chain traceability and artificial intelligence for energy optimisation can improve operational efficiency and sustainability results. Textile firms may keep ahead of sustainability trends and promote systemic change by collaborating with industry associations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and government agencies. In the end, incorporating these principles into every aspect of operations and decision-making will allow textile companies to achieve long-term sustainable performance while also contributing to broader environmental and social goals.

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