

THE ROLES OF SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND ETHICAL LEADERSHIP TOWARDS EMPLOYEE GREEN BEHAVIOURS IN THE AVIATION INDUSTRY

author: *Nguyen Thi Lang Phuong*
supervisor: *Prof. Ing. Aleksandr Ključnikov, Ph.D.*
examiner: *Prof. Ing. Jiří Strouhal, Ph.D.*

DOCTORAL THESIS' REVIEW

Submitted thesis "*The Roles of Socially Responsible Human Resources Management and Ethical Leadership Towards Employee Green Behaviours in the Aviation Industry*" deals with very interesting and actual topic discussed within contemporary research. Nguyen Thi Lang Phuong's thesis is one of the contributions to this discussion. As a frequent flyer reaching his 2,000,000 miles milestone in July 2023 on board of Vietnam Airlines flight from HCM to SIN I'm happy to have a possibility to review this thesis focused on aviation industry.

A thesis is logically structured, i.e. it comprises literature review, research design and methodology, results from qualitative and quantitative perspective, discussion, contributions and some implications for future research.

Author defines as a research problem "to develop a general model that explores the application of SRHRM in the aviation industry and examines the connection between SRHRM and employee's green behaviour by mediating the position of the leader's eco-helping behaviour and the employee's felt obligation as well as the role of ethical leadership".

From this perspective arise four research questions and four research objectives (see pp. 14-15).

A chapter focused on a literature review could be considered as a comprehensive and up-to-date one, references covers 278 titles (mostly journals; 52 cited papers are from the period 2019 – 2024). A literature review focuses on social identity theory, social exchange theory, social cognitive theory, and social learning theory, dealing also with green topics alike green (sustainable) HR management, CSR, SRHRM, in-role green behaviour, ethical leadership and also focusing on CSR in Vietnam's aviation industry.

From the research perspective a thesis tests 7+7 (!) research hypotheses (see pp. 33-38) focusing on impacts on employees' voluntary green behaviour and employee's in-role green behaviour:

H1a: SRHRM has a positive effect on employees' voluntary green behaviour.

H1b: SRHRM has a positive effect on employees' in-role green behaviour.

H2a. The leader's eco-helping behaviour positively mediates the influence of SRHRM on employees' voluntary green behaviour.

H2b. The leader's eco-helping behaviour positively mediates the influence of SRHRM on employees' in-role green behaviour.

H3a. The employee's felt obligation positively mediates the influence of SRHRM on employees' voluntary green behaviour.

H3b. The employee's felt obligation positively mediates the influence of SRHRM on employees' in-role green behaviour.

H4a. Ethical leadership has a positive impact on employees' voluntary green behaviour.

H4b. Ethical leadership has a positive impact on employees' in-role green behaviour.

H5a. Ethical leadership moderates the link between SRHRM and employees' voluntary green behaviour.

H5b. Ethical leadership moderates the link between SRHRM and employees' in-role green behaviour.

H6a. The mediating effect of employee's felt obligation on the link between SRHRM and employees' voluntary green behaviour is moderated by the ethical leadership.

H6b. The mediating effect of employee's felt obligation on the link between SRHRM and employees' in-role green behaviour is moderated by the ethical leadership.

H7a. The mediating effect of leader's eco-helping on the link between SRHRM and employees' voluntary green behaviour is moderated by the ethical leadership.

H7b. The mediating effect of leader's eco-helping on the link between SRHRM and employees' in-role green behaviour is moderated by the ethical leadership.

To be able to handle with this ambitious number of hypotheses there was applied a qualitative and quantitative research. As per qualitative research, there were realised semi-structured in-depth interviews with aviation industry players (executives from the field of HR management); as per quantitative research were realised questionnaires (and afterwards structural equation modelling).

On p. 43 is described the process of choosing candidates for semi-structured in-depth interviews (three executives: 37 y.o. training manager with 20 (!) years of professional experience in the aviation industry, 40 y.o. HR manager with 22 (!) years of professional experience in the aviation industry, and 45 y.o. academic expert with 18 years of professional experience in the aviation industry). What's quite unclear is how these candidates were really chosen (what was the initial sample size and why concretely these experts), so it would be vital to discuss the selection process during the thesis presentation. What also have to mention that's quite pity that the qualitative part results (industrial insights) are not a way more discussed.

As per the questionnaire (in total 33 questions with closed responses – 7-point Likert scale) there was set as minimum number of samples to be 236. It would be vital to describe more precisely how were

chosen respondents, what was the duration of the survey, etc. There were addressed 600 respondents from the aviation industry (not mentioned how, if online or offline) and author successfully collected 397 valid responses. All hypotheses were properly tested and supported. Also I do believe that 7-point Likert scale is too much for this group of respondents (5-point scale might be more than sufficient, as don't think so that some (or even majority) of respondents can really differ from strongly (dis-)agree and (dis-)agree. Kindly don't get me wrong, it's just kind of recommendation for your future research. Despite of an above-mentioned comments I believe that the aim and goal of this thesis was fulfilled. The PhD student's added value I can see in the analysis of an aviation industry in Vietnam in the approached area of research.

Practical and theoretical implications

As per theoretical implications, this thesis is crucial for gaining a deeper awareness of employees' voluntary green behaviour and employees' in-role green behaviour in the aviation industry. The added value is the identification of a new factor in the aviation industry, concretely SRHRM. From the practical perspective this thesis brings findings that executives in aviation companies should be mindful of the need to clarify and encourage SRHRM procedures and regulations among employees since SRHRM may successfully encourage both employees' voluntary green behaviour and employees' in-role green behaviour. The real practical impact and thesis' added value depends on promoting these results and make them publicly visible.

Formal issues and a language level

The thesis is processed from a formal and language point of view at a high-quality level and I don't have any significant critical comments. Only would like to strongly recommend for the future researches (and research papers) to minimise the usage of abbreviations as this may improve a text readability.

Publication outputs

Within current PhD studies Nguyen Thi Lang Phuong (co-)authorised 3 conference papers and 5 journal papers (from which at least three are still under review). From this perspective I hope that the minimum publication standard expected from finishing PhD students was fulfilled. Considering that all papers were prepared by group of 3+ researchers, it might be vital to describe role in these researchers.

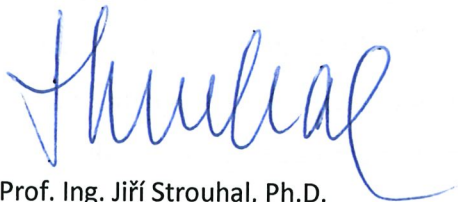
Final evaluation

A thesis presents integrated and well-arranged explication of analysed problem. It can be acknowledged as topical in terms of contemporary research on approached area. The thesis may bring a new knowledge and offer new questions and new suggestions for further research.

Therefore I would like to recommend the thesis "*The Roles of Socially Responsible Human Resources Management and Ethical Leadership Towards Employee Green Behaviours in the Aviation Industry*" for defending at the relevant committee for PhD theses defense.

In a case of a successful defense, I support awarding the academic title "Doctor – Ph.D.".

Mladá Boleslav, 30th April 2024



Prof. Ing. Jiří Strouhal, Ph.D.

ŠKODA AUTO University, Department of Finance and Accounting – Full Professor
Association of Czech Professional Accountants – President Emeritus