



Effect of green transformational leadership on green creativity: A study of tourist hotels



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Green Transformational Leadership positively related to the green creativity.
- GOI mediated the relation of green transformational leadership and green creativity.
- Resource commitment acted as a mediator.
- The background of the study was Tourist hotels.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the role played by green transformational leadership in promoting green creativity through green organizational identity. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data from managers and employees working in tourist hotels in Uttarakhand, India. In order to collect data for this study, 250 hotel employees and their 250 immediate supervisors were contacted. The findings of this study revealed that green transformational leadership had a positive influence on green organizational identity which leads to the promotion of green creativity in the organization. Further, it was also found that resource commitment acted as a moderator in the relationship between green organizational identity and green creativity. Hence, hotels have to increase their resource commitment for promotion of green creativity amongst their employees. On the basis of the study's findings, the implications for practitioners are discussed.

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1. Introduction

Sustainable growth has become the norm of the day, and there is an increased pressure on organizations to follow green practices for achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Hsieh, 2012; Park & Kim, 2014). Environmental security has become a crucial matter for the organizations; companies are creating different creative groups to reduce paper and water usage, to develop rain water harvesting premises, and to recycle water for sanitation purposes (Kala, 2011; Miles & Covin, 2000) for conserving the environment. Government has been promoting those organizations that have developed green services and products (Leonidou, Leonidou, Fotiadis, & Aykol, 2015) because these green practices or services contribute not only to the image of organization, but also result in

decreased cost. Thus, green services and environment friendly activities find a crucial place in the competitive environment of organizations (Fraj, Matute, & Melero, 2015). The last decade has witnessed speedy urbanization, depletion of natural resources, and increase in global carbon foot print in the name of economic development and this environmental degradation for the sake of economic development has become a major concern for the Indian government (Kumar, 2013; Ogra, 2008). Further, Uttarakhand has experienced major flood and earthquake as an outcome of routine urbanization and environmental degradation (Kala, 2014; Kumar, 2013). These calamities have aggravated the concern of the Government of India about dilapidation of environment, hence to the government has enforced stricter environmental norms across India. As a result, environmental deliberation has become a commonly used concept for global environmental change, thereby challenging more organizations to pay greater attention to avail green services such as green leadership and green creativity (Chen & Chang, 2013).

Abbreviations: GOI, Green organizational Identity.

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Previous studies have shown that in the world's developed as well as developing economies the service sector has been found to be contributing to more than 70% of the gross domestic product (GDP), thus resulting in the promotion of creativity (Ostrom et al., 2010; Thakur & Hale, 2013; Tyagi, Dhar, & Sharma, 2016). The success of the tourist hotels primarily depends on creativity (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015; Ostrom et al., 2010) related to the services provided. In addition, the introduction of innovative services can play a significant role in value creation. For example, the development of economic recovery, tourist activities, and recovery of environmental heritage of a site (Moller, Rajala, & Westerlund, 2008; Votsi, Mazaris, Kallimanis, & Pantis, 2014) are means of gaining larger market share and customer value (Chapman, Soosay, & Kandampully, 2003). Above all, the tourism and hotel industry has become one of the important service segments (Dhar, 2015; Narayan, Rajendran, Sai, & Gopalan, 2009), and so it needs to be fostered in order to make it more creative in its service orientation.

According to the World Tourism Organization, there has been a consistent rise in the tourism industry of the emerging economies like India (UNWTO, 2013). In this regard, according to the Indian Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF, 2013), a consistent growth has been observed in this sector which is evident through the contribution of US\$ 34.7 billion to the national GDP (IBEF, 2013). With a steep rise in the number of international tourists, India has become one of the preferred tourist destinations of South Asia (UNWTO, 2013). According to UNWTO, the international tourist arrival is expected to increase at a rate of 3.3% per year from 2010 to 2030.

Reports projecting industry growth trends to show that there is a great potential for the Indian tourism industry which can be further enhanced via providing memorable tourism experiences to the visitors (IBEF, 2013). Imparting of memorable experiences can be largely attained by offering better facilities as well as providing a wide range of cost effective and creative services (Leonidou, Leonidou, Fotiadis, & Zeriti, 2013). In today's competitive business environment, the success of a service oriented organization like a tourist hotel depends upon utilizing creative services that can satisfy the needs of the customers who always expect "something different and extra". Thus, creativity is gradually becoming an effective weapon to face market competition since the customers are becoming more aware and concerned about the environment (Fraj et al., 2015). The preservation of environment has become an area of critical importance; hence service organizations like tourist hotels have started to show their dedication to come up with environment friendly practices like green creativity (Chen & Chang, 2013; Leonidou et al., 2013). Creativity is vital for the development of novel and useful ideas which can lead to organizational development and performance (Amabile, 1988). In service organizations like hotels, creativity is the essential footstep in the innovation process, as it is a preliminary point for organizational innovation (Wang, Tsai, & Tsai, 2014). In this study, we adopted some concepts related to environmental innovation practices such as green transformational leadership, green organizational identity, green creativity and resource commitment. Green transformational leadership is a leader's behavior which motivates followers to fulfill environmental objectives and goals and encourages followers to perform beyond their expectation for achieving environmental performance such as green creativity (Bass, 1998; Chen & Chang, 2013).

Amabile (1988) and Chen and Chang (2013) defined green creativity as "the development of new ideas about green products, green services, green processes, or green practices that are judged to be original, novel, and useful" (p.113).

Nurturing green creativity among employees to produce innovative end results is the primary concern of managers (Chen & Chang, 2013; Zhu, Cordeiro, & Sarkis, 2013). Shalley, Zhou and

Oldham (2004) argued that creativity among the employees is recognized as an important element because it delineates the characteristics of the individual as well as depicts his or her ability to fulfill the duties under all circumstance. Similarly, some basic approaches have been adopted by past researchers to study the antecedents of creativity. In the first approach, managers deeply impact individuals by guiding employees to perform their work creatively (Gong, Huang, & Farh, 2009; Shalley & Gilson, 2004), thus making this approach their preferred leadership style. Based on these studies, Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, and Kramer. (2004) suggested that the behavior of the leader plays a crucial role in promoting creativity amongst the employees. Studies in the past have shown that transformational leadership plays a significant role in promoting employee creativity (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009; Mittal & Dhar, 2015). Transformational leadership generates a supportive and motivating environment (Jung, Chow, & Wu, 2003) and organizes necessary contextual resources to individuals as an expression of creative behavior. Hence, this study makes an attempt to understand the relationship between transformational leadership and creativity of service in organizations like tourist hotels from environmental or green perspective. In the second approach, green organizational identity and commitment towards resources were found to play a crucial role in nourishing green creativity in the hotel industry (Daugherty, Richey, Genchev, & Chen, 2005; Garg & Dhar, 2014; Sethi, 2000).

This study aims to examine the role of green transformational leadership toward influencing green organizational identity and its subsequent impact on green creativity in tourist hotels. The study further tries to establish that resource commitment plays an interactive role in the relationship between green organizational identity and green creativity. Thus, the study adds to the existing literature in the following ways: First, a significant relation between green transformational leadership and green creativity is confirmed. Second, the mediating role of green organizational identity between green transformational leadership and green creativity has been explained. Third, the role of resource commitment as a moderator provides a better understanding of green creativity in tourist hotels. Thus, this study attempts to understand the role of green transformational leadership and green creativity in the context of tourist hotels. Furthermore, we examined the extent to which green organizational identity and resource commitment affect green creativity of the tourist hotels.

2. Theoretical foundation and hypotheses formulation

2.1. Green transformational leadership and green creativity

Organizational creativity highly depends upon leaders and their characteristics (Halbesleben, Novicevic, Harvey, & Buckley, 2003) because they play a leading role in enhancing environmental performance (Andriopoulos, 2001). Several studies have demonstrated that transformational leadership plays a key role in getting creative outcomes (Mittal & Dhar, 2015; Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993). Transformational leadership has four dimensions, "intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, charisma, and inspirational motivation" (Bass, 1985). The *charismatic* power of the transformational leader helps in coming up with inspirational thoughts amongst the followers which lead to acquiring respect amongst them and thus earning their loyalty. With the help of the *charismatic* power that the transformational leader possesses, he is able to create a feeling of collective responsibility within their followers. *Individualized consideration* helps the transformational leader to create a feeling of belongingness amongst their followers that lead to the development of concern for each other. Further, the transformational leader with the help of *inspirational motivation* is

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