# **ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ / RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# BANKING ON GREEN: THE MODERATING ROLE OF BANK TYPE IN GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

YEŞİL BANKACILIĞA YÖNELİM: YEŞİL İNSAN KAYNAKLARI YÖNETİMİ VE KURUMSAL SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİRLİK İLİŞKİSİNDE BANKA TÜRÜNÜN MODERATÖR ROLÜ

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#### **Abstract**

This study examines the moderating role of bank type in the relationship between green human resource management and corporate sustainability, based on the AMO (Ability-Motivation-Opportunity) theory. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted in the study. A 5-point Likert-type questionnaire was used to collect data from both public and private banks. The study's sample consisted of participants holding various positions in the banking sector. A total of 151 participants responded to the questionnaire. The survey data were analyzed and interpreted using IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 and PROCESS Macro (Study 1). To support the quantitative study, content analysis was conducted by coding the sustainability reports of the same banks. The findings suggest that both private and public banks can benefit from implementing GHRM initiatives, albeit with some differences based on their organizational characteristics.

**Keywords:** Green Human Resource Management, Corporate Sustainability, Private Bank, Public Bank **JEL Classification:** M1, M10

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#### Öz

Bu çalışma, AMO (Yetenek-Motivasyon-Fırsat) teorisine dayanarak, yeşil insan kaynakları yönetimi ve kurumsal sürdürülebilirlik arasındaki ilişkide banka türünün düzenleyici rolünü incelemektedir. Araştırmada hem nicel hem de nitel yöntemler kullanılmıştır. Hem kamu hem de özel bankalardan veri toplamak amacıyla 5-li Likert tipi anket kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini bankacılık sektöründe çeşitli görevlerde bulunan katılımcılar oluşturmuştur. Ankete toplam 151 katılımcı yanıt vermiştir. Anket verileri IBM SPSS İstatistik 26.0 ve PROCESS Macro (Çalışma 1) kullanılarak analiz edilmiş ve yorumlanmıştır. Nicel çalışmayı desteklemek amacıyla aynı bankaların sürdürülebilirlik raporları kodlanarak içerik analizi yapılmıştır. Bulgular, kurumsal özelliklerine göre bazı farklılıklar olsa da, hem özel hem de kamu bankalarının yeşil İK girişimlerini uygulamaktan yararlanabileceğini göstermiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yeşil İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi, Kurumsal Sürdürülebilirlik, Özel Banka, Kamu Bankası

JEL Sınıflandırması: M1, M10

#### 1. Introduction

Corporate sustainability (hereinafter CS) is perceived as a novel and continuously evolving management paradigm. CS refers to the strategies implemented by companies to provide long-term benefits and value to customers, shareholders, employees, and the communities in which the company operates (Tandoh et al., 2022). It acknowledges the importance of corporate growth and profitability, while also emphasizing the need for companies to consider societal goals such as environmental conservation, social justice and equality, and economic development. In line with these objectives, organizations are obligated to contribute to sustainability by preserving and enhancing their economic, social, and environmental capital bases (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002). The triple bottom line, which focuses on three dimensions: social, environmental and economic, argues that a purely profit-oriented business cannot achieve success by ignoring society and the environment. However, companies that integrate these three dimensions will be able to achieve long-term CS. Focusing solely on economic sustainability is not sufficient for a company's sustainability. While concentrating on economic sustainability may lead to short-term success, long-term sustainability requires simultaneous satisfaction of all three dimensions (Gladwin et al., 1995). For CS to be realized at the organizational level, adaptation of both external factors (governments, customer groups, society, etc.) and internal factors (management support, human resource management, environmental education, employee training, teamwork, reward systems, etc.) to this process is crucial. Particularly, green human resource management (hereinafter GHRM) practices play a significant role in the implementation and enhancement of CS. In contemporary literature, GHRM is acknowledged to shed light on sustainability and is considered the cornerstone of sustainability purpose (Ahmad, 2015). Therefore, examining GHRM practices will assist us in better understanding the CS of banks in Türkiye. There are many GHRM studies in the literature. According to Jackson et al. (2011), GHRM is defined as initiatives undertaken by the human resources department focusing on the environmental, economic, and social performance of employees, which can lead to sustainable outcomes for the organization. In line with this definition, the positive relationship between GHRM and CS is evident. Indeed, the studies conducted in the literature also support this relationship (Guerci et al., 2015; Mishra, 2017; Ahmed et al., 2019; Citta & Fattah, 2020; Amjad et al., 2021; Jamal

et al., 2021; Abbas et al., 2022; Ali et al., 2022; Adubor et al., 2022; Yahya & Zargar, 2023; Yasin et al., 2023). In addition to these studies, we want to examine the level of green practices and policies, and CS adopted by public and private sector banks in Türkiye.

Although there is a substantial body of literature examining the relationship between GHRM and CS, no study has been found that explores the moderating effect of bank type on this relationship. In the literature, various variables and sectors have been considered in relation to this relationship. For instance, Jamal et al. (2021) explained this relationship in major developing industrial sectors, while Adubor et al. (2022) focused on manufacturing organizations in Lagos State. Yahya and Zargar (2023) utilized CSR and green innovation as mediating variables. Yasin et al. (2023) employed employer branding as a variable, while Jeromino et al. (2020) explored the effects of gender and age.

However, this study, uniquely, the moderating role of public and private banks in Türkiye in the relationship between GHRM and CS was examined both at the organizational level by reaching bank employees and by collecting secondary data by accessing bank reports. Considering various GHRM practices and sustainability activities of public and private banks in the relationship between GHRM and CS can provide valuable insights for bank managers in practice. Therefore, understanding the moderating effect of public/private banks on the GHRM-CS relationship can be intriguing and significant. Secondly, there are very few studies examining the relationship between GHRM and CS within the banking sector sample. This study is important to increase awareness in the banking sector and to reveal the status of banks to support sustainability activities and GHRM practices of banks and to increase these activities for banks. By selecting both private and public banks as samples, we aim to inform both bank managers and researchers about the state of the banking sector. In particular, framing GHRM practices through the AMO framework is important for providing researchers and bank managers with a better understanding from a general perspective. Finally, when considering the sustainability reports recently published by banks in Türkiye, it can be stated that there has been a positive development. This development may stem from the successful implementation of human resources practices within banks. Especially, the widespread adoption of GHRM in banks positively affects sustainability. Observing the status of this relationship in Türkiye could provide us with new insights.

The contribution of our study to the advancement of knowledge is threefold. Firstly, based on the theory (AMO) used by Yahya & Zargar (2023) and Iftikar et al. (2022), we extend the theory by considering the relationship between GHRM and CS with different moderator variable. In doing so, we conduct both quantitative and qualitative research to examine the relationship between GHRM and CS in depth by staying within the AMO framework. First, in study 1, we measure GHRM practices and sustainability performance by analyzing the information we collected from the employees of our sample banks at the organizational level. With study 2, we try to obtain in-depth information with a qualitative method that supports Study 1 by examining the sustainability reports published on the websites of these sample banks. Secondly, our study aimed to illuminate the current situation in GHRM and sustainability activities in banks, while also evaluating banks separately as private and public. Therefore, this study examined the relationship between GHRM and CS specifically for

banks and aimed to contribute by filling the gap in the literature. Finally, while some studies in the literature address the GHRM-GHRM relationship by focusing on a single dimension of GHRM (green recruitment and selection (Jepsen & Grob, 2015; Kiplangat et al. 2022; Jamil et al., 2023; Das & Dash, 2023) green training (Xie & Zhu, 2020; Moradeke et al., 2021), green performance management and green compensation management (Martins et al., 2021), in our study, based on the study of Obereder et al. (2022), we grouped GHRM practices within the AMO framework and tried to associate them with sustainability. In doing so, we aimed to keep the GHRM-CS relationship within the AMO framework and contribute to the theory.

This study is structured as follows: It begins with a brief literature review on GHRM and CS, emphasizing the connection between the two concepts. Following this, the methodology is explained, and then the main findings are presented and discussed. Finally, the study identifies limitations that affected the execution of this research and has subsequently generated several recommendations for future studies.

#### 2. Theoretical framework

# 2.1. Ability – motivation – opportunity framework on green human resources management, corporate sustainability and banking sector

Many researchers have employed the "Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO)" theory proposed by Appelbaum (2000) to examine GHRM practices. (Pinzone et al. 2016; Guerci et al. 2018; Zhou et al. 2022; Abbas et al. 2022; Al-Alawneh et al, 2023; Yahya & Zargar, 2023).

The initial major conceptual review article (Renwick et al., 2013) is considered the most prominent framework due to its use of the AMO framework to construct a framework for workplace-based GHRM policies and practices (Obereder et al., 2022). The AMO framework (Appelbaum et al., 2000) serves as a theoretical basis for our research model. This framework provides insights into HRM scholarship by advocating for the consistent application of GHRM practices that enhance abilities, motivation, and opportunities. This approach aims to effectively promote desired green behaviors and performance among employees, thereby improving CS (Al-Swidi et al., 2021; Maheshwari et al., 2024; Khan & Muktar, 2024; Shah & Soomro, 2023). According to the AMO framework, GHRM practices are divided into three main dimensions: ability (e.g., recruitment and selection, training and development), motivation (e.g., performance management, compensation and rewards), and opportunity (e.g., employee involvement, green teams, and sustainable work practices) (Obereder et al., 2022). The growing application of the AMO framework in recent GHRM studies suggests that integrating the three dimensions of GHRM—ability, motivation, and opportunity—helps empower, inspire, and provide employees with the means to demonstrate green behaviors. This integration, in turn, contributes to improved CS performance (Roscoe et al., 2019; Al-Swidi et al., 2021; Maheshwari et al., 2024).

The concept of sustainability has become a topic of discussion among stakeholders and academics with the increasing societal sensitivity to environmental issues. This growing interest has led to an increase in proactive participation in sustainable activities, resulting in the rise of green banking practices (Jeucken, 2001; Peiyuan & Yongda, 2010; Imeson & Sim, 2013). Consequently, financial institutions, particularly banks, are pivotal in the development and promotion of CS (Gunawan et al., 2022). To achieve sustainable development, the banking sector contributes through the implementation of green banking principles. While it is recognized that banks' operations do not directly cause environmental and social catastrophes, their support and funding of industries or projects with harmful environmental impacts can contribute to both environmental and social catastrophes. Banks can contribute to a greener and cleaner environment by endorsing various initiatives, such as offering green loans, green bonds, or sustainable bonds for eco-friendly projects. These projects may include green buildings, solar panels, and renewable energy sources (Miah et al., 2020). Siueia et al. (2019) emphasized the vital importance of banking sectors in enhancing future economies, underscoring the necessity for banking decision-makers to act sustainably. HR professionals are required to be agile and dynamic, aligning themselves with existing business trends to ensure sustainability and bottom-line profitability, as well as greening HR practices (Dumont et al., 2017). When discussing GHRM practices, relying on AMO theory, organizations need to develop green competencies by using appropriate methods such as recruitment and talent selection, training, performance appraisal, attracting and developing high-performing employees (Rehman et al., 2016; Dumont et al., 2017). Likewise, green motivation should be encouraged among employees through initiatives such as green incentives, effective performance management aimed at enhancing positive behaviors and fostering an ethical organizational climate (Guerci et al., 2015; Pinzone et al., 2016). Finally, employees are provided with green opportunities to engage in knowledge sharing and issue resolution activities through engagement schemes to enhance their productivity (Pinzone et al., 2016; Renwick et al., 2016).

#### 2.1.1. Ability – recruitment and selection /training and development

Ability development dimension reflects the extent of investment in HR practices that aim to improve employees' knowledge, skills and abilities (Wright & Kehoe, 2008). GHRM contributes to CS by developing the abilities of green employees through the attraction, selection, training, and enhancement of high-performing employees. Banking organizations are increasingly embracing green initiatives to promote environmental sustainability (Yadav & Pathak, 2013). Green recruitment is argued that recruiting candidates who are sensitive to the environment during the hiring process can positively contribute to achieving environmental goals in the workplace (Tang et al., 2018). The use of online platforms such as job advertisements and applications, online interviews, and social media platforms like Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook by private and public banks in Türkiye can be considered among green recruitment methods (Mishra, 2016; Hosain & Rahman, 2016; Ajadi et al., 2022). In GHRM, the primary aim of the training and development component is to enhance employees' skills, abilities, and knowledge necessary to achieve environmental goals and preserve the environment. This includes guiding employees towards changing their behaviors and attitudes

in this direction (Renwick et al., 2012). Some banks in Türkiye organize trainings and seminars on online platforms to educate about topics such as waste reduction, energy conservation, waste management, recycling (Hosain & Rahman, 2016).

#### 2.1.2. Motivation – performance management and compensation/ awards

Green performance indicators in a green performance management system are used to establish criteria for evaluating individuals on their environmental responsibilities, carbon emission reduction efforts, and communication regarding environmental concerns during performance appraisals (Ercantan & Eyupoglu, 2022). Compensation can motivate employees to exert their maximum potential and help them achieve more environmental goals. Awards that recognize individuals' or teams' exceptional environmental performances can enhance employee motivation (Obereder et al., 2022). Pinzone et al. (2016) found a connection between green performance management and environmental performance. Dumont et al. (2017) observed a link between employees' task-related and voluntary green behaviors and perceived GHRM. Banks play an important role in the business climate by encouraging environmentally friendly policies through green banking policies (Nanduri, 2016). Employment practices in the banking sector have shifted to prioritize performance and targets over experience and loyalty. Consequently, compensation has become primary factors for bank employees to consider achieving the bank's long-term objectives (Islam & Saha, 2001). In his study on green banking practices, Alshebami (2021) emphasizes the importance of banks motivating and encouraging their employees to adopt green behaviors.

# 2.1.3. Opportunity - involvement/ green teams

Involvement, defined as expanding opportunities for delegating decision-making authority and empowering employee input (Demortier et al., 2014), is considered a means for employees to engage actively. Consequently, participation is regarded as a chance for employees to become more involved (Mahdy & Alhadi, 2021). The role played by the banking sector is vital for the expansion and development efforts of all emerging and developing countries such as Türkiye. Therefore, banks should step ahead to play a more active role in reducing environmental deterioration (Masukujjaman et al., 2016). It is also of great importance that they achieve this with the participation of their employees and other stakeholders. For this purpose, embracing a green organizational culture can be important. Bray (2008) defines green teams as "groups of employees helping to identify and implement specific improvements to help their business operate in a more environmentally sustainable fashion." (Dangelico, 2014). The presence of a green organizational culture in banks contributes to the formation of green teams.

# 3. Literature review and hypotheses

#### 3.1. Green human resource management

GHRM has been defined as "HRM aspects of environmental management" (Renwick et al., 2013). According to Mathapati (2013), GHRM is defined as a system directly responsible for creating a

green workforce that understands, appreciates, and implements green initiatives... Based on these definitions, GHRM aims to contribute to the environmental goals of the organization by focusing on environmentally conscious employees through elements such as green performance management, green recruitment and selection, green compensation management, green training, and green teams (Chaudhary, 2020).

In recent years, GHRM has been associated with various variables, and efforts have been made to expand the literature. In their study on developing banks, conducted by Yahya & Zargar (2023), the researchers utilized the AMO theory to investigate the impact of CSR through the mediating effect on the relationship between GHRM and green innovation on achieving CS. The results of this research indicated that both GHRM and green innovation have positive effects on CS. Shahzad et al. (2023) utilized the mediating roles of green innovation, green culture, and green employee behavior to examine the impact of GHRM on sustainable performance. The study found that green HRM practices influence green innovation, green culture, and green employee behavior, ultimately affecting sustainable performance. In the study by Hooi et al. (2022), the mediating effect of green culture was found to be significant in the relationship between GHRM and green organizational citizenship behavior.

#### 3.2. Corporate sustainability

CS is conceptualized by Dyllick and Hockerts (2002) as the capability of an organization to satisfy the requirements of both its direct and indirect stakeholders—including shareholders, employees, customers, advocacy groups, and communities—without compromising its ability to meet the needs of future stakeholders. The literature on CS is extensive, with numerous studies available. For example, in a study conducted on the banking sector, Forcadell et al. (2019) utilized service innovation to enhance CS, while Khan (2019) similarly leveraged CS to improve the financial performance of commercial banks in Pakistan. Both studies reported positive outcomes. In their study on manufacturing companies, Hassis & Saleh (2023) found that corporate social responsibility mediates the relationship between CS and total quality management.

#### 3.3. Green human resource management and corporate sustainability

GHRM practices lay the foundation by categorizing specific activities, processes, and procedures that lead to long-term sustainability. In this context, sustainability can be defined as the adoption of GHRM practices and actions (Likhitkar & Verma, 2017). According to the authors, GHRM practices are vital because they lay the foundation for attaining CS (Jessica et al., 2022). GHRM designed and implemented HR practices to reach the environmental targets of organizations and improve employee behaviour. (Ren et al., 2018). The adoption of GHRM policies and practices contributes to CS by enabling employees to work towards achieving the organization's green goals. Dumont et al. (2017) also provided support for these claims in the case of Chinese employees; the researchers indicated that GHRM directly and indirectly affects green behaviours by generating a psychological green climate. GHRM practices are consistently implemented to effectively demonstrate desirable

employee green behaviors and performance improvement for enhancing CS (Shah & Soomro, 2023; Khan & Muktar, 2024; Al-Swidi et al., 2021; Maheshwari et al., 2024). In the literature, various variables, contexts and sectors are considered about this relationship. For instance, Jamal et al. (2021) revealed the impact of perceived GHRM practices on CS in their study on major industries in Pakistan. Adubor et al. (2022) have focused on manufacturing organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria. Yahya & Zargar (2023) used CSR and green innovation as mediating variables in the GHRM-CS relationship by reaching managers in the banking sector. Also, Yahya & Zargar (2023) noted that their study focused on the managers' perspective and called for future research to analyze employees' perceptions in the banking sector to provide comparative results. We responded to this call and reached out to both managers and employees of both public and private banks in Türkiye.

GHRM policies are adopted by relatively fewer organizations in developing countries compared to those in developed nations. To better understand how to address the current challenges (such as economic, social and political instability, migration) to the adoption of GHRM for sustainability, it is necessary to fill this knowledge gap (Kodua et al., 2022). Therefore, developing countries have a scarcity of empirical evidence in this context compared to their Western and/or Eastern counterparts. The purpose of this paper is to investigate how GHRM practices (including green recruitment, green training and development, and green compensation and rewards) in Türkiye affects corporate sustainability from an internal (employees) perspective. This related study fills a clear research gap in Türkiye by investigating the link between GHRM practices and CS.

H1: GHRM has a positive influence on CS.

# 3.4. Moderating role of bank type

Although the direct environmental impacts of banking operations are low, it is noteworthy that the indirect impacts can be much higher. Banks may maximize their impact on green businesses through funding and innovation. Banking and financial organizations may be in a more strategic situation to create and drive a green revolution for saving the earth (Miah et al., 2020). The contribution of bank loans to economic growth is closely related to the sectors to which loans are extended and the added value generated by these sectors (Hacievliyagil & Eksi, 2019). Creating this added value in line with sustainable targets should be a top priority for all sectors. According to Bihari (2011), green banking includes the promotion of environmental and social responsibility and emphasizes that banks should take into account environmental factors and future impacts before funding a project. Therefore, it should be inevitable for green banks to support their CSR through GHRM practices.

Aras et al. (2018) emphasized that the measurement and valuation of CS is an area that needs to be emphasized and studied both in the world and in Türkiye, and emphasized that public and private banks differ in terms of CS by making a multidimensional evaluation of CS performances of public and private banks. Our study, on the other hand, aims to see the differential impact of private and public banks in Türkiye on the relationship between GHRM and CS (see Figure 1).

When we look at the literature on the relationship between GHRM and CS, it is seen that it is addressed in different sectors. (e.g. services, health, etc.). However, the fact that the role of the banking sector in this relationship has not been investigated in Türkiye, a developing and Southeastern European country, has been seen as a gap and it is important to investigate Turkish banks, which are in an important position for sustainability.

H2: Type of banks moderates the relationship between GHRM and CS.

GHRM CS

Bank type

Figure 1. Theoretical Model

# 4. Methodology

The research methodology consists of two studies. Study 1 is a quantitative study while study 2 is a qualitative study. The survey data were analyzed and interpreted using IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 and PROCESS Macro (Study 1). To support the quantitative study, content analysis was conducted by coding the sustainability reports of the case banks.

#### 3.1. Study 1: Quantitative study

# 3.1.1. Sample and procedure

The study's sample comprised individuals employed across various roles within the banking sector, including both public and private banks. Convenience sampling was employed, a non-random method where sample selection is based on the researcher's judgment to collect data in the easiest, fastest, and most economical manner (Malhotra, 2020; Aaker et al., 1998; Zikmund et al., 2013). The estimated total population of employees in the banking sector from the four banks involved was approximately 5,000 individuals. The sample consisted of 151 participants, with 110 affiliated with private banks, representing 72.85% of the sample, and 41 from public banks, accounting for 27.20% (Table 1). Given the estimated population size of 5,000, the sample size of 151 participants is considered adequate for providing meaningful insights and generalizable results for this study, as it represents approximately 3% of the total population. Data collection was carried out by the researchers themselves, using an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The survey was

administered between May 2022 and July 2022. Participants completed the questionnaire during their working hours, and responses were collected electronically through LinkedIn.

**Table 1:** Respondents' profile

Variables	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
	Female	63	41,72
Gender	Male	88	58,28
	23-30	85	56,29
	31-40	45	29,80
Age	41-50	21	13,91
	Bachelor's Degree	101	66,89
Education	Postgraduate	50	33,11
Bank type	Private	110	72,85
Dank type	Public	41	27,15

Among the participants, 58.28% are male and 41.72% are female. The majority of participants, 85 individuals, fall within the 23–30 age range, comprising 56.29% of the sample. Regarding education levels, 66.89% of participants hold a bachelor's degree, while 33.11% have a postgraduate degree. Concerning bank affiliation, 27.15% of participants are associated with public banks, whereas 72.85% are affiliated with private banks.

#### 3.1.2. Construct measures

A questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection in this study. The questionnaire comprised three sections. The first section gathered participants' demographic information, including gender, age, educational attainment, job position, and the nature of their banking institution (private or public). The second section featured the GHRM scale, consisting of six items adopted from Dumont et al.'s (2017) work. These items were employed to assess the ecological orientation of human resources practices within the participants' respective banks. The third section of the questionnaire contained the CS scale, which included seven items adapted from Köhkönen et al.'s (2018) study. To ensure the accuracy of the scales in Turkish, we followed Brislin's (1970) translation-back-translation procedure. The original scales were first translated into Turkish by a bilingual expert and then back-translated into English by a second bilingual translator. This procedure helped to confirm that the translated items retained the original meaning and were appropriate for the Turkish context. These items were designed to gauge the perceived effectiveness of participants' banks in achieving sustainability across reporting, organizational, strategic, and communicative dimensions. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with each item on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 'I completely disagree' (1) to 'I completely agree' (5).

**Table 2:** Measurement Properties

Constructs/Items	FL	AVE	CR	α
GHRM		0,79	0,83	0,86
Our bank sets green targets for its employees.	0.833			
Our bank provides employees with green training to promote green values.	0.905			
Our bank provides employees with green training to improve employees' knowledge and skills required for green management.	0.930			
Corporate Sustainability		0.74	0.94	0.94
Our bank takes care of the organizing and management of sustainability issues.	0.813			
Sustainability is performed together in the whole organization.	0.877			
Our bank takes care of the control and reporting of sustainability issues.	0.881			
Our bank acts according to a sustainability strategy and vision.	0.892			
Sustainable actions are seen in the results of our bank.	0.883			
Our bank has innovations and experiments related to sustainability.				
Our bank actively communicates with end customers about the values related to sustainability.				

Note(s): FL= Factor Loading; α=Cronbach's Alpha; CR=Composite Reliability; AVE=Average Variance Extracted

The validity and reliability of the constructs were assessed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), following the guidelines of Fornell & Larcker (1981). CFA is a statistical method used to test the measurement model and assess the validity and reliability of the constructs. The results of the CFA indicated that the constructs of GHRM and CS have good validity and reliability. According to Bagozzi & Yi (1998) and Fornell & Larcker (1981), the AVE values exceed 0.50, ensuring convergent validity and exceeding the previously mentioned cut-off values.

#### 3.1.3. Hypothesis testing

A five-point Likert scale was used in the statements to evaluate the survey questions, and for each statement, the participants were asked to select one of the options "strongly agree", "agree", "neither agree nor disagree", "disagree", "strongly disagree". The survey data were analyzed and interpreted with IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0 and PROCESS Macro. During the analysis, correlation and regression analyses were performed.

**Table 3**: Correlation Matrix

Constructs	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3
Bank Type	1,27	,44		-,136	-,127
GHRM	3,60	,90			,621**
Corporate Sustainability	3,79	,83			

Note: The values in diagonal refer to the AVE of each construct

Table 3 presents the mean, standard deviation, and correlation matrix of the constructs: Bank type, GHRM, and CS. The mean and standard deviation provide descriptive statistics for each construct. The correlation matrix shows the strength and direction of the relationships between the constructs, with values ranging from – 1 to 1. Correlations closer to 1 indicate a stronger positive relationship,

while correlations closer to – 1 indicate a stronger negative relationship. The diagonal values represent the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct, which measures the amount of variance explained by the construct relative to measurement error.

# 3.1.4. Moderating role of bank type

The moderating role of bank type in the relationship between GHRM and CS was tested using a regression analysis in Table 4.

		U	,			
	Corporate sustainability					
Model	Coefficient	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
GHRM	1,02	,17	5,75	,00	,670	1,37
Bank Type	1,17	,47	2,46	,01	,233	2,11
GHRM x Bank Type	-,36	,13	-2,72	,007	-,622	-,099
* p < 0.05, *** p	<.001.					

Table 4: Regression analysis

The results indicated that bank type moderates the relationship between GHRM and CS, with a significant interaction effect (p < 0.05). This finding suggests that the type of bank (private or public) influences the strength of the relationship between GHRM and CS, highlighting the importance of considering organizational characteristics in implementing sustainability practices.

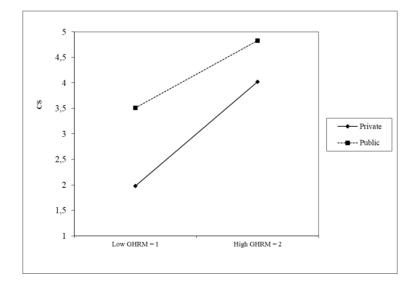


Figure 2: Moderating Role of Bank Type

The figure 2 illustrates that the effectiveness of GHRM in fostering CS is greater in private banks compared to public banks.

# 3.2. Study 2: Qualitative study

The qualitative research in this study aims to deepen our understanding of GHRM practices within sustainability efforts. While the quantitative phase provides an overview, the qualitative phase provides detailed insights into how these practices are applied and their effectiveness in real-world contexts. By describing case examples of GHRM practices, the qualitative research enriches our interpretation of the quantitative findings and provides a clearer, more comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon.

# 3.2.1. Sample

Sustainability reports published by both public and private banks can provide us with information on the implementation of GHRM practices. The BIST Sustainability Index sets a benchmark for Borsa Istanbul companies with high CS performance and aims to increase awareness, knowledge and practices on sustainability in Türkiye (Caliskan et al., 2020)

In our study, we analyzed the 2023 sustainability reports of the sample banks from which we collected data for the quantitative study. The public banks in our sample are Case C and Case D, while the private banks are Case A and Case B.

Case D is the bank with the largest asset size in Türkiye. The Bank's shareholders' equity increased by 64% in 2023, reaching TL 331 billion (Case D, Integrated annual report\_2023). Case C is the 3rd largest bank in Türkiye. In 2023, the Bank's total assets increased by 74.2%, reaching a total of TL 2,453,783. Its net profit in 2023 is TL 72.3 billion (Case C, Integrated annual report\_2023). Case B is the 2nd largest private bank in Türkiye by asset size. Its total assets increased by 69% to reach TL 2.2 trillion in 2023. It increased its net profit by 49% to reach a consolidated net profit of TL 86 billion 907 million in 2023 (Case B, Integrated annual report\_2023). Case A is the 3rd largest private bank in Türkiye by asset size. Having increased its consolidated assets to TL 1 trillion 905 billion in 2023, Case A's total deposits reached TL 1 trillion 293 billion (Case B, Integrated annual report\_2023). (See Table 5 for the financial information of our sample banks.)

Case A Case B Case C Case D **Total Assets** 1.904.7 2.201.7 2.453.7 3.800.3 **Equity Capital** 331.2 211.2 245.6 267.8 **Net Profit** 86.9 72.3 66.4 89.8

**Table 5:** Financial Information of Sample Banks in 2023

#### 3.2.2. Data collection

We have taken care to select the banks with the largest profits and growth among private and public banks in Türkiye. In this section, we attempt to support our quantitative study with our sample banks, which are the same as in Study 1. To access the sustainability reports of the banks, the integrated annual reports of the last year (2023) in English on their websites were accessed. All reports included in the

sample were downloaded as pdf. Then, all reports were read in full. Subsequently, statements linked to sustainability and GHRM were independently content analyzed by both authors to avoid bias. While coding, all concepts belonging to the GHRM functions that we matched with the dimensions of AMO were also scanned, especially sustainability and green concepts. The concepts scanned in all reports are as follows; "sustain," "sustainability," "green," "ghrm," "train," "development," "recruitment," "selection," "performance management," "remuneration," "compensation," "reward," "involvement," "green team," "team." The authors screened these concepts independently of each other and selected the most appropriate disclosures for the study. To further enhance the reliability of the research, both authors independently reviewed and coded the sustainability reports. This approach not only minimized individual bias, but also ensured a thorough and consistent analysis of the relevant GHRM and sustainability concepts. By cross-checking the findings, we aimed to increase the robustness of our results and reduce the likelihood of chance findings.

#### 3.2.3. Findings

In the sustainability report of Case A bank, various training and development practices for employees to promote sustainability were frequently found. Case A bank, which emphasizes the importance of the participation of all its stakeholders in green behaviors, was awarded the 'Best Bank in Türkiye's' award in the field of Sustainable Finance organized by Global Finance.

# Case A's disclosure:

"Information meetings and training programs were organized for employees on ESG policies and practices." "We aim to encourage and reward superior and sustainable performance with our performance management that emphasizes transparency, fair and equal opportunity... adopted an employment policy ensuring equal opportunities, and a succession plan for all key managerial positions. Clean Banking award is developed to promote behavior adherence to banking principles during our work" "...our sustainability strategy with the participation of all our stakeholders."

Case B bank's sustainability report emphasized the importance of the development and training of sustainability teams. Emphasizing the value to society of sustainable success achieved through the active participation of all employees, Case B Bank is leading Türkiye in the transformation of sustainable business models on issues such as climate crisis, energy resource issues and social inequalities.

#### Case B's disclosure:

"...training and seminars on individual habits for a sustainable world on the "Sustainability Day" celebrated concurrently in all its countries. The Bank organized Sustainability Simulation training" "The Bank's Compensation Policy is based on fairness, transparency, measurability and balanced performance targets; it encourages sustainable success.... The Bank monitors fairness in remuneration as per Sustainable Development Goals.... The Bank organized "Zero Waste Life" training open to the public and a prize-incentivized." "...the sustainability team was supported with

international academic programs and certification programs.... WWF Earth Hour initiative carried out since 2007, in support of the motto "together, we can solve the climate crisis". The Bank also briefs all employees and encourages individual participation in the initiative."

In its sustainability report, Case C bank emphasized that CS can be achieved with the full participation and support of employees and managers. In addition, Case C bank, as the 3rd largest bank in Türkiye, is motivated to set new projects and goals together with all stakeholders for sustainability and climate crisis for the welfare of society and nature.

#### Case C's disclosure:

"Sustainability and Our Bank's Sustainable Finance Practices" training was organized for managers and sales teams." "An incentive-based remuneration system was established for senior executives and all employees based on specific performance indicators related to sustainability in line with the Bank's strategic priorities" "This value creation model.....positions sustainability as one of the focal points of its corporate strategy. The bank carries out all its efforts in this direction under the ownership of senior management and with the participation of all employees."

Case D, Türkiye's largest public bank, has organized various sustainability training and development programs to encourage green behaviors among its employees. With the full participation of its internal and external stakeholders, case D bank aims to achieve sustainable performance by improving its environmental performance.

#### Case D's disclosure:

"The Bank rejects any discrimination and inequality which would disrupt equal opportunity based on gender, physical disability, cultural views, social class or differences of opinion and thought. The Bank views training and development as an important element of the progress it aims to achieve in the field of sustainability", "The Bank acts in accordance with global ethical principles in matters such as employee employment, promotion, career development, remuneration, diversity, and absolutely does not tolerate forced labor, child labor, all forms of discrimination and harassment", "The bank identifies sustainable development opportunities offered by the economic environment through effective stakeholder management. The Bank conducts its activities in constant communication and cooperation with its stakeholders."

In conclusion, when we examine the sustainability reports of both private and public banks, we can state that private banks are more attentive, diligent and diligent in this regard. It is possible to say that private banks, which are more goal-oriented in terms of implementing human resources functions, give more sustainable messages to society and their employees than public banks. Both the variety of sustainable trainings for employees and the use of motivational tools such as compensation, awards and bonuses in line with sustainable goals increase the sustainable participation of employees and indirectly other internal stakeholders, and the interest in CS increases further.

#### 4. Discussion

This study aimed to explore the moderating role of bank type in the relationship between GHRM and CS in the banking sector. This study expands a research field by utilizing the classification within Obereder et al.'s (2022) AMO framework to explain research phenomena.

Showkat (2018) concluded that while both private and public sector banks had adopted practices supporting environmental performance, these practices needed to be fully integrated into management practices. This study, however, emphasizes the positive impact of these management practices (GHRM) on CS, aiming to guide managers and advance this conversation. Additionally, the literature review clearly shows that companies with more advanced green policies achieve positive outcomes in terms of environmental sustainability, organizational, and social performance. Similarly, the empirical results of the current study also confirm a significant positive relationship between GHRM and CS. Furthermore, this finding supports previous literature claims that managers encourage employees to participate in and enhance CS.

In the literature, it has been reported that the dimensions of GHRM, which involve recruiting environmentally conscious individuals who align with the overall objectives of the company, play a key role in positive performance outcomes (Appelbaum, 2000; Singh et al., 2020). The current findings are consistent with these reports and further apply the AMO framework more specifically. The sustainable training and development of employees with a focus on green aspects benefit both individuals and the company (ElAlfy et al., 2020).

#### 4.1. Theoretical implications

This study makes significant contributions to the existing literature on GHRM and CS by exploring the moderating effect of bank type—a factor that has received limited attention in previous research. While earlier studies have examined various determinants of the GHRM-CS relationship, such as corporate social responsibility and green innovation (Shahzad et al., 2023; Rahman et al., 2023), this research uniquely investigates how the type of bank—whether public or private—affects the implementation and effectiveness of GHRM practices in achieving sustainable outcomes.

Firstly, the study broadens the understanding of the GHRM-CS relationship by highlighting the role of bank type as a moderating variable. This focus is crucial, as different types of banks may face distinct regulatory pressures, market dynamics, and organizational structures that influence their approach to sustainability. By examining the nuanced differences between public and private banks, the study provides a broader view of how GHRM practices can be tailored to different organizational contexts to enhance business sustainability.

Secondly, this research offers empirical evidence that supports the positive relationship between GHRM and CS, aligning with findings from previous studies. The data indicate that private banks, in particular, exhibit a stronger commitment to integrating sustainability into their GHRM practices. This is demonstrated through the extensive use of training programs, development initiatives, and

motivational tools designed to foster sustainable behaviors among employees. The study's findings suggest that private banks, driven by competitive market forces, are more likely to innovate and invest in comprehensive sustainability programs, thereby enhancing their reputation and securing a competitive advantage. Conversely, public banks may prioritize sustainability differently, with a focus on compliance and broad stakeholder management, potentially due to their distinct regulatory and operational frameworks.

Thirdly, by employing the AMO theory as a theoretical framework, the study deepens the understanding of how GHRM practices contribute to sustainable outcomes within organizations. The AMO framework, which has gained prominence in the HRM literature as a key explanation of the HRM-performance relationship (Bos-Nehles et al., 2023), serves as a robust lens through which to examine the impact of GHRM. In this study, the focus on skill-enhancing practices, particularly training, within the AMO framework sheds light on how specific HRM interventions can promote sustainability in the banking sector.

Finally, the qualitative analysis of sustainability reports from both public and private banks provides valuable insights into the practical implementation of GHRM practices. The findings reveal that private banks, compared to public banks, not only exhibit a higher level of strategic focus on sustainability but also actively engage in practices that align with sustainable goals. This distinction underscores the influence of organizational structure and market pressures on the adoption and effectiveness of GHRM practices, with private banks being more proactive in leveraging these practices to achieve long-term sustainability objectives.

In conclusion, this study contributes to both academic research and practical applications by offering a nuanced understanding of how GHRM practices vary between public and private banks and how these variations impact CS. The insights gained from this research have implications for policymakers, HR professionals, and banking sector leaders who aim to enhance sustainability through targeted GHRM interventions tailored to the specific needs and contexts of their organizations.

# 4.2. Practical implications

The findings of this study present critical implications for bank managers, employees, and policymakers, particularly in the context of enhancing CS through the adoption of GHRM practices. The evidence suggests that both private and public banks stand to benefit considerably from the strategic implementation of GHRM initiatives, although the approach should be meticulously tailored to the distinct characteristics and strategic imperatives inherent to each type of institution.

Bank managers must acknowledge the divergent roles and responsibilities that public and private banks fulfill within the broader economic framework. Public banks, often perceived as key pillars of economic and social stability, are entrusted with a heightened responsibility to prioritize sustainability. By integrating GHRM practices into their organizational frameworks, public banks can fulfill their social mandates, enhance their institutional reputation, and contribute meaningfully

to societal welfare. These practices not only align with governmental sustainability agendas but also meet the growing expectations of the public for socially responsible banking.

Conversely, private banks are uniquely positioned to leverage GHRM practices as a means of gaining competitive advantage within a highly dynamic market environment. The integration of sustainability into human resource management within these institutions can serve as a powerful differentiator, attracting environmentally conscious customers and investors who increasingly prioritize sustainability in their financial decisions. Moreover, these practices can reinforce the bank's market position by fostering a culture of innovation and responsibility, thereby solidifying its status as a leader in sustainable finance. Managers within private banks should, therefore, prioritize the development and implementation of GHRM strategies that not only advance environmental stewardship but are also congruent with the institution's broader business objectives and financial performance goals.

Employees, as the frontline actors in the banking sector, are integral to the successful implementation of sustainability initiatives, especially given their direct engagement with customers (Kaur et al., 2024). This study highlights the critical need to cultivate an environmentally aware workforce, as the achievement of CS goals is inextricably linked to the environmental awareness and commitment of employees (Rubel et al., 2021). Consequently, it is imperative for banks to recruit, develop, and retain employees who are not only skilled in their roles but also demonstrate a strong alignment with the institution's environmental values.

To this end, banks should incorporate environmental criteria into their recruitment processes, as well as into training and development programs. By selecting individuals who share the bank's commitment to sustainability and providing them with ongoing education on environmental issues, banks can foster a workforce that is both capable and motivated to contribute to the institution's sustainability goals. Furthermore, actively engaging employees in sustainability initiatives and recognizing their contributions can significantly enhance their commitment and drive to support the bank's environmental agenda.

Policymakers have an indispensable role to play in facilitating the widespread adoption of GHRM practices across the banking sector. By establishing robust regulatory frameworks and providing incentives that promote sustainability, policymakers can encourage banks to integrate GHRM practices more fully into their operational strategies. For public banks, this could include implementing policies that require transparency and accountability in sustainability reporting, thereby ensuring that these institutions rigorously address their social and environmental responsibilities.

For private banks, policymakers might consider the introduction of incentives—such as tax reliefs or recognition programs—for those institutions that demonstrate leadership in sustainability through the effective adoption of GHRM practices. Additionally, policies aimed at fostering the development of green skills and competencies within the workforce could further augment the efficacy of GHRM initiatives, yielding substantial benefits for both employees and the broader economic landscape.

#### 4.3. Limitations and future research

One limitation of the study is its focus on the banking sector in Türkiye, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Future research could replicate the study in different countries to compare the findings and identify cross-cultural differences.

This study was limited to a set of variables and did not take into consideration other constructs because of its particular study objectives. The study only considered the moderating role of bank type. Future studies could explore other potential moderators, such as organizational culture or leadership style, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the GHRM-CS relationship.

In addition, GHRM can be measured with its green selection, green appraisal, green evaluation and green attraction functions, and individual and organizational level AMO differences can be used in further studies to explain the relationship between GHRM and performance outcomes.

Future research could further explore the impact of these practices on long-term sustainability outcomes and the potential differences in effectiveness between public and private sector organizations.

#### 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical role of GHRM practices in improving CS performance in banking organizations. The research included both quantitative and qualitative approaches, providing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of GHRM on sustainability outcomes. Quantitatively, the study examined a sample of 151 responses from bank employees, providing valuable insights into how GHRM initiatives are perceived and their effectiveness in different banking contexts. Qualitatively, the analysis of sustainability reports from both private and public banks revealed nuanced differences in the implementation and focus of GHRM practices.

The findings suggest that both private and public banks can benefit significantly from adopting GHRM practices, although the nature and extent of these benefits may vary depending on their organizational characteristics. For example, private banks may prioritize GHRM initiatives as a means of gaining competitive advantage and attracting environmentally conscious stakeholders, while public banks may focus more on fulfilling their social responsibilities and enhancing their institutional reputation.

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Appendix 1: GHRM Disclosures of Private Banks

AMO	Category	Disclosures
Ability	Training and development Recruitment and Selection	Information meetings and training programs were organized for employees on ESG policies and practices. (Case A, Integrated annual report_2023)
		training and seminars on individual habits for a sustainable world on the "Sustainability Day" celebrated concurrently in all its countries. The Bank organized Sustainability Simulation training (Case B, Integrated annual report_2023)
		Case A and Case B have adopted an employment policy ensuring equal opportunities, and a succession plan for all key managerial positions.
Motivation	Performance Management, Remuneration, Compensation/Awards	We aim to encourage and reward superior and sustainable performance with our performance management that emphasizes transparency, fair and equal opportunity Clean Banking award is developed to promote behavior adherence to banking principles during our work (Case A, Integrated annual report_2023)
		The Bank's Compensation Policy is based on fairness, transparency, measurability and balanced performance targets; it encourages sustainable success The Bank monitors fairness in remuneration as per Sustainable Development Goals The Bank organized "Zero Waste Life" training open to the public and a prize-incentivized (Case B, Integrated annual report_ 2023)
Opportunity	Involvement/ Green Teams	our sustainability strategy with the participation of all our stakeholders (Case A, Integrated annual report_2023)
		the sustainability team was supported with international academic programs and certification programs WWF Earth Hour initiative carried out since 2007, in support of the motto "together, we can solve the climate crisis". The Bank also briefs all employees and encourages individual participation in the initiative. (Case B, Integrated annual report_2023).

**Appendix 2:** GHRM Disclosures of Public Banks

AMO	Category	Disclosures
Ability	Training and development Recruitment and Selection	"Sustainability and Our Bank's Sustainable Finance Practices" training was organized for managers and sales teams (Case C, Integrated annual report_2023). The Bank rejects any discrimination and inequality
		which would disrupt equal opportunity based on gender, physical disability, cultural views, social class or differences of opinion and thought. The Bank views training and development as an important element of the progress it aims to achieve in the field of sustainability (Case D, Integrated annual report_2023).
Motivation	Performance Management and Compensation/ Awards	An incentive-based remuneration system was established for senior executives and all employees based on specific performance indicators related to sustainability in line with the Bank's strategic priorities (Case C, Integrated annual report_2023). The Bank acts in accordance with global ethical principles in matters such as employee employment, promotion, remuneration, diversity, and absolutely does not tolerate forced labor, child labor, all forms of discrimination and harassment (Case D, Integrated annual report_2023).
Opportunity	Involvement/ Green Teams	This value creation modelpositions sustainability as one of the focal points of its corporate strategy. The bank carries out all its efforts in this direction under the ownership of senior management and with the participation of all employees (Case C_ Integrated annual report_2023).
		Case D identifies sustainable development opportunities offered by the economic environment through effective stakeholder management. The Bank conducts its activities in constant communication and cooperation with its stakeholders. (Case D, Integrated annual report_2023)