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1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to illuminate how Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) policies can be used by sustainability advocates in eliciting employee green behaviours using Pandey *et al.'s* (2013) model of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) embeddedness. GHRM is defined as "*the use of HR policies, philosophies and practices to promote sustainable use of resources and prevent harm arising from environmental concern within business organisations*" (Zoogah, 2011, p.118). Through GHRM environmental capabilities can be increased, opportunities provided and motivation elicited (ibid.). GHRM can occur in the HR function in the form of policies and it can be devolved to leaders and managers across the organisation. Employees are the main contributors in the pursuit of corporate environmental agendas. And the degree to which policies are embedded is likely to affect the desired green behaviours. For example, a qualitative study of pilots found that pilots can actively exert direct positive and negative influence on emissions during flights depending on their job (dis)satisfaction (Harvey *et al.*, 2013). If employees with low job satisfaction possess the power to damage or benefit corporate environmental outcomes significantly, a closer look at people management practices is needed (Daily and Huang, 2001). Consequently, this study focuses on GHRM policies that aim to elicit employee engagement in green behaviours.

Studies in GHRM focus on various outcomes. One study finds direct links between GHRM and in-role green behaviour outcomes, and indirect links with discretionary (voluntary) green behaviours (Dumont *et al.*, 2016). Other studies in GHRM focus on outcomes for companies, such as how employees or organisations are affected by environmental initiatives and how managers use GHRM to increase environmental performance. GHRM policies can affect employee attitudes towards their employer, including job satisfaction and attitudes towards environmental initiatives (Benn *et al.*, 2015), and Ramus and Steger (2000) find supervisory support can increase staff suggestions for green initiatives. It appears that GHRM can influence green behaviours directly and indirectly through, for example, employee job satisfaction, which can affect the environmental performance as exemplified by Harvey's *et al.'s* (2013) study of pilots. Thus, the way in which GHRM is implemented by managers and leaders needs to be

addressed. A focus on outcomes alone seems to treat the design and execution stage of GHRM policies and decision makers' intentions as a black box, and it does little to aid understanding of factors that can create discrepancies between organisational behaviours and their (ir)responsible actions.

Therefore, this paper responds to calls by Renwick *et al.* (2013) to explore underlying mechanisms of GHRM implementation. We aim to achieve this by gathering empirical evidence on the ways leaders and managers experience GHRM policies, which initiatives they consider successful, and what employee perceptions and behaviours their endeavours elicit. We call these leaders and managers sustainability advocates because all participants were selected based on their job role, which is in some form related to pursuing the 'green' agenda. Pandey *et al.'s* (2013) model can identify whether CES (Corporate Environmental Sustainability) is integrated in a peripheral, intermediate or embedded way, and what employee-level attitudes each way contains. To understand how company aspects influence GHRM practice implementation, this paper uses Pandey *et al.*'s (2013) model of CES. CES can be seen as the environmental aspect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (De Bakker and Nijhof, 2002). CSR is a well-developed and popular concept for businesses to fulfil their societal duties and we align with (Carroll, 1979, p. 500), who defines that *'the social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point of time'*.

This qualitative study focuses on data-emergent themes, GHRM aspects, communication, attraction and recruitment, environmental training (ET), management support, and reward and recognition. In the subsequent section, the model and GHRM literature are discussed linking how GHRM policies can aid implementation of environmental objectives and elicit green behaviours. Findings from seventeen semi-structured interviews with sustainability advocates in European firms are presented and discussed. The discussion section elaborates on GHRM policies, and finds misalignments between individual approaches and supporting organisational processes. Lastly, the conclusion highlights theoretical contributions to GHRM, limitations and future research avenues.

2. Literature review

The literature review is presented in two parts. Firstly, it describes the model of CES by Pandey *et al.* (2013). Secondly, contributions to GHRM (attraction and recruitment, training, reward and recognition, communication) of data emergent practices are reviewed and discussed.

2.1. Embedding CES

Corporate approaches towards environmental betterment are a product of well-established capitalist systems, which were believed to always dominate (Heilbroner, 1985). Hence, policies that make business sense are the preferred method. However, the business case for CSR is increasingly coming under scrutiny, as firms are criticised for window-dressing and cherry-picking initiatives that promise business benefits (Nijhof and Jeurissen, 2010; Moratis, 2014). To avoid such criticisms firms are embedding CSR into their policies and practices.

Aguinis and Glavas' (2013) model CSR identifies embedded and peripheral CSR, which are two degrees of strategic integration of CSR using core competencies of a firm. With the rise in environmental awareness, pursuing environmental agendas has become a mega-trend in business contexts (Markman and Krause, 2016), and is becoming an integral part of corporate identities. As long as firms are using core competencies to embed there is no differentiation between normative or instrumental CSR, substantive or symbolic, or cost-benefit-based or values-based (Aguinis and Glavas, 2013).

Firms that are progressing towards embedding CSR might not necessarily know how to utilise their core competencies effectively or have insufficient resources to try. Therefore, they might utilise corporate foundations to progress towards increased embeddedness. Using Aguinis and Glavas' model this would be labelled peripheral as the company is not using its core competencies. We use the model of Pandey *et al.* (2013) because it posits three degrees of CES embeddedness on a continuum called peripheral, intermediate and embedded. The continuum would be recognisant of change and progress. This normative model considers individual-level employee attitudes and values, and organisational-level characteristics. Firstly,

peripheral CES shows self-interest based compliant partial integration, and/or standalone initiatives (e.g. philanthropy and volunteering). Secondly, intermediate CES reflects the emergence of enlightened self-interest and a positive environmental reputation. Enlightened self-interest means companies realise that they can, in the long term, do well by doing good (Jensen, 2001). In practice, making a business case for CES would reflect enlightened self-interest and using corporate foundations would be classified intermediate. Lastly, environmental stewardship, and value-internalisation by employees is referred to as embedded CES. GHRM policies are examined next as they represent formal organisational conditions that encourage employees to participate on an individual level, which will help to identify peripheral, intermediate and embedded CES in organisations.

2.2. GHRM policies

Most existing work in GHRM comprise comprehensive reviews that propose future research directions (Renwick *et al.*, 2008; Jackson and Seo, 2010; Jackson *et al.*, 2011; Jabbour *et al.*, 2013; Renwick *et al.*, 2013), or a model of GHRM (Jabbour and Santos, 2008; Renwick *et al.*, 2008; Jabbour *et al.*, 2010a). Empirical papers examine the HRM and green performance link, individual GHRM initiatives such as recruitment practices (Ehnert, 2008), environmental training (Teixeira *et al.*, 2012; Vidal-Salazar *et al.*, 2012), green job design and analysis (Wehrmeyer, 1996; Govindarajulu and Daily, 2004; Jabbour *et al.*, 2010b), supervisory support (Ramus and Steger, 2000), or the authenticity and impact of green financial incentives (e.g. Kolk and Perego, 2013). The HR practitioner literature on CSR is mainly business-case oriented with a strong emphasis on the HR function (Strandberg, 2009; Bingham and Druker, 2016). A study investigated the integration of GHRM into the HR function across European firms, and found inconsistencies and varying degrees of alignment (Haddock-Millar *et al.*, 2016), which indicates that reality might be lagging behind practitioner-based CSR rhetoric.

2.2.1. Attraction, recruitment and selection

Following the employment cycle at entry point, talent attraction and recruitment can improve CES in organisations. Existing studies emphasise general talent management benefits, often ignoring how this

GHRM policy addresses environmental issues. For example, organisations know including CES in attraction and recruitment can help managers and leaders in the 'war for talent' (Renwick *et al.*, 2013). Some benefits are that organisations with a positive environmental image and strong CEP were found to increase selection attractiveness of skilled workers (Albinger and Freeman, 2000), number of applicants (Wagner, 2011), and quality of candidates (Ehnert, 2009). Studies that find positive relationships between environmental reputation, availability of CEP data and selection attractiveness use data from graduates (Backhaus *et al.*, 2002; Guerci *et al.*, 2016), which gives reason to believe that younger applicants in particular aspire to work for responsible employers. However, there is evidence of applicants using CEP to gather more information on employers when there is incomplete information in the recruitment process (Aiman-Smith *et al.*, 2001), suggesting not all applicants who use CEP data are environmentally-minded. Studying populations of graduates means hiring decisions of employers cannot be examined. This study addresses this gap by drawing from a population of employees with decision-making powers. Furthermore, the above policies would not be labelled using Pandey *et al.'s* (2013) model as they don't relate to the environment.

Scholars propose including green criteria in job descriptions, to screen how well candidates' attitudes might align with green goals of the company in interviews, and to use inductions to consolidate environmental activities in the firm (Wehrmeyer, 1996; Renwick *et al.*, 2013) Including environmental criteria in the decision-making process could aid firms in embedding CES, but based on existing studies this inclusion is unclear (Aiman-Smith *et al.*, 2001). and it is one of the least practiced GHRM policies (Guerci and Carollo, 2016). A study of 94 Brazilian companies shows, for example, recruiters *prefer* candidates with pro-environmental attitudes (Jabbour *et al.*, 2010a). which would make this practice embedded CES. More empirical evidence is needed to understand applicants' future engagement in employee green behaviours.

2.2.2. Environmental training

With respect to existing employees, there is a known gap between environmental policies and translation into practices, which has previously been attributed to a lack of investment and commitment to the cause

(McWilliams *et al.*, 2006). Environmental training (ET) can address this gap, as it enables and equips employees with knowledge, awareness and skills of green behaviours, and ET provision can promote environmental values through leader and manager support. However, research on ET, managerial support and environmental performance is inconclusive. ET provision can symbolise managerial commitment to environmental development, which can positively affect employee engagement in green behaviours (Govindarajulu and Daily, 2004). A questionnaire study of perceptions of HR factors to influence environmental performance by Daily *et al.* (2012) found significant links between ET, empowerment and environmental performance.

In contrast, Ramus and Steger's (2000) analysis of 353 questionnaires from six European firms showed that, although ET programmes are prevalent in organisations studied, those in charge of embedding CES, line managers, provided limited support. This is particularly interesting because the authors (ibid) found direct links between supportive line management behaviours and employees suggestions of eco-initiatives. Therefore, organisational structures may exist to elicit green behaviours in employees, but a low number of engaged line managers, who translate commitment into organisational practices can inhibit participation and embedding. In addition to enabling and supporting employees, ET can reinforce other GHRM policies (Govindarajulu and Daily, 2004; Jabbour *et al.*, 2010b; Daily *et al.*, 2012). For example, offering ET and incentives to new employees can promote employee initiatives (Jackson, 2012). Hence, ET seems an indispensable prerequisite to realise proactive environmental practices (Molina *et al.*, 2009).

2.2.3. Communication and empowerment

In the above section, the role of managers and leaders already emerges as important for ET, which raises the question how managers and leaders communicate GHRM. As stated above, their support signals company support for green behaviours. The ways in which leaders and managers communicate environmental agendas to employees can have positive and negative effects on green behaviours and potentially on the embeddedness of CES. A positive effect can be increased employee participation, as the studies in ET showed (Daily *et al.*, 2012; Vidal-Salazar *et al.*, 2012). In addition to ET, studies report

increased staff suggestions for green initiatives through supervisor support (Ones *et al.*, 2010), empowering actions (Ramus and Steger, 2000), and psychological enabling (Kitazawa and Sarkis, 2000).

To provide space for motives to be activated, leaders can empower employees. Empowerment can provide employees with room to act and feelings of efficacy, an individual's belief in a favourable outcome of their action (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). One reason why intrinsic motivation is important here is that most green behaviours are not role-prescribed and there is a lack of direct compensation though a salary. Where this is the case, leaders can try to communicate fairness and justice to employees, which can form lasting discretionary (intrinsically motivated) behaviours (Deci *et al.*, 1999). However, it can be assumed that not all employees are intrinsically motivated, which is why general workplace incentives should not be neglected.

2.2.4. Incentives and rewards

In general HRM, reward and recognition are seen as an antecedent to employee engagement (Balain and Sparrow, 2009). In GHRM, pay practices can be aligned with environmental objectives of the firm, encouraging employees to carry out green behaviours in exchange for an extrinsic reward. One example is National Grid, whose top executives' compensation is partly tied to reducing carbon emissions by 45 percent by 2020 (Environmental Leader, 2009). This financial embedding into the organisational fabric can also display employer commitment to CES and convey organisational expectations (Lent and Wells, 1994). Govindarajulu and Daily (2004) propose recognition based non-financial rewards for individual employees and/or groups such as, paid time off work, gifts, and praise by ways of communicating good practice and commitment to the environmental cause.

There are critical implications in the areas of intention, design quality and durability of green behaviour through financial incentives. Environmental bonuses are criticised for maintaining bonus levels (window-dressing), as performing well environmentally can be easy at the outset (Kolk and Perego, 2013). Findings from a study on the effect of reward policies on performance through engagement show that poorly designed

financial and non-financial rewards can lower engagement (O'Reilly and Tushman, 2008). Extrinsic incentives such as bonuses and rewards may appeal to employees who do not engage in responsible or green behaviours as a result of value identification, but would engage out of self-interest for the prospect of a reward. There is a risk of over relying on extrinsic incentives as they might crowd out intrinsic behaviours and are believed to be short-lived (Deci, 1971; Deci and Ryan, 2002). Thus, incentives seem a popular go-to tool, but may be less effective when the desired behaviours should be long-term and based on intrinsic values.

In summary, leaders and managers use GHRM policies to engage employees in green behaviours and to create positive business outcomes. The literature review introduced and justified a model of CES (Pandey *et al.*, 2013), and discussed existing knowledge on several GHRM policies and how they might relate to the model. The role of those communicating the agenda and making decisions appears to be essential. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how leaders and managers can use GHRM policies to tap into employee experiences of CSR, which, based on our literature review, seems underexplored. This exploratory study provides empirical evidence to what has hitherto been a predominantly theoretical debate adopted the following two research questions:

RQ1: How do sustainability advocates in organisations implement and experience GHRM policies to engage employees in green behaviours?

RQ2: How does GHRM relate to peripheral, intermediate and embedded CES?

3. Methodology

This study adopts a social constructivist position, where knowing and learning are an integral part of social life and created through social contexts, interactions, shared viewpoints and interpretive understandings (Vygotsky, 1962;). *While thought often precedes action, it's not always the case. In many situations individuals "act before they think" (March 1972, p. 432).* And behaviour that is accompanied by social

reinforcement, e.g. a supportive environmental climate, establishes legitimacy ex post. A person might view themselves as a person with high environmental standards, and yet engage in unsustainable behaviours. Practically, adopting this stance allows us to research concrete experiences, policies and practices. Therefore, we aim to discover a breadth of possible explanations that can illuminate the black box between CES intention and implementation. This is the theoretical contribution of this paper. Our exploratory qualitative methodology is suitable for providing open space to identify GHRM policies with difficult measurability, which is a known issue in CSR (e.g. Ehrenfeld, 2000).

3.1. Sample and procedure

The sample was selected purposively to consist of individuals pre-qualified to provide data that helps to answer the research questions (Charmaz, 2014). Managers and leaders (sustainability advocates) in higher positions, who pursue environmental agendas in their firms and are involved in engaging employees in green behaviours were targeted. The sample consists of seventeen sustainability advocates from a wide European context, with ten from the UK, four in the Netherlands, one in Germany, one in Belgium and one in France (Participant details can be found in Appendix 1). Contact with fifteen participants was established through business summits and two through professional relationships. Permission to contact all registered delegates of the business summit was obtained prior the event. Using a questionnaire design might have resulted in a larger number of participants and allowed an exploration of specific GHRM policies from review papers (Renwick *et al.*, 2008; Jackson and Seo, 2010; Jackson *et al.*, 2011; Jabbour *et al.*, 2013; Renwick *et al.*, 2013). However, this study does not intend to produce findings that are numerically representative. It aims to allow diversity in responses, even rare unusual ones to discover a range of possible answers in the empirically under-explored area of GHRM. We hope to elicit empirical data on the implementation realities of GHRM, in a similar vein to the study of pilots by Harvey et al. (2013), which is one of the few qualitative studies in GHRM.

Anonymity was assured to put interviewees at ease with sharing sensitive information (Bryman and Bell, 2009), and to foster an open and honest conversation about GHRM challenges. Qualitative semi-structured

interviews, which lasted between 20 minutes and one hour, were recorded, transcribed, coded, and analysed using NVIVO. Interview questions were broadly informed by GHRM literature and participants were encouraged to share experiences of current approaches to implementing environmental sustainability and engaging employees. To reduce bias and management speak, we probed for challenges and issues. This allowed deep and practically relevant findings to emerge (Weick, 1995; Bryman and Bell, 2011). Information on challenges and implementation strategies are normally not accessible via public platforms, websites or news articles, which makes these data valuable to researchers and practitioners.

3.2. Data analysis

Data were analysed for codes relating to the core category that encapsulates the phenomenon being studied - GHRM (Corbin and Strauss, 2015). This initially contained six categories, which were based on GHRM policies (attraction and recruitment, performance management and appraisal, training and development, employment relations, pay and reward, exit) by Renwick *et al.* (2008). In addition to this, the researcher exposed herself to all possibilities and potentials of data through open coding before interpreting data. Credibility of interpretations was established by asking other researchers to interpret data samples (Charmaz, 2008). Open coding led to the emergence of further sub-themes that contribute to understanding GHRM practice implementation. For example, how GHRM was communicated became a prominent theme. The final themes were *engagement and communication*, *attraction and recruitment*, *environmental training,* and *reward and recognition*. There was an additional focus on themes of Pandey *et al.'s* (2013) model, which included sub-themes on value identification, environmental stewardship, self-interest, enlightened self-interest and motivation, which all feed into the discussion. Through axial coding, data were rearranged and the categories combined so all themes relate to the phenomenon GHRM.

4. Findings

Rather than finding organisations with peripheral, intermediate or embedded CES, it was more common to find evidence of all types within the same organisations depending on the specific area. Findings on how

sustainability advocates approached GHRM are presented in the following sections and how this relates to peripheral, intermediate and embedded CES is critically examined in the discussion section.

4.1. Communication

Participants commonly expressed views that today's employees want to work for responsible employers; Their role to respond to this trend was being leading communicators and agents of the CSR vision. Given that companies spend over $720 million on general employee engagement (HBR, 2018) indicates extensive company efforts. Thus, it is not surprising that maintaining momentum of initiatives and green behaviours was named biggest challenge among the majority of participants. Communication was believed to be a tool that helps maintain such momentum. A response was the provision of employee suggestion platforms on all levels of the organisation. Acting upon employee suggestions was also considered essential. A combination of conveying environmental stewardship and supporting incentives are highlighted in the following excerpt:

"There is various forms of recognition and so on that we will give, but I think the most powerful one is that message that comes down from the leader of the division they are in, who says this is a really important agenda. (...) And it's those messages that are probably the most telling, but you do need to have a range of incentives across the piece." (I14:2)

When analysing data we noticed a discrepancy between a proposed value-based approach to elicit behaviours and maintain momentum, when in practice the approach instigates self-interest-based behaviours. More specifically, participants believed different functions internalise values and align with sustainability goals in different ways, which resulted in tailored linguistic approaches for different audiences. Many participants use normative value-based communication for the whole workforce, which was characterised by highlighting intrinsic obligations to do good, providing a vision, being authentic and stressing the importance of the green agenda. In contrast to this, most of these participants, who use normative language for the whole workforce, also advised against using normative language altogether in

meetings. Here, they believed what works best is appealing to self-interest and/or enlightened self-interest, which is encapsulated in the following data sample:

"When I walk into a room talking about sustainability (…) the last thing that I want to talk about is the sustainability side of it, if that makes any sense. (…) You need to talk in their language on their level. You need to say 'what we can do is that we can reduce your costs, we can do this, we can do that, and at the same time we can save X amount of trees." (I15:3)

Once sustainability is addressed in a language that is tailored to specific functions, relevant initiatives that align with specific functions can emerge.

4.2. Recruitment and attraction

Many participants drew the interviewer's attention to the role of CES in talent attraction and recruitment. A number of participants highlighted ranking in sustainability indices helps to attract greener talent. Interestingly, the most highlighted benefits were not the environment but for the workplace, which is captured in the following passage:

"Because we think that people, who think about the big picture and certainly, the environment and sustainability really fits into that, will also be really good in the workplace. Because, they won't just work in their own narrow area. They'll want to collaborate and think more broadly. So, one of the six things we are looking for when we hire somebody is that interest in the broader world about them and particularly their local community." (I14:2)

Interestingly, only one participant acknowledged that CES criteria would need to be used as selection criteria and outlined aspirations:

"And that's the step we have got to make, so when they are talking to a senior appointee (…), we are asking them about their own attitudes to sustainability. Does their personal agenda fit the way that we approach sustainability? Because, actually, we don't want senior people who don't want to push the

agenda and don't believe in it. And that is sort of the hooks we haven't quite got right yet when I am honest." (I14:4)

Participants commonly mentioned behaviour shifts, which means the factors that applicants consider when applying today are now different than in the past:

"I started to be a head-hunter 15 years ago (...) and what the candidates were looking for were, that was, you know, good pay, a good salary, a nice title and a career path. But nowadays they really want to give a meaning to what they are doing and they want to work for companies who can offer a meaning." (I15:5)

Participants felt they were aware of behaviour shifts, which included feelings of pride to work for a company that acts ethically and responsibly, and thus decided to include CEP information. The renewable energy company participant stated their applicants want to work for a sustainable company and already possess a strong moral and environmental compass. For one participant from a more traditional, privately owned financial institution, providing CEP data in recruitment was a company practice, but not regarded as a decisive factor in applicants' intentions to apply for a job in finance, which implies that there are industries in which behavioural shifts are more prominent than in others.

4.3. Environmental Training as an enabler if done correctly

Our data show barriers between what managers want to achieve (carry out green behaviours) and what they are actually willing and capable of doing (e.g. knowing and selecting suitable green behaviours), suggesting a training need:

"And what we see (...) is that a lot of managers expect people to make the translation from a high-over strategy to what does it mean for their work and how can they contribute on a day-to-day basis? And very often, what we will notice is that middle management does not know how."(I14:7)

Managers can be empowered by leaders, but this does not guarantee behaviour as the following quote about a lack of agency highlights:

> "*So, (…) following behaviour [or instructions] is much easier than thinking of 'ok what then should I do instead of what I did before?*" (I14:7).

Findings on ET implementation were diverse, which is illustrated by two examples. One company (travel e-commerce) commenced a CSR initiative in response to employee demand, where employees (managerial and non-managerial) were encouraged and empowered to initiate a one-working-day project in partnership with NGOs that are dedicated to local community causes, without initial skills training. Later in the interview, it emerged that, despite overall positive feedback, some employees criticised organisation and quality of some events, which led to the creation of an e-learning tool:

> *"We have an e-learning that we have just launched a couple of months ago. We believe that project initiators (…) are actually developing a lot of skills that we would like to recognise. (…) And after that, they get approval to actually execute the project. It's giving them the right skills, because, as I said, we start small and get bigger, right?"(I15:2)*

New approaches (creation of e-learning tool) emerged based on initial project experiences as employees took ownership of the sustainable development in the firm. Collaboration increased the manifestation of environmental change in the example above.

In another company (financial institution) bonuses for global managers are, among other things, directly tied to responsible financing. Metric for this external CSR bonus is employee engagement, which is measured by training completion rates of sector policies on responsible investments. Shortly after the interview for this research, the participating bank was sanctioned and fined for unethical practices.

4.4. Rewards and incentives

Recognition follows behaviour and is used in financial and non-financial ways. Recognition of good behaviours in particular was the most popular approach and believed to be successful in creating employee engagement in green behaviours: as exemplified below:

"What I like to do and what works well in my business is catch people doing something really well and then reward them and make people aware of it, and that sort of brings everyone along." (I14:2)

Incentives precede behaviours and are used to create habits by offering the prospect of small rewards and appealing to enlightened self-interest, as highlighted by another participant's response:

"So, we would incentivise reading the environmental newsletter we produce by putting a competition in. We would incentivise energy reduction through a campaign in our branches with a trigger donation to a charity at the end of a campaign. (...). It's a soft employee engagement incentive rather bonus." (I14:9)

Building on the above example in 4.3, the bank, where ET was used to determine senior managers' bonuses, which are in fact larger incentives, the following interview shows evidence of self-interest or even opportunism with regard to bonuses:

"And well it is not a very large bonus. It is something that is quite... but it is a nice reward and it is also rewarded (...), because if we can have some evidences that we reach some conditions, regulatory conditions, then we have a special tax on that type of bonus, which is a reduced amount of tax. But it must be collective, for everyone the same, and it must be related to sustainability something. And because, together with the management, because they are really the specialists in measuring the conditions to get the detaxation [sic] of the bonus. They know the conditions, and we give the input from what is from our perspective the most important topics that we need to get into the scheme from a CSR point of view." (I14:1)

The communication and language by this leader displayed an instrumental value and extrinsic motivation. In this instance, this GHRM practice was used as a means to an end (i.e. bonus). A distinctive characteristic of this participant was the way in which values were expressed, which is evidenced by the choice of words and the perceived sincerity, e.g. 'sustainability something'. This participant was also the only participant who did not explore the importance of authentic communication and engagement efforts by leaders and managers. One could argue that for a financial institution such an approach to receive detaxation is a core competency, and this CSR practice would be called embedded using Aguinis and Glavas' model (2013). The authors state that embedded CSR can be instrumental, but given this context value orientations seems pivotal.

Other participants discussed employee engagement surveys as a metric for success, where bonuses are supposed to reflect and reward leaders' ability to engage and mobilise the workforce to take engage and enact CES initiatives. Contrary to the general criticisms of financial incentives, a number of participants believed it is natural in the value system of many senior managers to be motivated and engaged by the prospect of financial rewards and in better alignment of their type of work. Financially rewarding senior managers, who have busy schedules, was regarded more effective for mobilising teams instead of participating in front-line initiatives.

5. Discussion

This section discusses results in response to the two research questions of this study: How do sustainability advocates approach and implement GHRM and on how does GHRM relate to peripheral, intermediate, and embedded CES?

This research resulted in three main findings. Firstly, this study finds GHRM policies are not in themselves peripheral, intermediate or embedded but contextually shaped by the way they are implemented. Secondly, individual GHRM policies influence each other in different ways. Our findings are in line with Renwick *et al.'s* (2013) findings that suggest ability-creating and opportunity-providing GHRM policies lag behind

our understandings of factors that motivate employees to engage in green behaviours. Thirdly, this study finds misalignments in what individuals aspire to do and organisational factors that are created to support this. Skewed value-internalisation and short-term-led GHRM policy design could explain this.

Exploring the reasons behind sustainability advocates using of contrasting approaches suggests they might be exposed to a paradoxical duality. A large number of sustainability advocates consider a two-pronged/double-barrelled pragmatic communication strategy effective, as it can engage many employees in green behaviours. Considering sustainability advocates' perceived awareness and feelings of pride knowing of behavioural shifts, it would be logical to assume that this awareness of increased moral needs (intrinsic motivation) in workforces is reflected in their employee green behaviour engagement exercises. While appealing to moral values when addressing large audiences reflects a value-based approach, appealing to self-interest (e.g. align CES with what the function wants to achieve) and enlightened self-interest (e.g. stating the number of trees that will be saved) for specific departments and individuals might not. There are growing concerns about the durability of self-interest based (extrinsic) approaches (Deci and Ryan, 2002). As keeping momentum was such a pressing challenge, the latter self-interest based communication approach might fail to create long-term behaviours and environmental stewardship, which is needed for embedded CES.

Further exacerbating success of value-based approaches are existing organisational conditions. Sustainability advocates are exposed to extrinsic incentives for their very own performance and engagement. Particularly in larger organisations, sustainability advocates, like any other employee group, are part of results driven environments. Thus, they might choose self-interest based practices that work best to engage most employees at a given point of time. Research in organisational ambidexterity suggests such contradictory conditions can coexist if they are managed consciously (Guerci and Carollo, 2016), which is a practical implication of this study.

Wider communication policies reflected embedded CES and targeted communication peripheral and/or intermediate CES. Our findings indicate that a self-interest based communication approach might hinder value internalisation. Another risk of this is that peripheral and intermediate policies can fail to address needs of the natural environment (Nijhof and Jeurissen, 2010; Moratis, 2014), because CES initiatives are designed to fit departmental needs, and departmental needs are tied to extrinsic organisational needs of making profit. Combined with the biggest perceived challenge of maintaining momentum and the perceived need to be a more responsible and authentic employer, a two-pronged communication approach (self-interest based approach for specific people and departments, and value approach for the whole workforce) might, therefore, be effective for engaging employees in green behaviours quickly, but it may not persist and if noticed it could be perceived as inauthentic.

Returning to findings on GHRM policies, including CES information in the recruitment process can be classified as an intermediate CES enlightened self-interest based GHRM practice, when the practice is adopted predominantly to increase business benefits. This is in line with our observations of the literature, where studies outline company benefits resulting from including CEP data in recruitment and selection process, neglecting the environmental contribution of this practice (Albinger and Freeman, 2000; Ehnert, 2009; Wagner, 2011; Renwick *et al.*, 2013). These business benefits are a welcome side effect, but it might be misleading to assume that high-calibre candidates engage more in green behaviours. There is empirical evidence that applicants who scan CSR credentials did so to compensate for incomplete information provided in the recruitment process (Renwick *et al.*, 2013). An exception are findings of the renewable energy company, which are in line with literature on person-organisation fit (Backhaus *et al.*, 2002), in that sustainable companies appeal to environmentally minded job seekers. To make a real contribution to CES and to become embedded, green criteria would be used in the selection process (to screen applicants for green abilities or a moral compass), but evidence from participants is mostly aspirational. Again, sustainability advocates seem to know what they ought to do and they communicate it, but organisational processes are lagging behind.

Because of its knowledge and ability increasing attributes, ET appears to be a necessary GHRM practice. The literature suggests that ET can reinforce other GHRM policies (Govindarajulu and Daily, 2004; Jabbour *et al.*, 2010b; Daily *et al.*, 2012). Findings of our study suggest ET provision as part of green organisational learning is more successful than using ET as a metric to determine senior manager bonuses. In the case of the bank that uses training completion rates to determine managers' bonuses, and engaged in unethical investment practices, ET is self-interest based means to an end and neither intermediate or peripheral as the company was not complying with legal responsibilities (Pandey *et al.*, 2013). These findings indicated a lack of value-identification for CES. In contrast, a combination of ET and empowerment in an emerging process that considers organisational factors can potentially become an embedded GHRM approach. As shown in the case where ET was used to increase skills and competencies, individual agency was activated in a positive way. This type of development reflects Georg and Füssel's (2000) view on corporate greening in that the collective identity gradually transforms as empowered employees make sense of sustainability processes in their firm by working in teams, and using ET when needed. Initially, this order seems counter-intuitive, particularly with regard to ET which has previously been found to have a stronger link to environmental performance than empowerment (Daily *et al.*, 2012), but it may lead to better and long-lasting results. Interestingly, we found supporting evidence for Daily *et al.'s* (2012) findings. Participants reported that low self-efficacy in managers for enacting green goals prevented them from mobilising their employees. The empowering-enacting gap is too big and agency and self-efficacy in individuals is not successfully activated, possibly because of a lack of understanding in this case. Trying to understand this difference, we found that empowerment-ET link successful on employee level and the ET-empowerment order at managerial level. An additional possible interpretation of the low self-efficacy in managers who received ET could be a result of confusion over values and incentive-based company expectations.

5.1. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to illuminate how Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) policies can be used by sustainability advocates in eliciting employee green behaviours using Pandey *et al.'s* (2013)

model of CES embeddedness. A diverse mix of sustainability advocates from large European firms use a range of GHRM policies to further environmental agendas in their firms, and to utilise business benefits that environmental orientations promise. On the basis of this, our paper argues that following a perceived value-based trend while maintaining existing organisational systems might lead to misalignments. Specifically, we found misalignments between sustainability advocates' intentions and actual implementation approaches, which could lead to unintended consequences, i.e. short-term self-interest-based employee green behaviour outcomes and not the desired values-based behaviour outcomes.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of Pandey *et al.'s* (2013) model and GHRM. Companies or GHRM policies are not in themselves peripheral, intermediate or embedded. The classification can only occur after a careful consideration of the contextual factors. This is similar to Aguinis and Glavas' (2013) version of the model that emphasises using firms' core competencies to inform practices. However, we recommend incorporating a normative view. Renwick *et al.* (2008) state GHRM can be undermined by internal and external forces. Similarly, our findings suggest value-based GHRM can be undermined by existing organisational dynamics.

In view of the limitations, all our participants were sustainability advocates, who are more likely to identify with moral values towards CES and might express CES in a more positive light. We approached this limitation by probing participants on implementation challenges and using secondary data from publicly accessible information, which, for example, revealed irresponsible practices in one company. In line with our research questions, the data-emergent approach to GHRM practices allowed us to explore those practices that sustainability advocates deem practical and relevant. However, other GHRM practices that occur in the literature could be explored in a European context, i.e. the link between trade unions and work councils and GHRM (Hampton, 2015; Zoogah, 2011).

Another limitation of this study is that it is drawn from a broad population from different countries in Europe. Interestingly, findings across the sample indicate a mismatch between intentions and outcomes and

different dynamics between GHRM practices. These were revealed by applying Pandey *et al.'s* (2013) model. These dynamics need to be further explored empirically. For example, further evidence on the experiences of recipients of GHRM can illuminate the intention-outcome gap. Data on recipients' concrete experiences and behaviours can be compared to sustainability advocates' intentions and espoused outcomes. This could not only develop an understanding of intentions and outcomes but also aid alignment of GHRM policies.

Jackson (2012) already proposes HRM practitioners who pursue GHRM become strategic partners of the environmental sustainability agenda and align goals with people management practices. In addition, we suggest sustainability advocates become not only environmental stewards but also stewards of normative values, an addition that could be added to Pandey et al.'s (2013) model. Before communicating a strategy and trying to onboard employees, sustainability advocates would review how their intentions and approaches align carefully. A potential avenue of exploration for practitioners could be a critical reflection on their own value system and that of the policies they create. Based on the findings of this study, sustainability advocates should not couple a values-based strategy and a self-interest-based strategy but choose a coherent approach. For example, an emergent employee-led approach would align well with the values-based communication that is so popular among sustainability advocates.

Our findings open up a moral discussion of GHRM in that policies that aid environmental betterment are considered, which is a distinction that has previously been neglected. A discussion on systemic change needs to take place at sustainability summits and in corporations as it is concerning that the majority of our current CSR approaches nurture opportunism and reduce intrinsic values (Ariely *et al.*, 2007; Nijhof and Jeurissen, 2010; Moratis, 2014), when those in charge believe that they are doing the right thing.

Appendix 1

Participant information

Interview Code	Company	Country Code	Role
I14:1	Financial services	BE	CSR Director
I14:2	Banking and financial services	UK	Head of Corporate Citizenship
I14:4	Chemicals	NL	Global Sustainability Director
I14:3	Renewable energy	UK	Business Dev. & Sales Manager
I14:5	Finance and insurance	UK	Head of CSR
I14:6	Retail	UK	Head of Sustainability
I14:8	Consumer products (Spirits)	UK	Global Sustainability Director
I14:9	Banking and financial services	UK	Sourcing manager
I14:7	Sustainability Consultancy	NL	Founding partner
I15:9	Apparel	NL	PR and Internal Communication manager
I15:8	Non-financial data consultancy	UK	Principal Sustainability Consultant
I15:5	Recruitment firm	FR	CEO
I15:3	Professional services	UK	Corporate Sustainability Manager
I15:7	Hotel & event venues	UK	Managing Director
I15:2	Online booking service	NL	Sustainability officer
I15:4	Postal services	GER	Head of CR and Communication
I15:6	Higher education	UK	Sustainability action officer

Appendix 2

Interview guide

- Introductions (explain research process) collect general info
- Approaches to sustainability
- Type of strategic focus
- GHRM Initiatives
- Reactions to initiative (if applicable)
- Implementation Challenges
- Motivation and engagement strategies
- Management of projects

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