Employee Green Value and Green HRM in Strengthening Proactive Personality toward Green Innovation in East Java Restaurants

(Study on East Java Restaurants)

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Abstract

Introduction/Main Objectives: This paper examines how proactive personality, employee green value, and green human resource management (GHRM) influence green innovative work behavior in restaurant SMEs in East Java. The study emphasizes sustainability in the culinary sector, highlighting how proactive traits and organizational practices support environmentally responsible innovation.

Background Problems: Restaurant SMEs are increasingly pressured to reduce waste and improve energy efficiency, demanding more sustainable operations. This raises the key question of how proactive employee traits and organizational green practices work together to shape employees' green innovative work behavior.

Novelty: Research integrating employee green value as a mediator and GHRM as a moderator in the restaurant SME context remains limited. This study offers novelty by combining these variables in one empirical model to explain how green innovative behavior emerges in small business environments.

Research Methods: The study uses a quantitative approach with survey data collected from 280 respondents selected through purposive–accidental sampling. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.1.1.4 to test direct, indirect, and moderating effects among variables.

Finding/Results: Results show that proactive personality significantly increases both employee green value and green innovative work behavior. Employee green value also positively affects innovative behavior and mediates the relationship between proactive personality and green innovation. In addition, GHRM strengthens the effect of proactive personality on green innovative work behavior.

Conclusion: The study concludes that proactive personality, strong green values, and GHRM practices jointly promote environmentally innovative behavior. The key implication is that restaurant SMEs should strengthen GHRM through green recruitment, environmental training, and sustainability-based performance evaluation to build an innovative and sustainable work culture.

Keywords: Employee Proactive Personality, Employee Green Value, Green Human Resource Management, Green Innovative Work Behavior, Restaurant

Introduction

SMEs are vital to economic growth but face increasing pressure to balance profitability with environmental sustainability. In East Java's restaurant industry, SMEs encounter challenges in reducing energy use, minimizing food waste, and adopting eco-friendly materials. These constraints highlight the importance of employee contributions to sustainable innovation. PP significantly influences employees' green values, as individuals who take initiative are more likely to internalize environmental principles (Liao et al., 2023). This is supported by Hidalgo-Crespo et al. (2023), who note that proactive traits heighten sustainability awareness and adaptability, especially among employees with long work experience who learn environmental values through daily interactions (Mi et al., 2020). Research also shows that proactive employees actively seek improvement opportunities and persist in problem-solving, strengthening environmentally responsible work behavior(Andri et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2021; Mawaddah et al., 2025).

PP has been shown to positively influence both innovative behavior and GIWB (Andri et al., 2020; Lailla & Nuraeni, 2023; Mawaddah et al., 2025). EGV reflecting beliefs in environmental stewardship acts as a moral driver for sustainable practices (Dibattista et al., 2025; Madan et al., 2025). The SIPT states that green values emerge from interpreting organizational cues such as leadership and policies, while the SVFT argues that innovation is stronger when personal and organizational values align. Empirical evidence shows that EGV mediates the link between PP and GIWB (Madan et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023), proving its role in transforming proactive tendencies into sustainable actions.

GHRM enhances this process by integrating sustainability into recruitment, training, and performance evaluation. Through GHRM, organizations strengthen employees' environmentally responsible behavior and engagement in green initiatives (Ababneh, 2021; Shoaib et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023). In East Java restaurant SMEs, GHRM supports efforts such as energy efficiency and waste reduction. Although research on PP, EGV, and GIWB is extensive (Ababneh, 2021; Andri et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2021; Dibattista et al., 2025; Lailla & Nuraeni, 2023; Madan et al., 2025; Shoaib et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023), studies focusing on SMEs remain limited. This study therefore examines EGV as a mediator between PP and GIWB and analyzes GHRM's moderating role, contributing both theoretically and practically to sustainable HR policy in the food service sector.

This research is grounded in Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT) and Supplies–Values Fit Theory (SVFT). SIPT emphasizes that employees' behaviors are shaped by perceived environmental cues, where sustainability-oriented leadership and culture encourage green and innovative actions (Dibattista et al., 2025; Shoaib et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023). Meanwhile, SVFT argues that employees show higher motivation when personal and organizational environmental values align (Gao et al., 2025; Madan et al., 2025; Piwowar-Sulej et al., 2024). When this alignment occurs, proactive employees are more likely to develop eco-friendly solutions that support operational efficiency and business longevity. Combined, these theories highlight that ecological innovative behavior is shaped by how employees interpret sustainability signals and how well their personal and organizational green aspirations match.

Hypothesis Development :

Proactive Personality and Employees' Green Innovative Work Behavior
       A PP reflects an individual's tendency to shape their environment, anticipate future changes, and persist in achieving goals despite obstacles, making it essential for promoting environmentally oriented innovation in East Java restaurant SMEs. Zhao et al. (2022)found that PP strengthens career adaptability through career identity and thriving at work, showing

that proactive employees are better prepared to achieve sustainable outcomes. Dai et al. (2024) confirmed that PP enhances innovative behavior due to higher engagement and creativity, while Al-Ayed, (2024) emphasized that IWB directly supports green innovation, illustrating the vital role of idea generation and implementation in sustainability. Similarly, Choi et al. (2021)showed that PP improves creative performance through creative self-efficacy and psychological safety, and Andri et al. (2020) validated its positive effect on innovation. Lailla & Nuraeni (2023)further highlighted a 43% increase in innovative behavior among proactive individuals, supported by Mawaddah et al. (2025) and Tawar (2025), who found that proactive employees are more engaged and capable of producing new ideas. Yusuf et al. (2025) also identified proactive traits as drivers of green creativity, including energy savings, waste reduction, and sustainability advocacy. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that PP consistently encourages green IWB by aligning personal initiative with sustainability goals, reinforcing its critical role in supporting environmentally responsible practices within restaurant SMEs.

H1: Employees' green innovative work behavior can increase if employees are proactive.

Proactive Personality and Employee Green Value

People with proactive personalities work to improve their workplace, create solutions, and maintain smooth operations (Liao et al., 2023), a key requirement for restaurant SMEs in East Java as eco-conscious consumers increasingly demand sustainable products. According to SIPT, environmentally aware employees actively seek information that aligns with their beliefs, making them more responsive to GHRM practices and organizational sustainability commitments that strengthen their green values (Tang et al., 2023). Chen & Hsieh (2023) also highlight that environmental self-identity and self-efficacy in social and marketing abilities shape individuals into green opinion leaders, reinforcing the role of environmental identity in forming EGV. In line with the SVFT, proactive individuals seek environments congruent with their personal values; thus, when organizations promote sustainability, employees develop stronger value alignment and commitment (Hidalgo-Crespo et al., 2023). Yuan & Li (2023) similarly emphasize environmental self-identity and social skills as drivers of sustainability advocacy. Empirical evidence supports these theoretical links: Muffato et al. (2024) found that openness and proactivity foster pro-environmental behavior through a strong connection with nature, while Piwowar-Sulej et al. (2024) showed that PP enhances environmental awareness under sustainability-oriented leadership. Mi et al. (2020) further noted that proactive green behavior directly contributes to environmental performance and addresses gaps left by formal regulations. Altogether, proactive employees transform environmental awareness into concrete green actions, making them highly valuable for restaurant SMEs pursuing sustainable operations.

H2: The more proactive employees are, the more green values they have.

Employee Green Value and Employee Green Innovative Work Behavior

EGV represents employees' beliefs and moral principles regarding the need to balance workplace activities with environmental preservation (Madan et al., 2025), and these values shape EGIWB by guiding how individuals address environmental issues in their professional roles. For restaurant SMEs in East Java to remain competitive, they must internalize green values through practices such as developing eco-friendly ideas, using resources efficiently, and managing waste responsibly. According to SIPT, green values arise from employees' internalization of sustainable norms embedded in organizational culture. When environmental responsibility becomes part of the company's identity, employees are more likely to shift their thinking and generate ideas aligned with environmental goals (Dibattista et al., 2025). A green organizational climate also stimulates participation and creativity (Madan et al., 2025), while GHRM strengthens these behaviors by ensuring consistent support for sustainability. K. Khan et al. (2025) found that GHRM fosters creative behavior through reinforcement of

environmental values, and Widyanty et al. (2025) noted that green climates particularly encourage innovation among younger employees. Similarly, Ma & Wang (2024) stated that employee ability, motivation, and organizational support make GIWB more attainable. Overall, EGV plays a crucial role in driving environmentally friendly innovative behavior because employees internalize green principles supported by organizational structures that promote sustainability (Madan et al., 2025).

H3: Employee Green Values significantly increase Employee Green Innovative Work behavior.

Employee Green Value and Employee Green Innovative Work Behavior

Individuals with proactive personalities tend to initiate conversations, seek improvements, and create positive workplace impacts, driven by creativity, excellence, and performance beyond expectations. Research consistently shows their adaptability and innovativeness Choi et al. (2021) found that proactive employees demonstrate higher creative performance due to strong self-efficacy and organizational support Callea et al. (2022) reported that they are more flexible, engaged, and often experience "flow" at work while Zhang et al. (2021) confirmed their tendency to openly share information, strengthening both radical and incremental creativity. In the context of GIWB, proactive individuals are more capable of motivating others to adopt sustainable practices. Piwowar-Sulej et al. (2024) revealed that those with strong environmental commitment propose more innovative environmental solutions, supported by EGV),which reflects their eco-conscious mindset shaped by social cues such as regulations or leaders' sustainable actions. According to the SVFT, innovation arises when personal and organizational values align, enabling proactive individuals to leverage social and psychological resources to generate novel ideas (Li et al., 2022). Their heightened responsiveness to GHRM and sustainability-oriented leadership further enhances green innovation. Therefore, restaurant SMEs in East Java should support employees in channeling their proactive traits and green values into developing sustainable products and services that advance green business practices.

H4: Employee green value mediates the influence of employee proactive personality on employee green innovative work behavior.

Green Human Resource Management and Employee Green Innovative Work Behavior

Environmentally friendly practices are increasingly essential for restaurant SMEs in East Java as sustainability awareness grows, and one key individual factor influencing EGIWB is PP. Proactive individuals take initiative and drive workplace improvements, yet organizational support is crucial for sustaining these behaviors. GHRM provides this support by fostering an environmentally conscious work culture. According to SIPT, employee behavior is shaped by workplace social cues, and GHRM signals that the organization prioritizes sustainability and innovation. Through green recruitment, environmental training, and sustainability-based rewards, proactive employees view these practices as opportunities to express eco-innovative ideas (Gao et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023). This is especially important in restaurant SMEs, where culinary operations directly influence waste and energy consumption. The SVFT further explains that innovation emerges when personal and organizational values align; thus, proactive employees are more likely to engage in green innovation when their environmental values receive organizational reinforcement (Shoaib et al., 2025). Ababneh (2021) also found that GHRM enhances green behavior through work engagement, while empirical evidence shows that GHRM strengthens the relationship between green culture and innovation (Fang et al., 2022) and promotes sustainable innovation through environmental strategies (Housheya & Atikbay, 2025). Therefore, the stronger the implementation of GHRM such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, and local sourcing the stronger the relationship between PP and EGIWB (Ababneh, 2021; Fang et al., 2022; Gao et al., 2025; Housheya & Atikbay, 2025; Shoaib et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023).

H5: Green human resource management moderates the influence of employee proactive personality on employee green innovative work behavior.
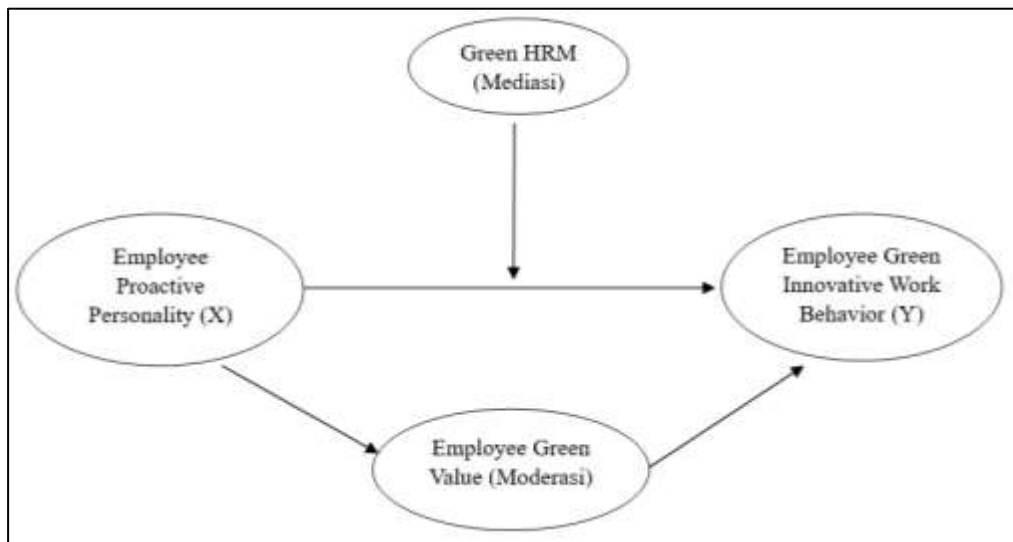

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework
Source: Authors Data, 2025

Research Methods

This study adopts a quantitative research approach using a survey method with online questionnaires distributed to restaurant SME operators across East Java. The quantitative method was chosen because it enables an objective and measurable analysis of the cause and effect relationships between latent variables. This approach aligns with the study's objective to examine the effect of EPP on EGIWB through EGV and to analyze how GHRM moderates this relationship. The study population includes all restaurant SMEs in East Java. Published by Manado Post, the number of restaurants in East Java fluctuated over the past five years from 4,323 in 2020, increasing to 5,402 in 2021, then declining to 4,084 in 2022, before rising again to 4,605 in 2023 and reaching 6,419 in 2024. These dynamics reflect post pandemic recovery and adaptation within the province's culinary sector.

Given the large and variable population, the sample size was determined based on the number of indicators (28), producing 280 respondents (10 x 28). The sampling technique used accidental purposive sampling, combining purposive
Selection (based on criteria) and accidental sampling (based on accessibility). The criteria included

(1) owners or employees with at least one year of experience and
(2) those familiar with environmentally friendly practices in their workplace.

Data were collected through Google Forms distributed via East Java culinary business networks and social media. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: respondent identification and measurement items for EPP, EGV, GHRM, and EGIWB (see Table 1). A pilot test was conducted to ensure clarity and reliability.

Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS, an approach suitable for examining complex relationships among latent variables in medium-sized samples. The analysis covered

the outer model (validity and reliability) and inner model (path coefficients, R^2, t-statistics, p-values, f^2, Q^2, and model fit). These results formed the basis for hypothesis testing and understanding how PP, green values, and GHRM jointly support green innovative behavior among restaurant SME employees in East Java.

Table 1 Latent Constructs Measurements

Latent Constructs	Indicator	Items
Proactive Personality (PP) **Adapted From:** (Bai et al., 2022) (Pakayli & Anjaningrum, 2025) (Maharani & Anjaningrum, 2025)	PP 1	Regardless of where I am, I always support positive change.
	PP 2	If I don't like something, I will improve it.
	PP 3	I feel positive about standing up for what I believe, even if others don't.
	PP 4	I can spot chances rapidly.
	PP 5	I am sure I can handle problems and change.
	PP 6	I can come up with and find new ways to solve problems.
	PP 7	I am willing to change and regard every shift as a chance to learn and improve.
	PP 8	I'm always seeking new methods to make life better.
Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) **Adapted From:** (Bai et al., 2022) (Maharani & Anjaningrum, 2025)	IWB 1	Looking for innovative product ideas, methods, technologies, and procedures.
	IWB 2	Being open to new ideas.
	IWB 3	Doing research and getting the money you need to make your ideas happen.
	IWB 4	Telling other people about these ideas and getting them to support them.
	IWB 5	Employees actively look for new information that will help them do their jobs better.
	IWB 6	Employees also take the initiative to make their ideas happen.
	IWB 7	Workers tell their teammates or bosses about their inventive ideas.
Green HRM (GHRM) **Adapted From:** (A. J. Khan et al., 2022) (Aboramadan, 2022)	GHRM 1	Employees are encouraged to work for the company's ecologically friendly objectives.
	GHRM 2	To foster green ideals, the organization offers eco-friendly training to its staff.
	GHRM 3	To equip staff with the information and skills necessary for green management, the organization offers environmentally friendly training.
	GHRM 4	My organization evaluates the success of its employees based on their eco-friendly actions at work.
	GHRM 5	Ensuring that staff receives environmental training equips them with the necessary understanding and abilities to actively promote a green workplace.
	GHRM 6	Using workers' eco-friendly actions as a metric for performance reviews.
	GHRM 7	Creating a connection between employees' actions that promote environmental sustainability and the awards and advantages they receive.
	GHRM 8	Creating a connection between employees' actions that promote environmental sustainability and the awards and advantages they receive.
Employee Green Value (EGV) **Adapted From:** (Madan et al., 2025)	EGV 1	I am deeply committed to doing my part to protect the environment from harm.
	EGV 2	It is the opinion of those closest to me that I should do everything possible to protect the environment.
	EGV 3	The majority of the important people in my life will support my efforts to work in an eco-friendly manner.

	EGV 4	I may improve my social connections by avoiding harm to the environment.
	EGV 5	It will leave a good impression on those who are close to me.

Source : Author's Data, 2025

Result

Respondent's Demographics

The demographic data in Table 2 describe 280 respondents representing restaurant SMEs across East Java. Most businesses were located in Surabaya (30%) and Malang (25%), showing both cities as dominant culinary centers. In terms of business scale, 55% of respondents operated small enterprises, and 45% managed medium-sized ones, demonstrating a balanced representation of SME categories. In terms of business age, 75% had operated for more than three years, indicating stable and mature establishments. Most restaurants were independently owned (62%) and operated a single outlet (78%), highlighting the prevalence of individual entrepreneurs. From the managerial profile, 60% of respondents were male and 40% female, with nearly half holding at least a bachelor's degree (48%). Overall, these demographics suggest that restaurant SMEs in East Java are managed by experienced and educated business owners, providing a strong basis for examining PP, green values, and IWB in this sector.

Table 2 Respondent's Demographics

Category	Description	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Business Location	Surabaya	84	30
	Malang	70	25
	Kediri	42	15
	Jember	28	10
	Other Cities/Districts	56	20
Business Scale	Small Enterprises (5–19 employees)	154	55
	Medium Enterprises (20–49 employees)	126	45
Business Age	Less than 3 years	70	25
	3–5 years	112	40
	More than 5 years	98	35
Ownership Type	Sole Proprietorship	174	62
	Partnership/Franchise	78	28
	Investor-Based	28	10
Restaurant Type	Dine-In	112	40
	Fast Food	70	25
	Takeaway	98	35
Number of Outlets	Single Outlet	218	78
	Multiple Outlets	62	22
Manager Education Level	High School	126	45
	Diploma/Bachelor's Degree	134	48
	Postgraduate Degree	20	7

Manager Gender	Male	168	60
	Female	112	40

Source: Authors Data, 2025

This section presents the results of data analysis obtained from 280 SME restaurant respondents in East Java Province. Model testing was conducted using a PLS based SEM approach through SmartPLS software. This approach was used because it is capable of testing causal relationships between complex latent variables and is suitable for medium sample sizes. The model was analyzed in two main steps. The first step was to look at the measurement model (outer model) to see if the constructs were valid and reliable. This analysis was done by looking at the factor loading values, AVE, CR, and Cronbach's Alpha. The second step is to look at the structural model (inner model) to see how strong the relationship is between the latent variables. This includes looking at direct, indirect, and moderating effects based on the study's conceptual model.
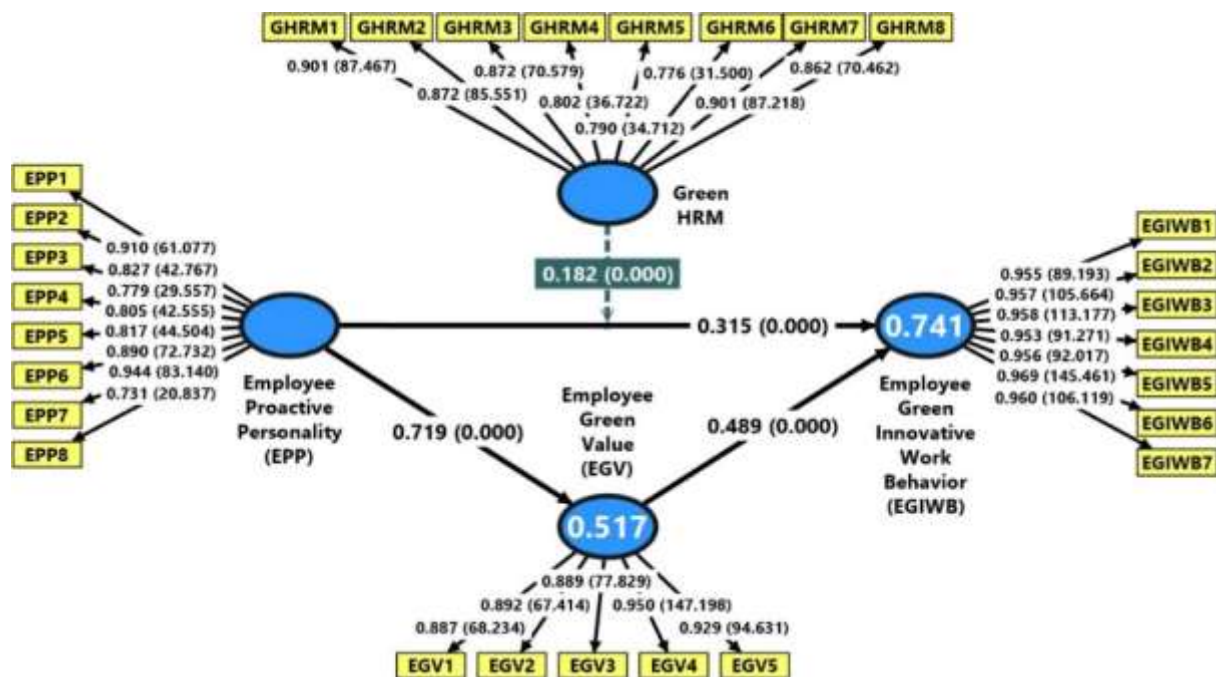

Figure 2 Graphical Output of PLS-SEM

Source: Processed Data (SmartPLS 4.1.1.4), 2025

Table 3 Convergence Validity and Reliability

Latent Constructs	AVE	CA	CR (rho_a)	CR (rho_c)
EGIWB	0.919	0.985	0.986	0.987
EGV	0.827	0.948	0.951	0.960
EPP	0.707	0.940	0.949	0.950
GHRM	0.719	0.944	0.949	0.953

Source: Processed Data (SmartPLS 4.1.1.4), 2025

Outer model evaluation was conducted to ensure that each indication accurately represented the construct being measured. Convergent validity testing was performed using each indicator's outer loading and AVE values. Based on the SmartPLS analysis, all indicators in the EPP, EGV, GHRM, and EGIWB variables had outer loading values greater than 0.70, indicating that all items met the convergent validity criteria. In addition, the AVE value of each construct is above the 0.50 threshold, ranging from 0.707 to 0.919, as shown in Table 3. These findings suggest that the latent construct represented by the indicator can explain more than 70% of the variance. Consequently, we assert that all constructs inside our research model are convergently valid and suitable for structural model analysis.

Inner Model of PLS

The following step is the inner model testing, which uses the path coefficient and R-square (R^2) values to determine if there is a causal relationship between the latent variables. An independent variable's capacity to explain a dependent variable is shown by its R^2 value. The results of the data processing indicate that EGV has an R^2 value of 0.517 and EGIWB has an R^2 value of 0.741 for EGIWB. The findings show that PP accounts for 51.7% of the variance in EGV and that PP, EGV, and green HRM account for 74.1% of the variance in EGIWB. You can tell the direction and strength of the association between latent variables by looking at the value of the path coefficient. Results show that there is a 0.719 (p = 0.000) correlation between green value and PP among employees, a 0.489 (p = 0.000) correlation between green value and IWB among employees, and a 0.315 (p = 0.000) correlation between green value and PP among employees. Furthermore, a coefficient of 0.182 (p = 0.000) was discovered to indicate that GHRM moderated the association between EPP and employee GIWB. There were statistically significant correlations between the variables since all of the p-values were less than 0.05.

Evaluating Hypotheses

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Overall, the results of this study support the SIPT and SVFT, which explain that employee work behavior is shaped by the process of interpreting organizational values and the alignment between personal values and corporate values. Thus, employees who have proactive personalities, strong green values, and are supported by green-oriented human resource management practices will be more likely to exhibit innovative and sustainable work behavior.

Table 4 Size of the F-Test Effect

	f-square	Meaning
EGV -> EGIWB	0.432	Large effect
EPP -> EGIWB	0.136	Medium effect
EPP -> EGV	1.072	Large effect
GHRM -> EGIWB	0.047	Small effect
GHRM X EPP -> EGIWB	0.130	Medium effect

Source: Processed Data (SmartPLS 4.1.1.4), 2025

The impact size (f^2) test shows how much each exogenous variable in the research model has an effect on the endogenous variable. The f^2 number tells you how much the dependent variable changes when you take the independent variable out of the model. A value of 0.02 for f^2 is minor (little effect), 0.15 is medium (medium effect), and 0.35 or higher is large (great effect). The f^2 value of 0.432 in Table 4 reveals that EGV has a big effect on EGIWB. This illustrates that employees' green values are a key part of what makes them want to do new work that is beneficial for the environment. The f^2 value of 0.136 indicates a moderate effect of EPP on EGIWB. This suggests that employees' proactive personalities are also important for encouraging green innovative behavior.

The impact size test (f^2) shows how much each exogenous variable in the research model affects the endogenous variable. The f^2 value shows how much the dependent variable changes when the independent variable is removed from the model. An f^2 value of 0.02 indicates a small effect, 0.15 indicates a moderate effect, and 0.35 or more indicates a large effect. An f^2 value of 0.432 in Table 4 shows that EGV have a large effect on EGIWB. This indicates that employee green values are a key factor that encourages them to do new work that is beneficial to the environment. The f^2 value of 0.136 indicates a moderate effect of EPP on EGIWB. This suggests that EPP is also important in encouraging green innovative behavior.

Table 5 T-Test Result

	Path-Coef.	T statistics	P values
Indirect Impact of Latent Constructs			
EGV -> EGIWB	0.489	10.940	0.000
EPP -> EGIWB	0.315	5.751	0.000
EPP -> EGV	0.719	24.490	0.000
GHRM -> EGIWB	0.163	3.278	0.001
GHRM x EPP -> EGIWB	0.182	5.823	0.000
Specific Indirect Impact of Latent Constructs			
EPP -> EGV -> EGIWB	0.351	9.492	0.000

Source: Processed Data (SmartPLS 4.1.1.4), 2025

Table 5 presents the t-statistic results used to evaluate the significance of relationships between latent variables. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamplings at a 5% significance level was applied, where relationships are deemed significant when the t-statistic exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05. The results show that EPP has a positive and significant effect on EGIWB, meaning proactive employees are more likely to display innovative and

environmentally friendly behaviors. EPP also significantly influences EGV, indicating that proactive individuals tend to possess stronger environmental awareness and commitment.

The analysis further confirms that EGV significantly affects EGIWB, underscoring the importance of green values in encouraging sustainability-oriented innovation. Mediation testing shows that EGV partially mediates the relationship between EPP and EGIWB, demonstrating that proactive employees with strong green values more effectively translate their proactivity into eco-innovative actions. Moreover, the moderation analysis reveals that GHRM strengthens the effect of EPP on EGIWB, indicating that environmentally focused HR practices enhance the impact of proactive traits on green innovation. Overall, all hypotheses (H1–H5) are supported, validating the research model and emphasizing that both individual factors (EPP, EGV) and organizational factors (GHRM) jointly shape green innovative behavior in restaurant SMEs in East Java.

Discussion

The Mediating Role of Employee Green Value

The study shows that PP has a positive and significant effect on GIWB, as proactive employees actively seek improvements and generate environmentally friendly ideas in their daily tasks (Andri et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2021). This aligns with Lailla & Nuraeni (2023), who state that highly proactive individuals tend to drive innovation, although Ababneh (2021)) argues that proactivity alone is insufficient without organizational support an aspect that restaurant SMEs may fulfill through informal reinforcement. PP also significantly shapes EGV, indicating that individuals accustomed to taking initiative more easily internalize environmental values (Liao et al., 2023). This is reinforced by Hidalgo-Crespo et al. (2023), who explain that proactive traits increase sensitivity to sustainability issues, especially among employees with over three years of experience who learn green values through daily operational interactions (Mi et al., 2020).

Furthermore, green values significantly influence GIWB, driving employees to develop more efficient and eco-friendly methods through conservation and waste reduction efforts (Song et al., 2023). These findings support Madan et al. (2025) and Chen & Hsieh (2023), who highlight green values as a moral force enhancing innovative motivation, especially among educated employees with close ties to business owners, resulting in consistent innovation (Widyanty et al., 2025). Overall, the results confirm that EGV mediates the relationship between PP and green innovative behavior, supporting the SVFT and the findings of Piwowar-Sulej et al. (2024). With respondents mostly of productive age, well educated, and experienced, green values effectively transform proactive tendencies into concrete sustainable actions (Dibattista et al., 2025; Tang et al., 2023).

The Moderating Role of Green Human Resource Management

The study demonstrates that PP has a positive and significant effect on GIWB, as proactive employees naturally seek improvements and generate environmentally friendly ideas (Andri et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2021). This aligns with Lailla & Nuraeni (2023), who note that proactive individuals often initiate sustainability-related changes, although Ababneh (2021) emphasizes that proactivity alone is insufficient without organizational support. The findings confirm that GHRM strengthens the relationship between PP and green innovative behavior, as environmental training, energy-efficiency directives, sustainability-based evaluations, and rewards increase proactive employees' confidence in expressing eco-innovative ideas (Fang

et al., 2022; Shoaib et al., 2025), consistent with (Gao et al., 2025), who highlight the role of green training and rewards in promoting resource efficiency and waste reduction.

In East Java restaurant SMEs, GHRM is often implemented informally through direct owner–employee interactions, such as modeling eco-friendly practices or appreciating green initiatives, which is effective due to close workplace relationships (Housheya & Atikbay, 2025; Mi et al., 2020). This supports SIPT, where leadership behaviors act as key cues guiding employee actions (Dibattista et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023). Employees with long experience are also more responsive to GHRM, making guidance and rewards more impactful (Gao et al., 2025). Overall, GHRM significantly strengthens the influence of PP on green innovative behavior, showing that even simple sustainability policies can drive innovation in restaurant SMEs (Fang et al., 2022; Shoaib et al., 2025) and confirming that individual traits and organizational support together build an environmentally oriented innovative culture (Dibattista et al., 2025; Gao et al., 2025).

Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, the results of this study reinforce SIPT and SVFT as a conceptual basis. The process of interpreting green-oriented organizational social signals and the fit between individual and organizational values proved to be important factors in the formation of green innovative behavior. This study also provides empirical contributions to the development of literature on EGIWB by integrating the role of EGV as a mediator and GHRM as a moderator in the context of SMEs, an area that has been studied very little.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study have practical implications for those in charge of restaurants in East Java. At the outset, businesses could improve their GHRM practices by providing staff with environmental training, evaluation tools focused on sustainability, and rewards for eco-friendly actions. The second most important thing is to find a way to hire people who are proactive. People who are proactive are better at adjusting to new situations and coming up with creative solutions to environmental problems. Third, strengthening the organization's green values through internal communication and leadership role models can foster collective awareness of the importance of operational sustainability.

Conclusion

The study concludes that employees with proactive personalities tend to display a higher level of environmental awareness and responsibility, which encourages innovative and sustainable work behavior. Proactive individuals are more capable of identifying opportunities for improvement, adapting to organizational changes, and generating creative ideas that align with environmental goals.

EGV plays an essential role as an internal driver that transforms proactive attitudes into concrete green innovative actions. When employees internalize strong environmental values, they become more motivated to develop eco friendly solutions, such as reducing waste, improving energy efficiency, and promoting sustainability oriented initiatives.

Furthermore, GHRM practices strengthen this relationship by providing a supportive organizational framework. Green recruitment, environmental training, and sustainability based performance evaluations enhance the capacity of proactive employees to express their creativity in environmentally responsible ways.

Overall, the findings affirm that both individual factors (PP and green values) and organizational factors (GHRM practices) jointly foster the emergence of EGIWB. This synergy

creates a foundation for restaurant SMEs in East Java to achieve operational sustainability and long-term competitive advantage through environmentally conscious innovation.

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