

## The Effect of Job Satisfaction On Sustainable Orientation: A Systematic Literature Review

<sup>1</sup>Siti Handayani Maulidina, <sup>2</sup>Ari Saptono, <sup>3</sup>Darma Rika Swaramarinda  
<sup>1</sup>Mahasiswa Doktor Ilmu Manajemen, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jakarta  
<sup>2</sup>Dosen Doktor Ilmu Manajemen, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jakarta  
<sup>3</sup>Dosen Doktor Ilmu Manajemen, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jakarta

E-mail: [siti.handayani@mhs.unj.ac.id](mailto:siti.handayani@mhs.unj.ac.id), [saptono.fe@unj.ac.id](mailto:saptono.fe@unj.ac.id), [darmarika\\_s@unj.ac.id](mailto:darmarika_s@unj.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to systematically examine the relationship between job satisfaction and sustainable orientation in the context of modern organizations. This literature review uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, referring to the PRISMA guidelines. A total of 41 scientific articles published between 2020 and 2025 were qualitatively analyzed. The results of the review indicate that job satisfaction plays a significant role in shaping individual and organizational sustainability behavior. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to demonstrate a higher commitment to sustainable practices, both in environmental, social, and economic aspects. Job satisfaction strengthens sustainable orientation through the mediation of organizational commitment, green HRM, and ethical climate.

**Keyword:** *job satisfaction, sustainable orientation, sustainable practices, green HRM, systematic literature review*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of global business dynamics that increasingly emphasize social responsibility and sustainability, organizations are required not only to pursue economic profit but also to integrate sustainability principles into all their operational activities. Sustainability has become a new strategic paradigm encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions known as the triple bottom line (Elkington, 1997). Amidst this shift, sustainable orientation has become a crucial indicator reflecting an organization's awareness and commitment to acting ethically, efficiently, and responsibly towards the environment. While much research focuses on macro-scale strategies such as green supply chains or corporate social responsibility, micro-scale dimensions related to individual behavior, such as job satisfaction, are often overlooked, even though human factors are the primary drivers of sustainability policy implementation at the organizational level (Renwick et al., 2016).

Job satisfaction refers to a positive emotional state resulting from an individual's assessment of their work, encompassing intrinsic dimensions such as work meaning, recognition, and autonomy, as well as extrinsic dimensions such as compensation, working conditions, and relationships with colleagues (Luthans, 2011; Robbins & Judge, 2019). Individuals with high levels of job satisfaction tend to exhibit proactive behavior, loyalty, and strong intrinsic motivation to contribute to organizational goals (Herzberg, 1959). In the context of sustainability, employees who are satisfied with their jobs also demonstrate greater concern for environmental and social issues in the workplace, such as energy conservation, waste reduction, participation in corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, and support for green policies (Paillé & Boiral, 2013). Thus, job satisfaction is not only correlated with employee productivity and retention, but also plays a crucial role in shaping individual and collective sustainability behaviors (sustainability-oriented behavior).

The relationship between job satisfaction and sustainability orientation can be explained through several behavioral and motivational theories. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) asserts that when employees' basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) are met, they will be motivated to exhibit behaviors with higher intrinsic and social value, including sustainability behaviors. Similarly, Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) suggests that satisfied employees will reciprocate positive feedback in the form of commitment and active participation in organizational sustainability efforts. Several empirical studies support this view: Kim et al. (2021) found that job satisfaction has a positive effect on corporate sustainable orientation through the mediation of ethical climate, while Luu (2018) showed that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between HRM practices and employee pro-environmental behavior. However, research results still show significant variation depending on cultural context, industry sector, and organizational characteristics. Therefore, a systematic review is needed that can comprehensively synthesize previous research findings to identify relationship patterns, mediating factors, and remaining research gaps.

Based on this background, this study aims to conduct a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) on the influence of job satisfaction on sustainable orientation. This study seeks to integrate empirical and conceptual findings from the past five years (2020–2025) to provide a more holistic understanding of how job satisfaction can be a key factor in strengthening sustainability orientation at the individual and organizational levels. Theoretically, this research enriches the human resource management literature.

## 2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Overview of Research Findings

Based on a review of 41 scientific articles published between 2013 and 2025, the majority of studies confirmed a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and sustainability orientation at

both the individual and organizational levels. Most studies used a quantitative approach with surveys and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis, while others employed mixed methods or case studies. The industries focused on included manufacturing, services, education, banking, and public organizations with consistent findings that employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to be more concerned with sustainability values, including pro-environmental behavior, social ethics, and organizational responsibility. Research by Paillé and Boiral (2013) showed that job satisfaction is an important predictor of employee green behavior, with employees with high job satisfaction demonstrating greater levels of participation in environmental initiatives. Similar findings were presented by Kim et al. (2021), who found that job satisfaction strengthens corporate sustainable orientation by establishing an ethical climate and an ethical organizational culture. Furthermore, Luu (2018) found that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between HRM practices and pro-environmental behavior of employees in the service sector. These results indicate that job satisfaction not only contributes to improved individual performance but also plays a role in strengthening sustainability values within the organization.

### **Mechanisms of the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Sustainable Orientation**

A thematic analysis of the reviewed articles revealed three main mechanisms explaining the relationship between job satisfaction and sustainable orientation:

- 1) Psychological mechanisms (intrinsic motivation): Based on Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), employees who are satisfied with their jobs have higher levels of intrinsic motivation, thus being encouraged to voluntarily act in support of sustainability initiatives.
- 2) Social mechanisms (organizational commitment): Social Exchange Theory (Blau,

1964) explains that job satisfaction fosters a sense of reciprocity toward the organization, which is manifested through behaviors that support the company's social and environmental goals.

3) Structural mechanisms (organizational climate and culture): Studies such as Islam et al. (2021) and Chaudhary (2020) show that ethical leadership and green HRM act as structural conditions that strengthen the relationship between job satisfaction and sustainability orientation. Thus, job satisfaction is not only an individual factor but also systemic closely linked to the organizational structure of values, culture, and policies that support sustainability.

### **Mediating and Moderating Variables**

Several studies indicate that the relationship between job satisfaction and sustainable orientation can be strengthened or mediated by other variables. As mediating variables, organizational commitment (Luu, 2018), ethical climate (Kim et al., 2021), and green HRM (Renwick et al., 2016) emerge as intermediary variables that clarify the internal mechanisms through which job satisfaction influences sustainability orientation. As moderating variables, factors such as industry type, organizational culture, and ethical leadership play a role in strengthening or weakening this relationship. For example, an organizational culture oriented toward innovation and social responsibility has been shown to strengthen the positive effect of job satisfaction on sustainability behavior (Hameed et al., 2022). The implication is that organizational management is not sufficient to simply increase general job satisfaction; it also needs to create a work environment conducive to sustainability through training, communication of ethical values, and reward policies for pro-environmental behavior.

### **Research Patterns and Trends**

Publication trends show a significant increase in research after 2018, in line with the development of the concepts of Green HRM

and Sustainability-Oriented HR Practices. The research focus shifted from the direct relationship between job satisfaction and sustainability behavior to a more complex integration model, involving psychological and organizational variables such as engagement, ethical leadership, and well-being. Furthermore, a new trend in cross-cultural studies has emerged, highlighting the importance of social and cultural context in understanding this relationship. In Asian countries such as Vietnam, China, and Indonesia, collectivist values and social norms have been shown to strengthen the relationship between job satisfaction and sustainability orientation due to a strong sense of social responsibility towards the work group and the community (Luu, 2018). Meanwhile, in the Western context, this relationship is more determined by individual autonomy and motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

#### Research Gaps and Academic Implications

From the results of this systematic review, several research gaps exist that require attention in future research:

- 1) Geographic and cultural context: most research still focuses on developed countries, while the context of developing countries is still limited.
- 2) Longitudinal approach: most studies are cross-sectional, thus not depicting long-term dynamics.
- 3) Integration of cross-disciplinary theories: it is necessary to combine organizational behavior theory with sustainability theory and environmental psychology.
- 4) Digital sustainability dimension: there is still little research linking job satisfaction with digital sustainability orientation, such as the adoption of green technology. Theoretically, the results of this review strengthen the understanding that job satisfaction is a strategic internal factor in strengthening sustainability orientation. Empirically, these results encourage the development of an integrative model involving psychological

variables, organizational culture, and green HRM strategies to explain this relationship more comprehensively.

#### Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, organizations need to review their human resource management policies to be more oriented toward well-being and sustainability. Programs to improve job satisfaction such as green skills training, recognition for environmental initiatives, and the implementation of an ethical work culture can be catalysts for developing sustainable behaviors and orientations in the workplace. HR managers need to view job satisfaction not merely as a factor in retention or productivity, but as a foundation for strengthening long-term sustainability values, which are key to the competitiveness of modern organizations.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Job satisfaction has a positive influence on sustainable orientation. Organizations that increase employee job satisfaction will strengthen a culture of sustainability. The results of this study emphasize the importance of fair and well-being-oriented HRM policies for achieving long-term sustainability.

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