

Sustainable Personal Branding: Aligning Individual Identity with Organizational Goals in Human Resource Management

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the intersection of Personal Branding and Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM), addressing the research gap regarding how individual branding efforts can support sustainability within organizations. As companies increasingly align their strategies with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the role of employees as active contributors to these goals becomes more prominent. Personal Branding, understood as the strategic self-presentation of professionals, appears as a potential enabler of sustainable organizational culture, green HRM practices, and responsible leadership. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines a systematic literature review with qualitative interviews involving 12 professionals from various industries who actively integrate sustainability into their personal branding. The findings reveal that when personal branding aligns with organizational values and sustainability goals, it enhances both individual credibility and organizational commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Digital platforms, especially social media, were identified as powerful tools for promoting sustainability-related identity and behavior, although challenges such as organizational resistance and limited resources still exist. The study outlines key characteristics of sustainable personal branding, including authenticity, ethical communication, and alignment with long-term environmental and social objectives. It also emphasizes the importance of digital literacy and lifelong learning in building personal brands that reflect sustainability values. By supporting employees in developing sustainability-oriented personal brands, organizations can strengthen their employer brand, boost employee engagement, and contribute more effectively to global sustainability goals. This research contributes to the evolving discourse on sustainable HRM by positioning Personal Branding as both an individual strategy and an organizational asset for promoting sustainability and long-term competitiveness.

Keywords: Sustainable Development; Sustainable HRM; Personal Branding; Responsible Leadership; Corporate Social Responsibility

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) has gained prominence as organizations strive to align their strategies with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals provide a framework for enhancing organizational contributions to sustainable development while maintaining economic viability. Aligning with the SDGs requires a holistic approach that integrates sustainability into HRM practices emphasizing the importance of both organizational and individual contributions to sustainable outcomes (Wright et al., 2018; Szántó, 2024).

As organizations recognize the pivotal role that employees play in advancing sustainability, the incorporation of sustainable practices within HRM has become essential. Personal Branding, defined as the process through which individuals market themselves and their professional identities, emerges as a critical element in this context (Shepherd, 2005; Szántó, 2024). Through effective personal brand management, employees can align their values and professional aspirations with their organizations' sustainability commitments. Such alignment not only enhances individual career prospects but also reinforces the organization's broader commitment to sustainable practices. Employees' branding efforts can influence organizational culture and strengthen its dedication to sustainable outcomes, positioning Personal Branding as a strategic asset in promoting sustainability (Gorbatov et al., 2018). Arruda and Dixson (2007) emphasize that individuals who manage their personal brands effectively can distinguish themselves from competitors and build credibility within their industries, leading to increased opportunities for partnerships, investments, and client engagement.

The primary objective of this paper is to analyze how Personal Branding can facilitate sustainable HRM practices and align individual identities with organizational sustainability goals. Specifically, the study aims to:

- Explore the role of Personal Branding in promoting green HRM practices.
- Examine how organizations can cultivate personal brands that reflect their sustainability commitments.
- Highlight the implications of Personal Branding for responsible leadership and corporate social responsibility (CSR).

By addressing these objectives, this paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on sustainable HRM, offering insights into how Personal Branding can serve as a critical mechanism for advancing sustainability initiatives within organizations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to establish a clear definition of Personal Branding and explore its connections with the aforementioned constructs, it is necessary to define key attributes that can serve as a standardized model for future use. Gorbatov et al. (2018) identify five primary attributes related to Personal Branding: strategic, positive, promise, person-centric, and artifactual.

Strategic definitions often predict a specific, directed outcome for a targeted audience, yet may overlook other dimensions. Bolino et al. (2016) point out that not all impression management is deliberate and strategic; it can also be unconscious.

The positive aspect of Personal Branding is well-received in various articles (Aaker, 1997, 1999; Shepherd, 2005; Montoya & Vandehey, 2002; Rampersad, 2009), which frame Personal Branding as creating a favorable impression.

The concept of promise in Personal Branding originates from marketing, signifying a commitment made to a particular target audience. What distinguishes Personal Branding is the enhanced reception of this promise by its intended audience. This attribute falls within the scope of human branding (Thomson, 2006).

The person-centric attribute, classified as a second-level agency characteristic (Gorbatov et al., 2018; Miles & Mangold, 2004), is particularly significant due to its emphasis on individual involvement – an element often absent in human and employee branding.

Sustainable Personal Branding has become increasingly relevant in aligning individual and organizational efforts toward achieving long-term environmental and social sustainability. Particularly noteworthy is the substantial positive correlation between person-organization fit and dimensions of employee well-being (Jaškevičiūtė et al., 2024). By emphasizing sustainable values, this approach not only builds trust and credibility among stakeholders but also promotes corporate social responsibility (CSR) and positive societal impact (Szántó, 2024). This paper explores what makes Personal Branding sustainable.

As companies navigate the complexities of sustainability, it becomes increasingly important for employees to embody the principles of sustainability in their Personal Branding efforts. This requires individuals to articulate their commitment to sustainable practices, showcasing how their personal values align with those of their organizations. As noted by Arruda and Dixson (2007) and Szántó (2024), individuals who effectively manage their personal brands can act as champions of sustainability, inspiring their colleagues and contributing to a broader organizational culture that prioritizes sustainable development. This perspective is supported by research highlighting the role of Personal Branding in promoting sustainable practices within organizations. For instance, a study on the behavior of students in relation to green marketing found that individuals with a strong personal brand in sustainability can influence their peers towards environmentally friendly behaviors (Babu et al., 2024). Additionally, research on social media interactivity's impact on information seeking and sharing among Generation Z in Indonesia emphasizes how Personal Branding in sustainability can lead to the creation of new values and behavioral changes within organizations (Wangsa et al., 2024).

The rise of digital technologies further shapes the evolution of Personal Branding by offering expanded opportunities for individuals to communicate and demonstrate their sustainability values in visible and impactful

ways. The effective management of personal brands in a digital context can enhance organizational visibility in sustainability initiatives, creating a mutually beneficial relationship between individual and organizational goals (Gorbatov et al., 2018).

Furthermore, integrating sustainability into Personal Branding plays an essential role in strengthening responsible leadership at the organizational level, as individuals who embed sustainability into their identity help reinforce CSR-driven values and ethical behavior across the workplace.

Embedding eco-friendly practices into organizational culture puts Sustainable Human Resource Management (SHRM) in a pivotal role in achieving environmental objectives. For instance, Faeni (2024) highlights that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) policies and knowledge development significantly impact employees' environmental performance in the public transportation sector.

Moreover, Wiredu et al. (2023) discuss how GHRM practices, coupled with green transformational leadership, stimulate environmental performance in businesses. Their study indicates that implementing GHRM practices leads to improved environmental management initiatives and green innovation, thereby contributing to sustainable development goals. As the same principle applies to all aspects of marketing, it should be transformed towards more ethical behavior to address the ongoing societal changes globally (Gigauri & Djakeli, 2021).

Incorporating sustainability into Personal Branding aligns individual actions with organizational environmental objectives, reinforcing a culture of sustainability. Responsible leadership, rooted in sustainable practices, can drive organizations toward achieving their sustainability objectives while simultaneously enhancing employee engagement and retention (Wright et al., 2018).

The literature on Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) highlights the importance of integrating sustainability into organizational practices. These way HRM strategies can be aligned with broader sustainability goals. Sustainable HRM involves the incorporation of environmental, social, and economic considerations into HR policies and practices (Wright et al., 2018). This integration not only enhances organizational competitiveness but also contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), thereby positioning organizations as responsible actors in their communities and the global marketplace. As organizations increasingly recognize the need to address sustainability issues, HRM practices are evolving to incorporate sustainability principles, ensuring that the workforce is aligned with these strategic objectives (Renwick et al., 2012).

Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) encompasses several dimensions aimed at fostering long-term organizational success while promoting environmental and social responsibility. The dimensions include:

- a) Green HRM: focuses on implementing HR practices that promote environmental sustainability (Faeni, 2024)
- b) Economic Sustainability: Ensuring that HR practices contribute to the financial viability of the organization by optimizing resource utilization and enhancing employee productivity (Kramar, 2014).
- c) Social Sustainability: Promoting fair labor practices, diversity, equity, and inclusion to create a supportive and ethical workplace environment (Ehnert et al., 2016).
- d) Employee Well-being: Implementing policies that support work-life balance, health, and safety, thereby enhancing employee satisfaction and retention (Kramar, 2014).
- e) Ethical Governance: Establishing transparent and accountable HR practices that align with ethical standards and legal requirements (Ehnert et al., 2016).
- f) Cultural Sustainability: Preserving and promoting organizational values and culture that support sustainable practices and continuous learning (Faeni, 2024).

These dimensions collectively contribute to a holistic approach in Sustainable HRM, integrating economic, environmental, and social objectives to achieve long-term organizational sustainability. This may involve recruiting employees who share a commitment to sustainability, developing training programs that emphasize sustainable practices, and encouraging behaviors that reduce environmental impact (Renwick et al., 2012). The concept of green leadership further reinforces this approach by emphasizing that leaders who model sustainable behaviors are instrumental in embedding sustainability into daily organizational routines and long-term strategy.

Personal Branding in the Context of Sustainable HRM

Personal Branding has been recognized as a vital component of professional identity, influencing how individuals present themselves within organizations (Karaduman, 2013; Khedher, 2015). This approach not only fosters individual authenticity but also enhances organizational commitment to sustainability. For instance, Gorbatov et al. (2018) emphasize that Personal Branding, when aligned with organizational values, can lead to increased employee engagement and a stronger organizational culture. Similarly, McShane and Cunningham (2012) highlight that employees who perceive a congruence between their personal values and their organization's sustainability initiatives are more likely to exhibit proactive environmental behaviors. Individuals who intentionally integrate sustainability

into their personal brands often become visible advocates for socially and environmentally responsible practices within their organizations.

The alignment of Personal Branding with sustainable HRM is critical for fostering a culture of sustainability within organizations. When employees embody the values of sustainability in their personal brands, they reinforce the organization's sustainability message, thereby enhancing its credibility and reputation in the marketplace (Wright et al., 2018).

The integration of sustainability-based branding practices into leadership training and business education is increasingly essential to prepare future leaders for the growing emphasis on sustainability within HRM.

Characteristics of Sustainable Personal Branding

Sustainable Personal Branding differs from traditional branding through its focus on ethical conduct, environmental responsibility, and social impact.

Key characteristics include:

- **Alignment with Organizational Sustainability Goals:** Sustainable Personal Branding integrates individual values with an organization's mission, fostering a cohesive approach to sustainability (Faeni, 2024). This alignment supports both individual and organizational objectives.
- **Ethical Communication and Consistency:** Consistent communication of sustainable practices and ethical behavior builds credibility and reinforces an individual's brand image (Gorbatov et al., 2018).

Key Messages of Sustainable Personal Branding:

- **Commitment to Long-Term Sustainability:** A sustainable brand communicates dedication to ethical and environmentally conscious practices.
- **Authenticity and Transparency:** Sustainable Personal Branding relies on authentic interactions and transparency about one's efforts to contribute to sustainability goals (Elshaer, 2024).
- **Social Responsibility:** Communicating commitment to positive societal change through engagement with community initiatives and sustainability efforts (McShane & Cunningham, 2012).

Tools and Strategies:

- **Digital Tools and Platforms:** Leveraging digital platforms to communicate sustainability initiatives and engage with a broader audience.
- **Training Programs and Mentorship:** Providing access to training and mentorship that enhances knowledge and skills in sustainability-related practices.
- **Measurement and Feedback Mechanisms:** Using metrics and feedback to evaluate and adjust branding efforts in line with sustainability goals (Walczak-Skalecka, 2023).

These characteristics underscore that Sustainable Personal Branding extends beyond self-promotion and represents a long-term ethical stance that aligns individual identity with broader organizational and societal expectations.



Figure 1. Characteristics of Sustainable Personal Branding

Digital Technologies and Sustainable Personal Branding

The role of digital technologies in facilitating sustainable initiatives within HRM cannot be overlooked. Digital platforms provide individuals with the tools to showcase their commitment to sustainability and engage with broader audiences. As personal brands increasingly reflect sustainability values, organizations can leverage these digital tools to enhance their visibility and credibility in sustainability initiatives (Gorbatov et al., 2018).

Emerging technologies such as AI, analytics, and digital collaboration tools expand opportunities for identifying sustainability-aligned talent and promoting sustainable behaviors at scale. Furthermore, digital technologies facilitate the development of green HRM practices by enabling organizations to implement more efficient and effective HR processes. Technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics can help organizations identify candidates with strong sustainability values during the recruitment process and tailor training programs to promote sustainable behaviors among employees. This alignment of technology and HRM practices can create a more cohesive approach to achieving sustainability goals, ensuring that both individual and organizational efforts are synchronized. Digital tools can support the creation of a collaborative culture where employees are encouraged to share ideas and initiatives related to sustainability. This collaborative approach not only enhances employee engagement but also fosters innovation in sustainable practices (Renwick et al., 2012).

In summary, the integration of Personal Branding into sustainable HRM is a multifaceted issue that involves aligning individual identities with organizational sustainability goals. Organizations can foster a culture of responsibility and ethical leadership that supports their sustainability initiatives. Based on the literature review, further research of the dynamics of Personal Branding in the context of sustainable HRM is welcomed. It can provide a foundation for understanding how individual branding efforts can contribute to broader sustainability objectives.

METHODS

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate the intersection of Personal Branding and sustainable HRM practices (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This approach was selected to ensure a comprehensive understanding of both conceptual foundations and practical experiences related to sustainable Personal Branding. The research began with a systematic literature review to identify key constructs related to Personal Branding and sustainable HRM, followed by qualitative interviews with professionals who successfully integrate sustainability into their Personal Branding efforts.

A systematic literature review was conducted using academic databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and EBSCO, employing keywords such as “Personal Branding”, “sustainable HRM”, “green HRM”, and “corporate social responsibility”. The initial search yielded 250 articles, which were then refined to a final set of 60 studies using predefined eligibility criteria, including relevance to the research objectives, publication period (2010–2024), and a preference for peer-reviewed sources. The systematic review process followed the PRISMA guidelines (Moher et al., 2009), which ensure rigor in the selection and synthesis of relevant literature.

The review highlighted critical themes related to Personal Branding in the context of sustainability, including the role of digital technologies, the integration of sustainability into Personal Branding strategies, and the implications for organizational practices (Szántó, 2024). These synthesized themes provided a structured foundation for the qualitative phase and supported the identification of gaps concerning the practical application of Personal Branding within sustainable HRM. This synthesis also identified research gaps in the existing literature, particularly regarding the practical application of Personal Branding strategies in promoting sustainability within HRM. Additionally, the literature review underscored the importance of responsible leadership and ethical considerations in Personal Branding, suggesting that personal brands should not only reflect individual values but also contribute to broader organizational sustainability goals (Wright et al., 2018). These insights served to inform the development of interview questions for the qualitative phase, ensuring that the research was grounded in the current discourse on sustainable HRM.

For the qualitative component, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 professionals from various sectors, including finance, healthcare, and education, who actively engage in Personal Branding efforts aligned with sustainability. This method was considered appropriate because it offers flexibility while enabling deeper exploration of participants’ experiences and perspectives.

This method was chosen for its flexibility, allowing participants to express their experiences and perspectives on Personal Branding while also enabling researchers to probe specific areas of interest (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The selection of participants was guided by purposive sampling, ensuring that individuals with diverse experiences and backgrounds in sustainable Personal Branding were included.

This sampling strategy ensured the inclusion of participants who possessed relevant knowledge and firsthand experience with sustainability-oriented Personal Branding. The interviews aimed to gather insights into how

individuals perceive and manage their personal brands while promoting sustainable practices within their organizations.

The semi-structured format encouraged rich narratives and allowed participants to elaborate on issues that were personally significant. Thematic analysis was employed to identify key themes and patterns related to sustainable Personal Branding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis involved multiple coding cycles, beginning with familiarization, followed by the development of initial codes, theme generation, and subsequent refinement of these themes.

Themes included the alignment of Personal Branding with organizational sustainability goals, the role of digital technologies in promoting sustainability commitments, and the challenges faced by individuals in promoting sustainable practices. By employing a systematic and rigorous approach to qualitative data collection and analysis, this study aims to contribute valuable insights to the discourse on sustainable HRM and the role of Personal Branding within this context.

This integrated methodological strategy strengthens the credibility of the findings and supports a more holistic understanding of how sustainable Personal Branding functions within organizations.

RESULTS

The findings from the qualitative phase revealed several key insights regarding the interplay between Personal Branding and sustainable HRM practices.

The following subsections summarize the primary themes that emerged from the interviews and illustrate how participants connect their Personal Branding efforts with sustainability-oriented organizational practices.

Alignment with Organizational Values

Participants emphasized the importance of aligning their personal brands with their organizations' sustainability goals. Many expressed that their commitment to sustainability significantly influenced their branding strategies, leading them to actively showcase their involvement in green initiatives. One participant noted, "I ensure my online presence reflects my commitment to sustainability; it's essential for my personal brand and my company's values." This alignment was frequently described as a source of authenticity, enabling employees to communicate their sustainability values in ways that build trust and strengthen their credibility among stakeholders. This finding is consistent with Wright et al. (2018), who assert that organizations that encourage employees to embody their values can cultivate a culture of sustainability that enhances overall organizational performance.

These insights illustrate how Personal Branding serves as a mechanism for reinforcing organizational sustainability objectives by creating meaningful synergy between individual and corporate identity. By actively promoting their sustainable practices, individuals contribute to the organization's reputation as a responsible corporate citizen, thereby enhancing both personal and organizational brand equity (Gorbatov et al., 2018).

Leveraging Digital Platforms

The use of digital platforms emerged as a recurring theme in the interviews. Participants highlighted how social media and professional networks enable them to share their sustainability achievements and connect with like-minded professionals. This aligns with Gorbatov et al. (2018), who stress the importance of digital visibility in enhancing personal brands. Participants also emphasized that consistent and engaging digital content plays a crucial role in communicating sustainability commitments and expanding the reach of their Personal Branding efforts.

Challenges in Promoting Sustainability

Several participants pointed out the challenges they face in promoting their sustainable practices within their organizations. Issues such as organizational resistance to change and lack of resources for sustainable initiatives were cited as significant barriers. One participant remarked, "While I am passionate about sustainability, I often find it challenging to convince my organization to invest in green practices. There's a real lack of resources and support." These challenges reveal a gap between individual sustainability intentions and institutional support systems, suggesting that employees often operate without the necessary organizational backing to fully express their sustainability-oriented personal brands.

The challenges faced by employees also highlight the potential disconnect between individual motivations and organizational practices. A broader range of motivational tools employed by an organization tends to result in more positive evaluations of its organizational culture by its employees (Zsigmond et al., 2024). As noted by Wright et al. (2018), organizations must not only set sustainability goals but also foster an environment where employees feel

empowered to contribute to these objectives. Participants stressed that improved communication, resource allocation, and leadership engagement would significantly enhance their ability to contribute to sustainability goals and strengthen their Personal Branding efforts. Moreover, organizations should actively seek feedback from employees on how to overcome barriers and implement sustainability initiatives, fostering a collaborative approach that encourages shared ownership of sustainability goals (Renwick et al., 2012).

Digital Literacy

Table 1. Key Aspects of Digital Literacy in Promoting Sustainable Personal Branding

Category	Key Aspect	Description	Strategies for Improvement	Potential Outcomes
Digital Literacy	Technical Skills	Ability to navigate and use digital platforms effectively for Personal Branding.	Training sessions on platform-specific tools and emerging technologies.	Enhanced digital fluency, effective social media engagement.
	Strategic Thinking	Understanding how to develop and execute strategies for engaging audiences online.	Workshops on digital strategy development and analytics training.	Increased brand visibility, stronger audience connection.
Continuous Learning	Adaptability	Staying updated with evolving digital tools and emerging social platforms.	Lifelong learning programs, e-learning modules.	Ability to pivot quickly in response to new technologies and trends.
	Innovation	Exploring new ways to showcase sustainability efforts digitally.	Encouraging experimentation and knowledge sharing within teams.	Innovative approaches to communicating sustainability initiatives.
Organizational Support	Access to Training and Resources	Providing necessary resources to develop employees' digital literacy.	Investments in digital training platforms, access to expert mentorship.	Improved employee satisfaction and engagement with digital branding.
Mentorship and Peer Support	Collaboration	Engaging with colleagues who have strong digital skills for mutual learning.	Establishing peer-mentorship programs and collaborative projects.	Enhanced learning environment, increased cross-functional knowledge sharing.
	Building a Culture of Sustainability	Collaborative effort towards creating a sustainability-focused workplace culture through shared digital literacy practices.	Promoting team-based goals and celebrating successes in sustainability branding.	Stronger alignment between personal and organizational sustainability values.

(Source: own work, 2024)

The findings also revealed that digital literacy is essential for effectively promoting personal brands focused on sustainability. Participants indicated that having the skills to navigate digital platforms and engage with their audiences plays a critical role in their branding success. One participant mentioned, "Understanding how to use social media effectively has been crucial for me. It's not just about posting; it's about engaging with my audience and understanding what they care about." These insights demonstrate that digital literacy encompasses not only technical capability but also strategic communication skills that enable individuals to convey sustainability messages effectively. Furthermore, the interviews highlighted the role of mentorship and peer support in developing digital literacy. Participants expressed that collaborating with colleagues who possess strong digital skills can foster an environment of learning and growth, enabling individuals to enhance their Personal Branding efforts.

Such collaborative learning environments were described as valuable in strengthening sustainability communication, improving confidence in digital engagement, and supporting the development of a broader organizational sustainability culture. This collaborative approach not only benefits individual employees but also contributes to building a culture of sustainability within organizations (Wright et al., 2018).

DISCUSSION

The results of this study highlight the transformative potential of sustainable Personal Branding in advancing organizational sustainability initiatives. The findings indicate that when employees intentionally integrate sustainability into their Personal Branding, they reinforce organizational sustainability narratives and enhance the visibility of sustainability-focused actions across the organization. By aligning individual branding efforts with broader sustainability goals, professionals can contribute significantly to their organizations' commitments to responsible practices and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The findings suggest that sustainable Personal Branding can serve as a bridge between individual and organizational values, creating a more cohesive approach to sustainability within organizations. This alignment strengthens both identity expression and organizational culture, enabling employees to act as authentic ambassadors of sustainability. As employees actively manage their personal brands to reflect their commitment to sustainability, they not only reinforce their organizational identity but also become advocates for sustainable practices.

Research findings also indicate that organizations that support sustainable Personal Branding initiatives witness a positive impact on employee engagement, organizational culture, and overall commitment to CSR. Participants emphasized that employees who consistently communicate sustainability values through their personal brands are often seen as credible, trusted figures who can influence colleagues and external stakeholders.

Studies show that individuals who align their branding efforts with sustainability goals are perceived as credible, trusted leaders, enhancing their influence within and outside their organizations (Faeni, 2024; Elrayah et al., 2024).

The Role of Sustainable Personal Branding

Sustainable Personal Branding empowers individuals to take ownership of their contributions to sustainability. Participants reported that aligning personal brand values with organizational values not only enhances their credibility but also fosters a sense of belonging and purpose within their organizations. This reinforces the notion that Personal Branding can amplify CSR-related communication and strengthen the visibility of sustainability initiatives at both the individual and organizational levels. This alignment reflects the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), where Personal Branding efforts can serve to amplify the impact of CSR initiatives (Wright et al., 2018).

Moreover, the concept of sustainable Personal Branding extends beyond individual employees to shape organizational culture and identity. By encouraging employees to articulate sustainability-driven values, organizations create a shared narrative that strengthens collective commitment to long-term sustainability goals. This collective identity is essential for reinforcing the organization's commitment to sustainability, as it fosters a shared sense of purpose and direction among employees (Sarkis & González-Torre, 2010). Findings therefore suggest that organizations should create structured opportunities for employees to communicate their sustainability achievements and incorporate them into their personal branding efforts.

Additionally, sustainable Personal Branding can enhance an organization's reputation as a responsible corporate citizen. This reputational advantage is particularly valuable in a competitive market environment where stakeholders increasingly prioritize ethical and sustainable organizational behavior. Furthermore, sustainable Personal Branding also plays a significant role in talent attraction and retention. Organizations known for strong sustainability commitments are more likely to attract employees, whose personal values align with sustainable practices, resulting in more cohesive and motivated teams. The intersection of Personal Branding and sustainable HRM thus not only enhances individual identities but also strengthens the overall employer brand in the competitive labor market.

Fostering Digital Literacy and Lifelong Learning

As highlighted in the findings, digital literacy is crucial for individuals looking to promote their sustainable practices effectively. Participants emphasized that mastering digital communication is essential for crafting compelling sustainability narratives and engaging audiences meaningfully. The ability to navigate digital platforms and engage with audiences plays a critical role in successful Personal Branding.

Organizations should consider implementing comprehensive training programs that focus on developing digital literacy in the context of sustainability. This includes training on social media, content creation, and analyzing audience engagement.

By equipping employees with digital communication competencies, organizations can amplify their sustainability messages and strengthen employee-driven sustainability advocacy. For instance, studies indicate that green HRM practices significantly influence employees' eco-friendly behaviors and environmental performance across industries (Kim et al., 2019; Pham et al., 2019; Daily et al., 2012).

Integrating digital literacy with sustainability education fosters a culture of continuous learning and innovation. The literature consistently emphasizes that digital competence is essential for adapting to emerging sustainability challenges and enabling employees to participate actively in organizational transformation. Research further shows that digital literacy supports innovation, adaptability, and continuous learning within an evolving sustainability landscape (Jackman et al., 2021; Sánchez-Cruzado et al., 2021; Tejedor et al., 2020; Faeni, 2024).

Moreover, fostering a culture of lifelong learning is essential in the context of sustainable Personal Branding. As technology evolves, employees must continuously refine their branding strategies to effectively communicate sustainability values and maintain digital relevance. By investing in the development of their employees, organizations can create a workforce that is not only skilled in digital literacy but also committed to sustainability (Wright et al., 2018).

Addressing Barriers to Sustainable Branding

The challenges faced by participants in promoting sustainability underscore the need for organizations to create supportive environments for sustainable Personal Branding. Barriers such as limited resources, insufficient leadership communication, and resistance to change hinder employees' ability to authentically integrate sustainability into their personal brands. Addressing these barriers is essential for enabling employees to fully engage in sustainable Personal Branding.

One critical step organizations can take is to foster a culture of sustainability that is supported by leadership. Effective leadership plays a decisive role in legitimizing sustainable behaviors, allocating resources, and motivating employees to participate in sustainability initiatives. As noted by Wright et al. (2018), effective leadership is crucial in creating an environment where employees feel supported in their sustainability initiatives.

Fostering collaboration among employees can help address challenges related to sustainable branding. Encouraging teamwork and knowledge-sharing enables employees to learn from one another and develop innovative approaches to sustainability communication. Organizations can promote knowledge sharing and collective problem-solving by creating opportunities for employees to work together on sustainability initiatives. This collaborative approach can enhance employee engagement and create a sense of ownership over sustainability goals, ultimately leading to a more cohesive and sustainable organizational culture (Renwick et al., 2012). The intersection between individual and organizational sustainability efforts is critical for achieving broader sustainability goals.

When organizations provide adequate support through infrastructure, training, and culture-building, employees are better positioned to express sustainability values consistently and authentically. By aligning these efforts, both levels can drive meaningful change, promoting a culture of continuous learning and innovation in response to environmental challenges (Walczak-Skalecka, 2023; Gorbatov et al., 2018). Sustainable Personal Branding is therefore an evolving process that adapts to organizational needs, societal expectations, and emerging sustainability priorities.

In addition to these findings, Sustainable Personal Branding contributes directly to strengthening an organization's competitive intelligence capabilities. When employees consistently communicate sustainability-oriented expertise and engage in transparent, values-driven professional behavior, they facilitate the continuous gathering and interpretation of strategic insights related to environmental trends, stakeholder expectations, regulatory changes, and emerging sustainability innovations. This employee-driven intelligence flow enhances organizational learning, supports more informed strategic decision-making, and enables firms to anticipate market shifts more effectively.

As a result, Sustainable Personal Branding not only reinforces responsible leadership and CSR initiatives but also acts as a strategic lever that helps organizations build sustainable competitive advantage in dynamic and increasingly sustainability-focused business environments.

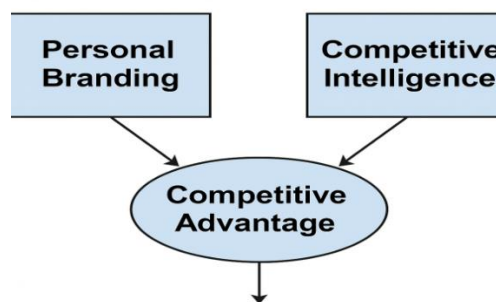


Figure 2. Integration of Personal Branding, Competitive Intelligence, and Competitive Advantage

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper contributes to the evolving discourse on Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) by exploring the role of Personal Branding in promoting sustainability initiatives within organizations. The findings reveal that effective Personal Branding can enhance individual credibility, align personal values with organizational sustainability goals, and ultimately contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The results further indicate that cultivating sustainable Personal Branding practices strengthens the connection between employee identity and corporate sustainability efforts, thereby enhancing organizational capacity to pursue long-term environmental and social objectives.

As organizations continue to navigate the complexities of sustainability, fostering an environment that encourages sustainable Personal Branding will be essential for leveraging the full potential of their workforce (Szántó, 2024). This alignment between personal and organizational branding is particularly important for creating a consistent and meaningful sustainability narrative across all levels of the organization. The study highlights that Personal Branding is a strategic tool that amplifies the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. When employees communicate their sustainability values through their personal brands, they act as influential ambassadors who reinforce the credibility and visibility of corporate sustainability commitments. As employees actively manage their personal brands to reflect their sustainability commitments, they serve as ambassadors for their organizations, enhancing the credibility of sustainability claims and initiatives. This illustrates that Personal Branding is not solely an individual endeavor but a collective force that can elevate an organization's reputation as a sustainability leader (Wright et al., 2018).

By prioritizing digital literacy and addressing the barriers to sustainable branding, organizations can create a culture of responsibility and ethical leadership. The study reinforces the importance of equipping employees with digital communication skills to effectively share sustainability achievements and engage diverse audiences. Organizations that invest in training programs focused on digital literacy not only empower employees to develop their personal brands but also strengthen their overall commitment to sustainability. Such investments can stimulate innovation, enhance employee engagement, and support the development of competitive advantages grounded in sustainability (Gorbatov et al., 2018). Furthermore, the integration of Personal Branding strategies into HRM practices will benefit not only individual professionals but also the organization as a whole.

Aligning Personal Branding efforts with organizational values contributes to a shared sustainability identity, reinforcing the cultural and strategic importance of sustainability within daily operations. This shared identity is essential for fostering a culture where sustainable practices are embedded in everyday operations, creating a strong foundation for achieving long-term sustainability goals (Renwick et al., 2012).

In today's interconnected and environmentally conscious business landscape, sustainable Personal Branding has become a critical topic for both academic research and practical application in the corporate world. As the paper concluded, this concept involves the strategic development and management of an individual's professional identity, emphasizing authenticity, ethical behavior, and alignment with long-term environmental and social sustainability goals.

By cultivating a sustainability-driven personal identity, individuals enhance their credibility while simultaneously contributing to organizational and societal sustainability objectives. Gorbatov et al. (2018) highlight the importance of aligning Personal Branding with ethical and sustainable practices to build a credible professional identity. Additionally, McShane and Cunningham (2012) emphasize that authentic Personal Branding, when aligned with corporate social responsibility, can lead to increased trust and engagement among stakeholders. Furthermore, research by Elrayah et al. (2024) underscores the role of personality traits and educational institutions in shaping sustainable entrepreneurial intentions, indicating that Personal Branding aligned with sustainability can drive green initiatives. Moreover, a study by Walczak-Skalecka (2023) explores how personal circumstances influence brand-building activities, providing insights into how Personal Branding can be adapted across different social and professional groups.

The implications of this research extend to leadership practices within organizations. Leaders who advocate sustainable Personal Branding play a key role in nurturing ethical leadership and motivating employees to participate meaningfully in sustainability initiatives. By encouraging employees to engage in sustainable practices and share their experiences, leaders can cultivate a sense of belonging and purpose, motivating employees to contribute to the organization's sustainability initiatives actively (Szántó, 2024). Sustainable Personal Branding offers a powerful approach to aligning individual and organizational values for the greater good.

Integrating ethical, environmental, and social dimensions into Personal Branding allows employees to communicate sustainability commitments authentically and consistently. Organizations, in turn, must foster an environment that supports these efforts through comprehensive training and a culture that prioritizes sustainability (McShane & Cunningham, 2012). When organizations actively support sustainable Personal Branding, they enhance stakeholder trust, strengthen reputation, and create positive societal impact.

Future research should further explore the dynamics of sustainable Personal Branding and its implications for HRM practices, providing deeper insights into how organizations can cultivate a workforce that champions sustainability. Examining Personal Branding across different industries and cultural settings may provide valuable evidence on how context influences sustainability-driven branding behaviors.

Additionally, studies examining the effectiveness of specific Personal Branding strategies in promoting sustainability can provide practical guidelines for organizations seeking to align their HRM practices with their sustainability objectives.

In conclusion, this paper emphasizes the vital role that Personal Branding plays in advancing sustainable HRM practices. Recognizing the interconnectedness of Personal Branding and sustainability enables organizations to cultivate a motivated, engaged workforce that actively contributes to long-term sustainability goals. This strategic approach enhances organizational credibility and reputation, while simultaneously empowering employees to take ownership of their contributions to a sustainable future.

Informed Consent

The authors have obtained informed consent from all participants of the qualitative research.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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