

## **The Mediating Effect of Environmental Attitude of Employee in the Relationship between Environmental Training and Environmental Orientation of Organization**

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### **Abstract**

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This paper aims to examine the relationships among environmental training, environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization and the mediating effect of environmental attitude of employee in the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. In order to achieve the study objectives, primary data were collected from 108 employees of selected leading apparel company which is operating in Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa areas of Sri Lanka. The simple mediation analysis was used to test the research model. Findings of the study revealed that, there are positive and significant relationships exist among the study variables. Moreover, empirical finding of the study indicated that environmental attitude of employee does not mediate with the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. The empirical finding of the study contradicted with what was hypothesized in the study. Hence, further empirical studies should be carried out to test the theoretical argument (mediating effect) of this study.

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**Keywords** - Environmental attitude of employee, Environmental orientation of organization, Environmental training, Green Human Resource Management

### **1. Introduction**

Twenty first century has been paying great attention in the environmental concerns all around the world (Ahmad, 2015). Environmental protection become an increasingly focus of activity because of the specific environmental threats such as bad weather, rising global temperature, melting ice, accumulating greenhouse gases, encroaching seas, inundated coastal lines and many more (Ahmad, Saha, Abbasi, & Khan, 2009). These environmental threats are considered as the global issues rather than the national issues that lead to international conflict and undermine human health, economic wellbeing and social stability (French, 2010). Hence, countries have increased their interest to protect the environment and ensure a green environment to the future generations.

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In this context, organizations have the huge responsibility and accountability to protect the environment. Therefore, a great attention has been paid by the organizations towards environmental protection and management (Renwick, Redman, & Maguire, 2013) nowadays then before. In addition to that, increased regulatory forces and public environmental concern also emphasize the environmental performance of the organizations (Banerjee, 2002). Environmental issues (e.g. climate change, pollution and energy crisis etc.) create challenges as well as opportunities for business organizations (Thevanes & Arulrajah, 2016a and 2016b). Miles and Covin (2000) stated that environmental performance of an organization improves its reputation and goodwill. Further, environmental performance of organization has found other benefits to the organizations such as financial savings and reduces risk of liability (Perron, Cote, & Duffy, 2006). On the other hand, organizations are facing challenges regarding the adoption of environmental initiatives to improve their environmental performance in order to reduce the risk of legal actions and gaining the competitive advantage as well as gaining the export benefits. The need of environmental orientation of organization not only has the economic and legal responsibilities but also ethical responsibilities.

Organizations take certain initiatives such as Environmental Management System (EMS), Cleaner Product (CP), designing and implementing environmental strategies and programme to reduce the negative impact of the organizations (Arulrajah, Opatha, & Nawaratne, 2016). Further, organizations implement several green practices such as green human resource management (green HRM) practices (Ahmad, 2015), green marketing (Peattie, 1992), green accounting (Owen, 1992) and green management (McDonagh & Prothero, 1997) to reduce the ecological footprint. In recent years, many scholars stated that organizations startup to implement the green HRM practices to enhance environmental performance of the organization (Renwick et al., 2013; Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014; Ahmad, 2015; Arulrajah, Opatha, & Nawaratnae, 2015; Arulrajah & Opatha, 2016). Through the implementation of green HRM practices, organization can improve their green abilities of employees, provide the green opportunities to the employees and motivate the employees to actively participate in the green initiatives of the organization (Renwick et al., 2013). Among the green HRM practices, environmental training considered as the essential tool to the success of designing and implementing the environmental initiatives of the organization (Jabbour, Teixeira, Oliveira, & Soubihia, 2010).

In this context, employees of organization are considered as the major stakeholders in determining the environmental orientation of organization. Shaping and reshaping behaviors of employees, environmental management related knowledge, skills and attitude development, creating environment-friendly innovative behaviors and knowledge based eco-innovations are possible through people and HRM (Thevanes & Arulrajah, 2016a and 2016b). The researchers have discovered through their researches that environmental attitude of employee is one of the important and effective factor which leads to improve the environmental orientation of organization (Schultz, Shriver, Tabanico, & Khazian, 2004; Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014). Further, many researchers argued that environmental training to the employees improves the environmental attitude of employees (Zoogah, 2011; Renwick et al., 2013; Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014; Ahmad, 2015). In this context, there is a need to explore more on the relationships among environmental training, environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization theoretically and empirically. Even though, environmental training and environmental attitude of employee are considered as the crucial elements to improve the environmental orientation of organization, there is only little research that has been focused the relationships among the study concepts.

Therefore, this study fills these relationship gaps in the existing literature. In considering above reasons, the researchers would like to conduct this research study in order to fill the theoretical and empirical knowledge gaps in relationships among environmental training, environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization. Hence, the objectives of this study are to explore the relationships among environmental training, environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization and test the mediating effect of environmental attitude of employee in the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization in selected leading apparel company which is operating in Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa areas of Sri Lanka. This study should be both theoretical and empirical significance. From the theoretical perspective the results and findings are expected to contribute to HRM, environmental orientation and environmental attitude literature. Furthermore, in the existing literature, these relationships are not clearly explored and remained unclear. Therefore, this research study fills these relationship gaps in the existing literature. This study is conducted in Sri Lanka. Findings of the study enrich the study of literature in Sri Lanka.

From the practical perspective, the researcher believes the results of this study will help to improve environmental training, environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization among practitioners. This study especially meant for the selected leading apparel company which is operating in Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa areas of Sri Lanka. In other words, the empirical findings should help the practitioners to understand how their environmental training and environmental attitude of employee may influence on environmental orientation of organization at the organizational level. Finally, overall findings of the study will be especially relevant to the practitioners including surveyed company, operating in developing economics, especially in Sri Lanka.

This article is structured as follows. The next section presents the review of the relevant literature about environmental training, environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization and proposes the hypotheses; the third section provides the methodology of this study. Lastly, we present the findings of this study and discuss their implications and finally, it ends up with the conclusion.

## **2. Review of Literature**

### **2.1 Environmental Training and Environmental Orientation of Organization**

Several researchers have suggested that training can improve the organization's performance (Arthur, 1994; Pfeffer, 1998; Birdi et al., 2008). The reason is training will improve knowledge, skills and attitude of employees and can increase their motivation and commitment to perform their tasks (Jackson & Schuler, 1995; Birdi et al., 2008). Environmental training defined as the systematic process to improve the environmental knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees in order to achieve the environmental goals of the organization (Thevanes & Arulrajah, 2016b). And environmental orientation of organization defined as the organization's general orientation towards protecting the environment and reducing the negative environmental impact of an organization in order to satisfy the stakeholders of an organization and being an ethical and green organization (Thevanes & Arulrajah, 2016b). Jabbour and Santos (2008) stated that superior environmental performance requires the HRM practices that support the whole implementation and maintenance of environmental management systems of organization. Environmental training seems to be an important role of HRM and plays a crucial role in environmental management of organization (Wehrmeyer, 1996).

Because, environmental training develops the environmental knowledge, skills and awareness of the employees. Research also indicated that environmental training is an important aspect to create environmental concerned employees (Arulrajah et al., 2015). Due to that, organizations are investing huge amount of capital on environmental training. Environmental training is considered as the essential tool to determine the environmental performance of the organization (Aragon–Correa, 1998). Moreover, ISO 14000 environmental management standards also mandated the environmental training to the employees. In addition, Cook and Seith (1992) argued that environmental training to employees leads to compliance with regulatory requirements, increase the employees' responsibility and liability, to create positive public image, encourage employees to become stewards of the environment and motivate the employee to participate in the proactive environmental management.

Environmental training plays a major role in encouraging employees' skills to work in an innovative environment that will positively influence the environmental performance of organization (Cole, Elliott, & Strobl, 2008). Without proper environmental training, it is impossible for an organization to achieve its environmental goals (Arulrajah et al., 2015). According to Zoogah (2011) environmental training educates employees about the environmental management, train them on conservation of energy, reduce waste, and recycle within organization and provide opportunity to engage employees in environmental performance. In addition, Ahmad (2015) suggested that environmental training makes the employees aware of different aspects and value of environmental management. Researchers have stated that environmental training and education improve the employee abilities to give high contribution to environmental management activities (Ramus, 2002; Renwick, Redman, & Maguire, 2008).

Brio, Fernandez, and Junquera (2007) argued that progress in environmental management is considered as an employee oriented activity and environmental training contributes to improve the employee's skills toward environmental management of organization. Research has suggested that environmental training improve the employee's motivation towards eco initiatives and environmental performance of organization (Jabbar & Abid, 2014). In addition, environmental training helps to reduce waste, use the resources properly, conserve energy and reduce the causes of environmental degradation which in turn leads to environmental orientation of organization. Therefore, number of organizations providing the environmental training to their employees in order to improve the environmental orientation of organization. According to the above literature, this review establishes that environmental training has a positive relationship with environmental orientation of organization as the first hypothesis of this review:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization.

## **2.2 Environmental Training and Environmental Attitude of Employee**

Several authors have argued that environmental related training to the employees improves their individual environmental performance (Jabbour & Santos, 2008; Renwick et al., 2008; Renwick et al., 2013; Ahmad, 2015). This has to happen through positive attitude changes among the employees towards environmental protection and management related aspects. In this context, environmental attitude of employee defined as the employee's feeling, beliefs and intension of employee to participate in the environmental initiatives of the organization in order to achieve the environmental goals of the organization (Thevanes & Arulrajah, 2016b).

Environmental training is an important aspect in the implementation process of environmental management system within the organization (Delmas & Pekovic, 2013). Accordingly, environmental training concerns systematic process that gives employees the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to meet the environmental management goals set by senior management (Daily, Bishop, & Massoud, 2012).

Renwick et al. (2013) have indicated that environmental training provides environmental knowledge and attitudes of employees which improve the environmental performance of the employee. Environmental training and education create a culture in the organization which employees feel them accountable for environmental outcomes and impacts (Ramus, 2002). Training improves the employee's awareness of the organization's environmental goals (Jackson, Renwick, Jabbour & Muller-Camen, 2011). Aragon-Correa (1998) has argued that environmental training is associated with the environmental position of particular organization. Accordingly, environmental training improves employee attitudes positively towards organization's environmental management initiatives such as prevention of pollution and waste management and many more (Florida, 1996; Hart & Ahuja, 1996). Environmental training can be considered as an indicator to measure the firm's environmental performance (Aragon-Correa, 1998). Fernandez, Junquera, and Ordiz (2003) have stated that environmental training is important to increase employees' awareness and emotional attachment to achieve the environmental objectives of the organization.

However, few studies have considered the relationship between environmental training and environmental attitude of employees in the past. There has been research evidence that environmental training increases employees' abilities to adapt to change and develop proactive attitudes toward environmental issues (Carter & Dresner, 2001). Sarkis, Gonzalez-Torre, and Adenso-Diaz (2010) suggested that environmental training is relevant to adapt environmental practices in the organization. In other words, environmental training improves the employees' positive attitude towards environmental initiatives of the organizations such as recycling, reducing green gas emissions, reuse, reducing energy usage and reducing paper usage and many more. Employees need positive environmental attitudes and competencies which are important to improve the employee environmental performance (Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014). Zoogah (2011) stated that environmental training improve the environmental knowledge, skills, and attitude of employees. Environmental attitude stated as mindset of employees towards environmental issues (Kaiser, Wolfing, & Fuhrer, 1999).

In addition, Opatha and Arulrajah (2014) suggested that three aspects of environmental attitude of employee such as cognitive aspect (believe in environmental protection), affective aspect (positively feeling about the environmental protection) and behavioral aspect (intention to be a serious contributor to environmental protection). Thus, organizations are providing environmental training to improve the cognitive, affective and behavioral aspect of environmental attitude to the employees. Thus, this review considers it as a gap in the literature and wants to establish a positive relationship between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee. Based on the above cited literature evidences, it can be possible to establish a positive relationship between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee. According to the above literature, this review establishes that environmental training has a positive relationship with environmental attitude of employee as the second hypothesis of this review:

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee.

### **2.3 Environmental Attitude of Employee and Environmental Orientation of Organization**

Researchers have studied the relationship between environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization (Ramus, 2002; Jabbour & Santos, 2008; Renwick et al., 2013; Young et al., 2015). Nowadays, organizations are paying great attention on environmental related corporate social responsibility activities (CSR). CSR is defined as balanced integration between social and environmental considerations into business decisions and operations. Employees are the key stakeholders in CSR activities of the organizations. Strandberg (2009) argues that without employee participation, CSR becomes public relations (PR) activities. Accordingly, environmental attitude of employee leads to enhance environmental orientation of the organization and ultimately it leads to improve organization's superior environmental performance.

Several researchers have argued that employee's positive attitudes toward environmental protection and their participation in environmental management activities of the organization lead to superior environmental performance (Ramus, 2002; Strandberg, 2009; Florida, 1996). Personal values of employees impact on their attitude towards economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development (Cirnu & Kuralt, 2013). Harries and Tredigda (2012) have argued that employee positive attitudinal and behavioral changes towards environmental protection lead to improve environmental orientation and performance of the organizations.

An organization can be considered as collection of people. They have to work as a team to achieve their common goals and purposes. Nowadays, in facing environmental challenges and in transforming environmental issues and challenges as opportunities, employees' positive attitudes towards environment are of paramount importance. Hence, more positive attitudes of employees towards environmental initiatives and programs improve environmental orientations of organizations. In other words, environmental orientation of an organization can be represented by its employees' environmental attitudes in general. By positively shaping employees' attitudes towards environmental protection and management through HRM, an organization can improve its environmental orientation and ultimately, it leads to organization's environmental performance.

Positive environmental attitudes of employees (including management) in an organization will lead to establish and implement several corporate environmental policies (e.g. environmental purchasing policy, fossil fuel use reduction policy, toxic chemical use reduction policy, and etc.) in that particular organization, such organizations' managers and supervisors behaviors may also support employees' eco initiatives (e.g. innovation, encouraging new ideas experimentation and learning, competence building, supportive of training and education activities and many more), and ultimately these trends may improve environmental orientation and the performance of the organizations (Ramus, 2002).

Environmentally proactive workforce or employees of the organizations are interested in implementing environmental protection related initiatives and volunteer activities. Finally, these trends may be reflected in their organizations' operations, processes, products and service performance. Environmental issues demand the organizations to improve the product and process related improvements to protect and sustain the environment. Product related development includes practices such as packaging and eco labeling and process related development includes practices such as recycling waste and redesigning the products (Gilley, Worrell, Davidson, & El-Jelly, 2000).

Environmental attitudes of employees are the base for these initiatives and activities of the organizations and definitely these trends improve the environmental orientations of the organizations. Therefore, this review proposes the third hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization.

## 2.4 Environmental Attitude of Employee Mediates the Relationship between Environmental Training and Environmental Orientation of Organization

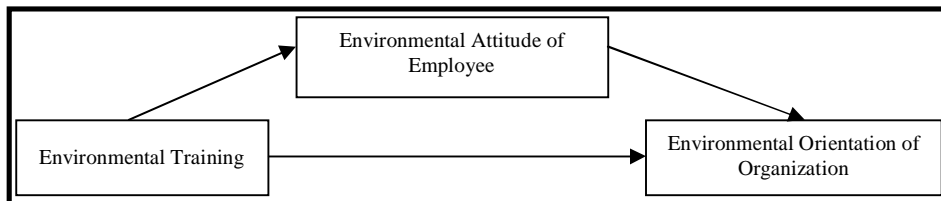
Based on the above cited literature evidences, it can be possible to establish a positive direct relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of employee. In this context, Opatha and Arulrajah (2014) have stated that environmental attitude of employee plays a significant role in determining the environmental orientation of organization. Environmental attitude of employee considered as the employee's general concerns about the natural environment (Kaiser et al., 1999). Environmental attitude of employee has a positive effect on environmental management programmes of the organization, which in turn leads to improve the environmental orientation of organization (Park, Kim, & McCleary, 2012). In addition, researchers argued that environmental training to the employee positively shapes the environmental attitude of employee towards environmental management activities of the organizations (Zoogah, 2011; Ahmad, 2015). Hence, most of the organizations seriously consider providing environmental training in order to improve the environmental attitude of employee to achieve the environmental goals of the organizations.

According to the above literature, this review establishes that environmental attitude of employee mediates the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization as the fourth hypothesis of this review:

Hypothesis 4: Environmental attitude of employee mediates the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization.

Hence, based on the review, this paper proposes a conceptual model that shows the relationships among environmental training, and environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



Source: Developed for this study purpose

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Sampling and Data collection

The empirical data for the current study were collected from a leading apparel company. Apparel industry is the one of the key contributors to enhance economic activities of the country.

Apparel sector of Sri Lanka has been recognized for its excellence in speedy delivery and reliability while keeping quality and innovation at global standard. Further, good industrial practices in labour management and environmental management has made Sri Lanka as an attractive destination for apparels made under ethical labour and environmental condition (Central Bank of Sri Lanka-CBSL, 2015). Based on the environmental concern of the apparel industry, current research is in the selected leading apparel company which is operating in Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa areas of Sri Lanka. Therefore, conducting such a study in Sri Lanka could provide useful knowledge that helps Sri Lankan companies to develop their environmental performance.

The total population for the study was 185 employees in the selected leading apparel company which is operating in Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa areas of Sri Lanka. Out of these, 108 employees were selected as sample to conduct this research by using disproportionate stratified sampling method. This study depends on primary data. The data of this study were collected from the respondents through structured questionnaire. In order to ensure the content validity of the scale used, it is advised to largely adapt the items for each construct from prior researches (Luarn & Lin, 2005). Therefore, 16 survey items for each constructs in the questionnaire were adapted from prior researches. The questionnaire contained questionnaire relating to environmental training, environmental attitude of employee, and environmental orientation of organization.

## **3.2 Measures**

### **3.2.1 Environmental Training**

The researchers used an instrument adapted from past review works of Opatha and Arulrajah (2014) and Arulrajah et al. (2015). This instrument can be used to measure environmental orientation of training (environmental training) in an organization that consists of four question items in five Point Likert-scales. The items are: (1) conducting training needs analysis to identify environmental training needs of employees, (2) analyzing and identifying environmental training needs of employees in order to make them more environmental concerned, (3) conducting a serious and systematic training program which is given to each employee for the purpose of giving needed knowledge, skills and attitudes for good environmental management, and (4) providing opportunities to everybody to be trained on environmental management aspects. This instrument had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.71 which is higher than 0.70. Hence, this instrument had a good reliability.

### **3.2.2 Environmental Attitude of Employee**

The researchers measured environmental attitude of employee, using an instrument adapted from past research work of Opatha and Arulrajah (2014) which consists six question items in the five point Likert-scale. They are: (1) I believe in greening and environmental protection, (2) I believe that environmental protection deals with protecting and saving the natural environment, (3) I feel positively about the need of greening, (4) I like to working in greening and environmental protection, (5) I intend to be a serious contributor to greening and environmental protection, and (6) I am going to be a serious green employee. This instrument had Cronbach's alpha of 0.75 which is higher than 0.70. Hence, this instrument had a good reliability.



### 3.2.3 Environmental Orientation of Organization

This researchers used an instrument adapted from past research works of Bansal (2005) and Chan (2005) to measure environmental orientation of an organization. This instrument can be used to measure environmental orientation of an organization that consists of six question items five point Likert-scale. The items are: (1) paying great concern on environmental protection and management, (2) making lots of efforts and initiatives to support environmental protection, (3) having great commitment in environmental protection and management related projects, (4) frequently discussing the organization's environmental protection performance, (5) having outstanding environmental protection performance in comparison with other organization in same industry, and (6) being recognized by society for protecting and managing the environment efficiently and effectively. The instrument had a good level of internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Profile of the Respondents

In the survey, the gender distribution of the respondents is 73.1percent males and 26.9 percent females. The results revealed that the respondents are young, with 54.6 percent between 21 and 30 years.

In terms of educational background of the respondents, 75.9% of them were A/L qualified, 21.3% of them were graduates and 2.8% of them were postgraduates. More than 80 percent of the respondents are middle level employees. The results also revealed that 38.9 percent respondents have the work experience below 3 years, 27.8 percent of the respondents have work experience between 3 and 5 years and 33.3 percent of the respondents have the experience above 5 years.

### 4.2 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the variables (Jahangir & Begum, 2008). According to Sekaran (2000), the correlation coefficient value (r) range from 0.10 to 0.29 is considered weak, from 0.30 to 0.49 is considered medium and from 0.50 to 1.0 is considered strong. However, according to Field (2005), correlation coefficient should not go beyond 0.8 to avoid multi- collinearity. The correlation matrix shows that multi-collinearity does not threaten the validity of the data. Table 1 present the correlations and descriptive statistics for all variables tested in the study. The descriptive statistics of the study suggest that there are high levels of environmental training and environmental orientation of organization exist in this leading apparel Company. The results also imply that there are high degrees of positive environmental attitudes exist among the company's employees toward environmental protection with mean scores from 3.87 to 4.20 of 5.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix**

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2
1 Environmental Training	3.87	0.77		
2 Environmental Attitude of Employee	4.20	0.73	0.288**	
3 Environmental Orientation of Organization	4.17	0.74	0.527**	0.239*

Notes: N=108, \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05level (2 tailed)

Source: Survey data

Correlation analysis explained that environmental training has a strong positive correlation with environmental orientation of organization. Correlation analysis also shows two significant and weak positive correlations: the correlation between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee and that between environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization.

### 4.3 Simple Mediation Analysis

To test the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization ( $H_1$ ), environmental training and environmental attitude of employee ( $H_2$ ) and environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization ( $H_3$ ), as well as mediating effect of environmental attitude of employee ( $H_4$ ), simple mediation analysis was conducted. This method was proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) to examine the mediating effect. In conducting simple mediation analysis, series of regressions were performed. The first involved regressing the dependent variable on independent variable, then independent variable on mediating variable and hereafter mediating variable on dependent variable and finally performing a multiple regression analysis with independent variable and mediating variable on dependent variable.

Table 2 shows the results of simple mediation analysis. Step-1 which tests the Hypothesis 1 ( $H_1$ ) shows a significant and positive coefficient on environmental training ( $\beta = 0.527$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The result that supports  $H_1$  arguing environmental training has a positive relationship with environmental orientation of organization.

Step-2 shows a significant and positive coefficient on environmental training ( $\beta = 0.288$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). In other words, empirical data support  $H_2$  predicting that there is a positive relationship between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee.

The result of step-3 indicates that environmental attitude of employee has a positive relationship with environmental orientation of organization ( $\beta = 0.239$ ,  $p = 0.013$ ). This result provides a support to the third hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) of the study.

**Table 3. Simple Mediation Analysis**

Step	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	Sig
1	Environmental Training	Environmental Orientation of Organization	0.278	0.527	0.000
2	Environmental Training	Environmental Attitude of Employee	0.083	0.288	0.002
3	Environmental Attitude of Employee	Environmental Orientation of Organization	0.057	0.239	0.013
4	Environmental Training	Environmental Orientation of Organization	0.286	0.500	0.000
	Environmental Attitude of Employee			0.095	0.273

Source: Survey data

Finally, based on the simple mediation analysis, from step 1 to step 3, the relationship between the variables are significant as sig value is less than 0.05. In the step 4, environmental attitude of employee (0.273) is insignificant while environmental training (0.000) is significant. The results of simple mediation analysis suggest that environmental attitude of employee does not mediate the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. The analysis yield results quite different what was hypothesized in hypothesis 4 ( $H_4$ ).

## 5. Discussion

The results of the analyses indicate that a significant and positive relationship exists between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. This result provides a support to the first hypothesis of the study. The results of the current study suggest that when employees receive high level of environmental training it directly contributes to improve the environmental orientation of organization. Environmental training plays a vital role in determine the environmental orientation of organization by enhancing the environmental knowledge, skills, attitude, awareness and behavior of employees. In addition to that environmental training considered as the motivation factor to improve the individual environmental performance which in turns lead to improve the environmental orientation of organization. Further, providing environmental training to employees on environmental practices of the organization directly contributes to improve the environmental orientation of organization. Our research suggested that, when an organization decided to reduce its negative environmental impact and enhance the positive environmental impact, it needs to seriously consider more about providing appropriate environmental training to the organization's employees to reach its environmental goals. This finding consistent with previous studies which suggested environmental training contributes to enhance the environmental orientation of organization (Fernandez et al., 2003; Perron et al., 2006; Ji, Huang, Liu, Zhu, & Cai, 2012).

The results of analyze further indicate that a significant and positive relationship exists between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee. This result provides a support to the second hypothesis of the study. The results of the current study suggest that when employees receive high level of environmental training it highly contributes to improve the environmental attitude of employee. The main objective of environmental training is to shape the environmental attitude of employees and develop their knowledge, skills and abilities which are needed to protect environment in an organizational context. Further, environmental training to the employees leads to improve the cognitive, behavioral and affective aspect of environmental attitude of employee. Therefore, the company wants to consider more about providing the environmental training to top level, middle level and low level of employees to promote their positive environmental attitude. This finding is consistent with previous research that indicated environmental training can increase the environmental attitude of employee (Ji et al., 2012; Daily et al., 2012). The findings also serve as empirical evidence for various conceptual and theoretical studies on the subject (Jabbour & Santos, 2008; Renwick et al., 2013; Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014; Ahmad, 2015). Furthermore, the results of the study suggest that, when an organization is developing and implementing the environmental management system within the organization it needs to focus on providing the environmental training to the all levels of employees to positively shape the environmental attitude of employees. Insufficient studies have been conducted on the relationship between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee. The findings from the current study provide the new knowledge on the relationship between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee. Therefore, findings of the study contribute to HRM, green HRM and environmental attitude literature.

The results have shown that there is a significant and positive relationship between environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization. In other words, organizations can improve the environmental orientation of organization by positively shape the cognitive, affective and behavioral component of environmental attitude of employee.

Employees are key stakeholders in an organization in achieving the environmental goals of organization. Therefore, positive environmental attitude change of employees considered as the one of the main factors to develop the environmental orientation of organization. The positive environmental attitude development of employees in the organizations ultimately reflects in various initiatives and activities of the organizations in protecting and managing the natural environment or in reducing the negative environmental impact of the organizations. In overall, this trend improves the environmental orientation of the organization. This finding parallel to past research works, which found that environmental attitude of employee, has a significant role in environmental orientation of organization (Harris & Tregidga, 2012; Young et al., 2015).

Based on the researchers' knowledge, our study is the first to test the mediating effect of environmental attitude of employee in the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. Insufficient studies have been conducted regarding the relationships among variables of this study. Empirical finding of the study suggested that, environmental attitude of employee does not play a mediating role in the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. This finding contrast with the theoretical argument of the study. Theoretical evidences of the study suggested that environmental attitude of employee mediates the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. Empirical finding of the study is quite different what was hypothesized. Hence, further empirical studies should be carried out to test the theoretical argument (mediating effect)of this study.

## **6. Conclusion**

The empirical data for the current study were collected from a leading apparel company which is operating in Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa areas of Sri Lanka. Based on the empirical finding of the study, there is positive and significant relationship exists between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. Similarly, there is positive and significant relationship exists between environmental training and environmental attitude of employee as well as environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation. Moreover, findings of the study revealed that, environmental attitude of employee does not mediate the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization.

## **7. Implications of the Study**

For academic research, this study contributes to understand the relationships among environmental training, environmental attitude of employee and environmental orientation of organization. Insufficient studies have been conducted regarding the relationships among these variables. Therefore, findings of the study contribute to HRM, green HRM, environmental attitude and corporate environmentalism literature. This is the first study that examines the meditating effect of environmental attitude of employee in the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. Past research works did not address this research gap adequately. It still remains unclear. Hence, further considerations should be given to the mediating effect of environmental attitude of employee in the relationship between environmental training and environmental orientation of organization. The results of the study also have useful implications for top management; especially those want to improve the environmental orientation of organization. Organizations that want to enhance the environmental orientation may need to provide the appropriate environmental training to the all levels of employees.

Findings also suggest that organizations want to consider about develop the positive environmental attitude of employees to improve the organization's environmental orientation.

### 8. Limitations and Future studies

The current study is a cross-sectional study. Therefore, it is important for future studies to validate the current findings in a longitudinal designs could be more appropriate than cross-sectional ones for establishing casual inferences based on preexisting theory and empirical data (Chiaburu, Dam, & Hutchins, 2010). The current study only applies a quantitative research design. Therefore, future studies may consider collecting deeper data from the respondents. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods would provide an opportunity for more deep explanations regarding the relationships among environmental training, environmental attitude of employee, environmental behavior of employee and environmental orientation of organization. This study only considered the relationship between environmental training and environmental attitude. Future research may explore the relationships among environmental training, environmental knowledge and environmental skills. In addition to that, future studies have the further opportunities to consider the antecedent variables related to this study. Also, environmental orientation of organization concept has further opportunity to explore the internal and external orientation of organization. The findings of this study are methodologically limited by restrictions imposed by the study in specific apparel industry, which not permit the generalization of findings. They are also geographically limited by the focus on Apparel Company in Sri Lanka. In order to overcome these two limitations, broader studies are suggested, as in the survey type as well as comparisons between countries. Also, future studies could replicate the proposed model in various industrial sectors (for example, food manufacturing etc.) in Sri Lanka.

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