

Analyzing the Role of Green Human Resource Management in Driving Organizational Sustainability

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Abstract

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) has emerged as a strategic approach that integrates environmental sustainability with human resource practices to foster long-term organizational performance. This paper analyses the role of Green HRM in driving organizational sustainability by examining how environmentally oriented HR functions, including green recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, rewards, employee engagement, and workplace culture, contribute to sustainable business outcomes. Adopting a conceptual and descriptive approach based on recent secondary literature, the study synthesizes contemporary theoretical perspectives and industry practices to explain the relationship between Green HRM and environmental, social, and economic sustainability. The analysis highlights that Green HRM enhances resource efficiency, strengthens employees' pro-environmental behaviour, supports regulatory compliance, improves corporate reputation, and promotes innovation for sustainable development. The study concludes that organizations integrating Green HRM into strategic decision-making are better positioned to achieve competitive advantage, environmental stewardship, and long-term resilience while aligning with global sustainability goals and stakeholder expectations.

Keywords: *Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM), Organizational Sustainability, Sustainable Human Resource Management, Environmental Performance, Employee Green Behaviour, Sustainable Development, Corporate Sustainability, Green Workplace*

Submitted: April 30, 2026

Revised: May 20, 2026

Accepted: June 3, 2026

Published: June 15, 2026

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.21318126](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21318126)



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1. Introduction

The growing urgency of climate change, resource depletion, and increasing stakeholder expectations has transformed organizational sustainability from a voluntary initiative into a strategic business imperative. Organizations are now expected to integrate environmental responsibility into every functional area, including human resource management, to create long-term economic, social, and ecological value. Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) has consequently emerged as a strategic extension of sustainable human resource management that embeds environmental objectives into workforce planning, recruitment, training, performance management, compensation, and employee engagement. Drawing upon the Resource-Based View (RBV) and the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) framework, Green HRM suggests that employees constitute a unique source of sustainable competitive advantage when empowered with environmental knowledge, motivation, and

opportunities to participate in green initiatives. Contemporary evidence further indicates that Green HRM contributes to organizational resilience, innovation, and environmental stewardship while supporting Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) priorities (Bimo & Sulistyaningsih, 2024). The rapid transition toward sustainable business models has significantly expanded the strategic responsibilities of human resource professionals. Beyond managing talent acquisition and employee performance, HR departments are increasingly expected to cultivate an environmentally responsible organizational culture that encourages green behaviour across all hierarchical levels (Bhanot & Gaikwad, 2025). Green recruitment attracts environmentally conscious employees, green training enhances sustainability competencies, and green performance appraisal aligns employee objectives with environmental outcomes. Simultaneously, green reward systems reinforce environmentally responsible behaviour, thereby strengthening organizational commitment toward sustainability. These integrated HR practices not only improve operational efficiency and resource conservation but also enhance organizational legitimacy, employer branding, and stakeholder trust. In highly competitive industries, firms implementing Green HRM have demonstrated stronger adaptability to environmental regulations, customer expectations, and sustainability reporting requirements, thereby positioning sustainability as a strategic capability rather than merely a compliance obligation (Coelho et al., 2024).

Global business environments are increasingly characterized by digital transformation, ESG reporting, carbon neutrality commitments, and circular economy principles, making Green HRM an indispensable component of organizational strategy. Modern organizations are integrating digital technologies, artificial intelligence, data analytics, and sustainable leadership practices with Green HRM to improve environmental decision-making and employee participation (Gaikwad, 2024). These developments illustrate that environmental sustainability cannot be achieved solely through technological investments; rather, it requires behavioural transformation supported by effective human resource systems (Gul et al., 2025). Employees trained in sustainability practices become active contributors to waste reduction, energy conservation, green innovation, and environmentally responsible decision-making. Green HRM functions as an enabling mechanism that connects organizational sustainability strategies with day-to-day employee behaviour, ensuring that environmental objectives are translated into measurable organizational outcomes across multiple industries. The organizations continue to experience implementation challenges associated with organizational culture, leadership commitment, employee resistance, measurement of green performance, and integration of sustainability objectives into traditional HR systems. These challenges are particularly evident in developing economies where sustainability initiatives often remain fragmented or compliance-driven rather than strategically embedded. Therefore, there is a growing need to comprehensively analyze how Green HRM practices contribute to organizational sustainability through employee engagement, environmental performance, innovation capability, and long-term competitive advantage (Lawter et al., 2025). This paper addresses this need by examining the theoretical foundations and practical implications of Green HRM while synthesizing recent scholarly evidence to explain its strategic role in driving sustainable organizational transformation. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, and organizational leaders seeking to strengthen sustainability through effective human resource management practices.

2. Background of Study

The increasing severity of climate change, biodiversity loss, resource scarcity, and environmental degradation has compelled organizations to reconsider traditional business models and embrace sustainability as a strategic priority. International sustainability frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and evolving Environmental, Social, and

Governance (ESG) standards have accelerated the integration of environmental responsibility into organizational functions. Among these functions, Human Resource Management has emerged as a critical enabler of sustainability by influencing employee attitudes, competencies, and environmentally responsible behaviours. Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) extends conventional HR practices by embedding environmental objectives into recruitment, training, performance evaluation, compensation, and employee participation. The organizations increasingly recognize that sustainable transformation depends not only on technological innovation but also on developing a workforce capable of supporting environmental stewardship and long-term organizational resilience (Pham et al., 2024). The theoretical foundation of Green HRM is supported by the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV), Stakeholder Theory, and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), which collectively emphasize that organizations achieve sustainable competitive advantage by effectively managing environmental resources while creating value for multiple stakeholders. Modern organizations are therefore investing in green competency development, environmental leadership, employee empowerment, and sustainability-oriented organizational cultures to improve operational efficiency and reduce ecological footprints (Roscoe et al., 2024). These initiatives have demonstrated positive outcomes such as enhanced employee engagement, lower resource consumption, improved corporate reputation, and greater innovation capability. As industries continue transitioning toward low-carbon and circular economy models, Green HRM has become an indispensable strategic mechanism for aligning workforce capabilities with organizational sustainability objectives.

The rapid digital transformation associated with Industry 5.0 has further expanded the scope of Green HRM by integrating artificial intelligence, data analytics, smart workforce management, and digital learning platforms into environmental management practices. Organizations increasingly utilize digital HR systems to monitor sustainability performance, deliver green training, facilitate paperless operations, and encourage employee participation in environmental initiatives. This convergence of digitalization and sustainability enables organizations to strengthen compliance with environmental regulations while fostering continuous improvement in green performance (Yong et al., 2024). The employees equipped with sustainability competencies contribute significantly to waste reduction, energy conservation, responsible resource utilization, and environmentally innovative business processes, thereby enhancing both organizational effectiveness and societal well-being. Despite the strategic significance of Green HRM, considerable differences remain in its implementation across industries and geographical regions, particularly within emerging economies where sustainability initiatives often remain fragmented or policy-driven. Organizations continue to encounter challenges related to leadership commitment, employee resistance, inadequate sustainability competencies, and the absence of standardized green performance metrics. These challenges create a pressing need for a comprehensive understanding of how Green HRM practices contribute to organizational sustainability through environmental performance, employee behaviour, innovation, and long-term competitiveness. Therefore, analysing the role of Green HRM provides valuable insights for managers, policymakers, and researchers seeking to develop integrated sustainability strategies capable of balancing economic growth, social responsibility, and environmental conservation in an increasingly competitive global environment (Aftab et al., 2025).

3. Rationale of Study

Organizations worldwide are increasingly expected to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship and social responsibility in response to climate change, stringent environmental regulations, and rising stakeholder expectations. While technological innovations have accelerated sustainable business practices, the human dimension of sustainability remains comparatively underexplored. Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) addresses this gap by

embedding environmental values into human resource functions, thereby encouraging employees to adopt sustainable behaviours that support organizational goals. Existing research demonstrates that environmentally responsible employees significantly influence organizational sustainability through improved resource utilization, waste reduction, innovation, and environmentally conscious decision-making. However, empirical findings remain fragmented regarding the strategic mechanisms through which Green HRM creates long-term organizational value across diverse industries and organizational contexts. A comprehensive analysis of Green HRM is essential to understand its contribution to sustainable organizational transformation and competitive advantage (Dumont, Shen, & Deng, 2024). The emergence of Industry 5.0, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting frameworks, and carbon neutrality commitments has expanded the strategic role of human resource management beyond traditional personnel functions. Organizations increasingly require HR policies that integrate sustainability competencies, green leadership, employee engagement, and continuous environmental learning into organizational culture. Despite growing scholarly attention, significant implementation challenges persist, particularly concerning leadership commitment, organizational readiness, employee motivation, performance measurement, and the integration of digital technologies with Green HRM initiatives. These challenges are especially relevant in developing economies where sustainability practices are still evolving. This study seeks to provide a comprehensive conceptual understanding of how Green HRM can strengthen organizational sustainability by aligning human capital strategies with environmental objectives, thereby offering valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers committed to achieving sustainable development and long-term organizational resilience (Anlesinya, Amponsah-Tawiah, & Dartey-Baah, 2025).

4. Objectives of Study

- To examine the concept, dimensions, and theoretical foundations of Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) in the context of organizational sustainability
- To analyze the role of Green HRM practices, including green recruitment, training, performance appraisal, compensation, and employee engagement, in promoting sustainable organizational performance
- To evaluate the contribution of Green HRM toward enhancing environmental performance, employee green behavior, and organizational competitiveness
- To identify the challenges and opportunities associated with the implementation of Green HRM practices across organizations
- To propose strategic recommendations for integrating Green Human Resource Management into organizational sustainability initiatives to achieve long-term environmental, social, and economic sustainability

5. Review of Literature

Miah et al. (2024) conducted a systematic literature review on Green Human Resource Management from an organizational sustainability perspective and observed that Green HRM has become a significant research domain due to its direct association with environmental performance, employee green behaviour, and sustainable organizational development. The study emphasized that green recruitment, green training, green performance management, and green rewards collectively shape employees' environmental awareness and workplace sustainability orientation. It further highlighted that Green HRM research is increasingly grounded in the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity framework, Resource-Based View, and stakeholder-oriented sustainability logic. The review concluded that Green HRM is not merely an administrative HR practice but a strategic sustainability mechanism that supports environmental responsibility and long-term organizational competitiveness.

Anshima et al. (2025) reviewed Green HRM practices using the TCCM framework and found that post-SDG sustainability priorities have revived academic and managerial interest in integrating green practices into organizational systems. The study identified that Green HRM contributes to organizational performance by strengthening employees' pro-environmental behaviour, environmental management participation, and sustainability-driven work culture. It also revealed that theories such as the Resource-Based View, AMO theory, social exchange theory, and social identity theory are widely used to explain the relationship between Green HRM and sustainability outcomes. The study suggested that organizations should optimize green HR practices to reinforce employees' environmental responsibility and sustainable workplace behaviour.

Anwar et al. (2024) empirically examined the relationship among Green HRM, employee green behaviour, and organizational green performance among 144 SME workers in Indonesia using Partial Least Squares analysis. The findings revealed that Green HRM significantly influences both employee green behaviour and organizational green performance. The study further reported that employee green behaviour strengthens the relationship between Green HRM practices and green performance outcomes. This indicates that sustainability-oriented HR practices become more effective when employees actively participate in energy saving, waste reduction, recycling, and responsible workplace behaviour. The study is useful for the present research because it practically confirms that Green HRM works as an employee-centred pathway for improving organizational sustainability.

Miah et al. (2026) investigated the impact of Green HRM practices on employee green behaviour in the university context of Bangladesh and found that Green HRM positively promotes everyday green workplace practices such as energy conservation, double-sided printing, recycling, digital skill sharing, and green initiative participation. The study also identified environmental knowledge management and green self-efficacy as sequential mediators between Green HRM and employee green behaviour. This finding suggests that organizations cannot achieve sustainability merely by introducing green policies; they must also develop employee confidence, knowledge-sharing systems, and environmental learning culture. The study contributes to Green HRM literature by linking Social Cognition Theory and Social Learning Theory with workplace sustainability practices.

Legese et al. (2026) examined how Green HRM enhances sustainable organizational performance by connecting HR practices with environmental, economic, and social sustainability outcomes. The study emphasized that Green HRM strengthens sustainability performance when organizations align green employee competencies, leadership commitment, environmental innovation, and green culture with strategic goals. It further indicated that sustainable organizational performance depends on the integration of environmental policies into routine HR systems rather than treating sustainability as a separate compliance activity. The study is highly relevant to the present topic because it explains Green HRM as a multidimensional strategic approach that supports the Triple Bottom Line by enhancing environmental protection, employee participation, and long-term organizational value creation.

6. Discussion and Analysis

The analysis of contemporary literature indicates that Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) has evolved into a strategic organizational capability that integrates environmental sustainability with human resource functions. Green HRM extends beyond traditional HR responsibilities by embedding environmental considerations into recruitment, training, performance appraisal, compensation, employee participation, and organizational culture. The Resource-Based

View (RBV) suggests that environmentally competent employees constitute valuable organizational resources capable of generating sustainable competitive advantage, while the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) theory explains that employees demonstrate green workplace behaviour when organizations provide appropriate environmental knowledge, motivation, and participation opportunities. Green HRM serves as a strategic mechanism that aligns organizational sustainability objectives with employee behaviour, thereby enhancing long-term organizational resilience and environmental performance (Yusoff et al., 2024).

The literature further reveals that Green HRM significantly contributes to the Triple Bottom Line dimensions of environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Green recruitment attracts environmentally conscious talent, while green training develops sustainability competencies required for responsible resource utilization. Similarly, green performance appraisal and reward systems motivate employees to participate actively in environmental initiatives, resulting in reduced waste generation, improved energy efficiency, enhanced recycling practices, and stronger organizational commitment toward sustainability (Shafaei et al., 2025). Organizations implementing integrated Green HRM practices also report improvements in employer branding, employee satisfaction, stakeholder trust, operational efficiency, and corporate reputation. These outcomes demonstrate that sustainability-oriented HR systems simultaneously strengthen organizational performance and environmental responsibility.

The emergence of Industry 5.0 and digital transformation has substantially expanded the strategic importance of Green HRM. Modern organizations increasingly utilize artificial intelligence, cloud-based HR platforms, people analytics, digital learning systems, and intelligent performance management tools to promote environmentally sustainable workplaces. Digital technologies facilitate paperless operations, virtual employee training, real-time sustainability monitoring, carbon footprint measurement, and environmentally informed decision-making. The technological advancement alone cannot ensure organizational sustainability unless employees actively embrace green values and environmentally responsible behaviour. Therefore, Green HRM functions as the human dimension of digital sustainability by integrating technological innovation with organizational culture, employee competencies, and sustainable leadership practices to achieve long-term environmental and organizational objectives (Alam et al., 2025).

Green HRM implementation continues to face numerous organizational challenges, including inadequate leadership commitment, insufficient green competencies, resistance to organizational change, financial constraints, and limited sustainability performance measurement systems. These challenges are particularly significant in emerging economies where environmental initiatives often remain fragmented and compliance-oriented. Organizations must therefore institutionalize Green HRM by embedding sustainability into strategic HR planning, leadership development, employee engagement, continuous environmental learning, and organizational governance (Saeed et al., 2024). Such integration enables organizations to improve Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance, strengthen organizational resilience, promote continuous innovation, and create sustainable value for employees, stakeholders, and society. Green HRM should be viewed as a long-term strategic investment rather than merely an environmental compliance initiative.

7. Findings of Study

- The study finds that Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) has evolved from a conventional human resource function into a strategic organizational approach that supports long-term sustainability by integrating environmental objectives with workforce management practices. Green recruitment, training, performance appraisal, compensation, employee

involvement, and leadership development collectively encourage environmentally responsible behaviour, thereby strengthening organizational commitment to sustainability. The analysis further reveals that organizations implementing Green HRM practices experience significant improvements in environmental performance through efficient resource utilization, reduced energy consumption, effective waste management, lower carbon emissions, and increased adoption of sustainable workplace practices. These outcomes demonstrate that Green HRM contributes directly to achieving environmental sustainability while simultaneously improving operational efficiency and organizational effectiveness.

- The study also indicates that employee green behaviour serves as a critical mechanism through which Green HRM influences organizational sustainability. Employees who receive environmental training, participate in green initiatives, and are recognized for sustainable performance exhibit higher levels of environmental commitment, innovation, collaboration, and organizational citizenship behaviour. This enhances organizational adaptability and strengthens the achievement of sustainability objectives. Another important finding is that digital transformation and Industry 5.0 technologies have significantly enhanced the effectiveness of Green HRM. The integration of artificial intelligence, cloud-based HR systems, digital learning platforms, and people analytics facilitates paperless operations, real-time sustainability monitoring, continuous employee development, and evidence-based environmental decision-making.
- Organizations adopting sustainability-oriented HR practices are better positioned to meet Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) expectations while creating long-term value for customers, employees, investors, and society. The study finds that successful implementation of Green HRM requires strong leadership commitment, sustainability-oriented organizational culture, continuous employee engagement, adequate investment in green competencies, and well-defined environmental performance indicators.

8. Conclusion

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) has emerged as a strategic organizational capability that extends beyond traditional human resource functions by integrating environmental sustainability into workforce management practices. The study concludes that Green HRM plays a pivotal role in promoting organizational sustainability through green recruitment, training, performance appraisal, compensation, employee engagement, and environmentally responsible leadership. These practices foster employee green behaviour, enhance resource efficiency, reduce environmental impacts, and strengthen organizational commitment toward sustainable development. Furthermore, the integration of Green HRM with contemporary business approaches such as Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks, the Triple Bottom Line, and Industry 5.0 demonstrates that sustainability is increasingly driven by both technological advancement and human capital development.

The study further concludes that organizations adopting Green HRM as a core strategic function are better positioned to achieve long-term competitive advantage, organizational resilience, and sustainable business performance. While challenges such as leadership commitment, employee resistance, limited green competencies, and sustainability measurement remain, these barriers can be addressed through strategic planning, continuous environmental learning, digital HR transformation, and supportive organizational culture. Therefore, Green HRM should be viewed not merely as an environmental initiative but as a comprehensive management philosophy that aligns organizational objectives with global sustainability goals. Future research may extend this conceptual understanding through empirical investigations across different industries, organizational sizes, and geographical

contexts to develop more robust evidence on the long-term effectiveness of Green HRM in achieving sustainable organizational transformation.

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