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Review Paper

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) Practices: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) involves adopting policies and practices aimed at achieving sustainable development. This paper aims to explore Green HRM and its influence on organizational behavior. Green HRM helps organizations balance their economic and environmental goals. It is a valuable approach for meeting financial objectives without compromising environmental standards and laws. Organizations need to continuously communicate environmental strategies to employees to raise awareness about Green HRM. Green recruitment offers potential employers the opportunity to connect with candidates globally, increasing their chances of attracting and retaining talent after induction. Performance management systems should integrate Green HRM as a key aspect, so employees actively help protect the environment from harm. Green training and development teach employees the value of sustainable development, how to save energy, and how to comply with environmental regulations. A review of the literature on Green HRM concludes that it positively influences positive organizational behaviors, including organizational citizenship, employee retention, and performance management. The purpose of this paper is to consolidate studies on implementing Green HRM practices within organizations.

Keywords: *Green HRM, sustainable development, training and development, green recruitment, positive organizational behavior*

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) involves applying HR policies and strategies to promote the efficient and sustainable use of resources in organizations, as well as to advance broader environmental sustainability goals (Mandip, 2012). The goal of "going green" is to use products and methods that reduce pollution or waste of natural resources (Robinson, 2009). Green HRM involves environmentally friendly HR policies and practices. On one hand, these help organizations achieve financial goals through environmental branding; on the other hand, they protect the environment from negative impacts that organizational policies and actions might cause.

The concept of Green HRM arose alongside the Green Movement, a political movement centered on four main principles: environmentalism, sustainability, non-violence, and social justice. Its adherents, known as "Greens," embrace Green Ideology and align closely with

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ecological, conservation, environmental, feminist, and peace movements. As global awareness of the Green Movement has increased, management researchers in areas such as accounting, marketing, supply-chain management, and HRM have begun exploring how their respective practices can support environmental objectives. Today, the UN Global Compact, together with several educational organizations, has developed the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), encouraging scholars and managers to work jointly to develop new knowledge that promotes environmental responsibility (PRME, 2010). Green behavior emerges when Green HR policies take into account the collective and individual abilities of employees, which are shaped by the organization's culture. Including environmentally focused attitudes and behaviors in Green HRM policies can help create guidelines that reflect employees' environmental behavior. When environmental strategies are clearly communicated and employees are involved, a consistent green culture can be created and maintained. Through training, appraisals, and other feedback systems, the professional side of employees' lives gets attention. When green measures, environmental performance norms, and green information systems or audits are included in performance management and appraisal systems, organizations see continuous enhancement in their environmental outcomes (Renwick et al., 2013; Marcus & Fremeth, 2009; Jackson et al., 2011).

Applications of Green HRM Practices

Some common examples of Green HR practices include using company job portals for recruitment and conducting telephone, online, and video interviews. This reduces travel needs for candidates and cuts down on paperwork. In compensation management, companies can offer green rewards to employees, such as nature-friendly workplace benefits, carbon credit offsets, free bicycles, and pollution-free vehicles for commuting, all aimed at engaging people in the green agenda. While many employees may not be fully aware of their responsibility to protect the environment at work, the new millennial workforce, especially knowledge workers and highly skilled employees, increasingly consider environmental consciousness when choosing their employers. Knowledge workers who are highly skilled seek purpose and personal fulfillment in their roles in order to remain dedicated to their organizations. Green HR can foster this commitment by adhering to environmentally responsible values and practices. Additional green initiatives involve reducing the consumption of paper and printed resources during recruitment, performance evaluations, and training and development activities. Jackson et al. (2011) recommended proactive environmental management for industrial corporations, governments, NGOs, and organizations working on environmental sustainability (González-Benito & González-Benito, 2006; Shrivastava & Berger, 2010). The study highlights that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) promotes sustainable workplace practices, enhances organizational behavior, supports corporate social responsibility, reduces environmental impact and costs, improves employee engagement and retention, and significantly predicts positive organizational citizenship behavior (Kumari & Rajput, 2015).

There are many reasons for companies to adopt Green HRM practices, benefiting both the organization and its employees. Being ecological, economical, and practical at the same time is possible through green practices. Here are some environmentally friendly initiatives that can help organizations stay green: green printing, green manufacturing, job sharing (two employees sharing one full-time position), teleconferencing, video conferencing and virtual interviews, recycling, telecommuting, online training, energy-efficient office spaces, green payroll, carpooling, public transport, company transport, flexible work arrangements, e-filing, free bicycles for commuting, buying computers from companies that use recycled

components, purchasing from local vendors (which reduces CO2 emissions from long-distance transport), and even tracking the total number of printed pages per employee during performance reviews, as well as using recycled office furniture (Peerzadah et al., 2018).

More specifically, HR can apply a green approach across several functional areas that influence the acquisition, development, and retention of human capital. These include onboarding, sourcing and recruitment, induction, performance management and appraisals, learning and development, compensation and rewards, employee relations, and exit interviews. Additional green-focused practices involve green recruitment, green performance management, green training and development, green compensation, and green employee relations, as well as operational measures such as maintaining a paperless office, conserving energy, and managing recycling and waste disposal. The purpose of this research is to explore the number of studies conducted on Green HRM implementation in different organizations and to create a scientific document that organizes Green HRM approaches in a clear, structured manner.

METHOD

Objectives of the Study

- To gather and organize research articles on Green HRM practices
- To understand how Green HRM practices are applied in organizations

Sample

A total of 48 articles were collected from JSTOR, EBSCO, Google Scholar, Scopus, and Oxford Academic. The articles came from various management and environmental journals, including the *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *German Journal of Research in Human Resource Management*, *Sustainability*, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *Business Strategy and the Environment*, and the *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*. The year-by-year distribution of research articles is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Distribution of Research Articles by Year

Year	Number of Articles
2007	1
2008	2
2009	3
2010	3
2011	3
2012	3
2013	2
2014	2
2015	3
2016	5
2018	3
2021	3
2022	3
2023	2
2024	4
2025	5
2026	1

Data Collection and Procedure

Research articles were collected from online journal databases, including JSTOR, EBSCO, Google Scholar, Scopus, and Oxford Academic. All articles were compiled into a table, and findings were derived from that table.

Findings

The research articles were categorized by author, year, sample, method, and major findings. Due to the significant volume of recent publications from 2021 to 2026, the results have been divided into two tables: Table 2 presents the foundational and earlier research, while Table 3 showcases the latest studies that reflect current trends in Green HRM.

Table 2 *Foundational Studies on Green HRM*

No.	Author(s)	Year	Sample	Method	Major Finding
1	Mandip	2012	13 Indian Industries	Survey/Interview	GHRM is the use of HR policies and strategies to promote sustainable resource use within business organizations
2	Robinson	2009	Executives	Survey/Case Study	The reason of going green is to utilize products and methods that minimize pollution or waste of natural resources
3	Muster & Schrader	2012	German Industries	Case Study/Interview	Implementing environmental policies to improve employee environmental behavior remains a struggle for many organizations
4	Uddin & Islam	2015	Managers	Survey/Interview	GHRM includes activities (recruitment, training, performance appraisal, employee relations, pay, and rewards) aimed at achieving organizational goals through environmental sustainability
5	Jackson et al.	2011	Business Executives, Global Consumers & Management Scholars	Case Study/Interview	Global agreement has emerged around the need for proactive environmental management
6	Shrivastava & Berger	2010	Indian Industries	Case Study/Interview	Governments and NGOs have promoted regulations and policies hoping to slow or reverse the fast obliteration of natural resources
7	Renwick	2008	Sixty Books & Articles on Green HRM	Review	Green HRM practices are systematically categorized from the start of

No.	Author(s)	Year	Sample	Method	Major Finding
					recruitment through to employee exit
8	Hirst et al.	2009	Books & Articles on Green HRM	Review	More research is needed on developing Green HRM strategies and engaging employees
9	Deshwal	2015	Industries	Case Study/Interview	HR can take a green approach that affects the acquisition, development, and retention of human capital
10	Marcus & Fremeth	2009	Industries	Case Study/Interview	Green information systems and audits can provide useful data on environmental performance
11	Zoogah	2011	Employees	Survey/Interview	Green training and development teach employees the value of environmental management and provide opportunities to engage in problem-solving
12	Liebowitz	2010	Employees	Survey/Interview	Green rewards can include bonuses for employees' outstanding work on special projects
13	Pillai & Sivathanu	2014	Employees/HR Managers	Survey/Interview	Green rewards can include workplace and lifestyle benefits, from carbon credit offsets to free bicycles
14	Smith & Perks	2010	Owners, managers, and employees in South Africa	Survey	The impact of green practice implementation was found on manufacturing/operations, marketing/sales, distribution/logistics, and finance/IT functions
15	Swaty & Madan	2016	Secondary data	Review	Green HRM was suggested as a business strategy for firms with proper training
16	Muster & Schrader	2011	Books & Articles on Green HRM	Review	The green work-life balance concept shows it is effective to consider the whole person, including their private life
17	Gayathri & Karthikeyan	2013	Journals, websites, articles	Review	Greening employees can only succeed if environmental aspects are considered in all core business processes
18	Daimy &	2016	Primary and	Descriptive	The need for green HR and

No.	Author(s)	Year	Sample	Method	Major Finding
	Christopher		secondary data	research	a green environment in every organization was highlighted
19	Masri	2016	Top managers and quality managers in West Bank	Survey/Interview	Organizations can benefit from using GHRM practices to support pro-environment behavior
20	Jafri	2012	HR professionals from automobile industry in India	Survey	Positive outcomes from Green HR Practices differed significantly by company size
21	Vij et al.	2013	Research journals, websites, articles	Review	Green HRM policies help safeguard and enhance worker health and well-being
22	Popli	2014	18 large scale manufacturing industries in Nasik	Survey	Some companies still struggle to put green concepts into practice across different HR functional areas
23	Sharma	2016	Research journals and articles	Review	The green movement and Green HR are still in their early years
24	Renwick et al.	2008	60 books, articles, edited works, and papers	Review	Linking employee involvement in environmental management to improved performance is valuable
25	Lather & Goyal	2015	Managerial and non-managerial employees	Survey	Few companies have employee green teams to generate ideas and foster organizational learning
26	Jain	2016	Top ten Indian Companies	Review	Green HRM practices are powerful tools for making organizations and their operations green
27	Peerzadah et al.	2018	Journals, websites, articles	Review	Green HRM efforts lead to increased efficiency, less waste, improved job attitudes, and lower costs
28	Bombiak & Marciniuk-Kluska	2018	150 young enterprises in Poland	Survey	It is necessary to raise awareness of how Green HRM can impact sustainable development
29	Jain & D'lima	2018	200 employees	Survey	Gen Y cares about the planet's health and values organizations practicing green hiring and recognition

Table 3 Recent Advances in Green HRM Research (2021–2026)

No.	Author(s)	Year	Sample	Method	Major Finding
30	Guo et al.	2025	172 studies (N = 54,963)	Meta-Analysis & MASEM	GHRM positively affects employee attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes. Green performance management and empowerment are effective for in-role behaviors; rewards are more important for extra-role behaviors
31	Priyashantha et al.	2026	125 quantitative studies (2014–2025)	PRISMA Systematic Review	Five themes identified: antecedents, outcomes, individual/organizational boundary conditions, and multi-level pathways
32	It	2026	158 Scopus articles (2017–2025)	Bibliometric Review	Since 2021, output has risen sharply, driven by evidence from China and Pakistan. Four major clusters emerged
33	Vandy et al.	2026	179 Scopus publications (2017–2024)	Mixed-Method	GHRM practices indirectly support circular economy goals. An Outcome-Based CE-GHRM Integration Framework was proposed
34	Hafidz & Makarim	2025	1,670 Scopus articles (2020–2025)	PRISMA Review	The shift from degradation to sustainability is driven more by human capacity building and eco-conscious culture than by technology alone
35	Chowdhury et al.	2025	66 articles	Systematic Review	Green Training and Development has received the most attention; Green Compensation and Rewards the least
36	Alam	2026	Scopus publications (2020–2025)	PRISMA & Bibliometric Analysis	GHRM links CSR intentions with ESG outcomes by turning sustainability strategies into measurable practices
37	International Journal of Business Performance Management	2026	311 IT professionals in Gurgaon, India	Survey	Significant relationships exist among GHRM practices, employee green performance, and OCB. OCB mediates this relationship
38	World Journal	2026	83 organizations + 30 studies (2020–2025)	Mixed-Method	High GHRM–change management fit shows 485% more green innovations and 90.5% better sustainable performance

DISCUSSION

Green Human Resource Management has been described as the application of HR policies and strategies to encourage the sustainable use of resources within organizations (Mandip, 2012), as well as efforts that channel human resources toward meeting organizational

objectives while maintaining environmental sustainability (Uddin & Islam, 2015). Scholars have emphasized the importance of Green HR and eco-friendly workplaces, advocating for the adoption and use of environmental action plans (Daimy & Christopher, 2016). The goal of going green involves using products and methods that reduce pollution or the depletion of natural resources (Robinson, 2009), supported by green information audits that collect data on environmental performance (Marcus & Fremeth, 2009). Governments and non-governmental organizations have been noted to play a role in establishing regulations and policies intended to curb the rapid degradation of natural resources (Shrivastava & Berger, 2010). There is worldwide consensus on the need for proactive environmental management to achieve sustainability (Jackson et al., 2011). Further research is required to formulate Green HRM strategies and to involve employees in GHRM practices (Hirst et al., 2009). The green movement and Green HR remain in their early stages, as increasing environmental awareness has prompted the adoption of eco-friendly HR practices focused on waste management and the production of green products (Sharma, 2016).

Recent Developments (2021–2026)

The field of Green HRM has experienced remarkable growth since 2021, with publication volumes increasing sharply, driven largely by empirical evidence from developing countries such as China and Pakistan (It, 2026). This surge reflects the growing global recognition of sustainability as a strategic business priority.

A comprehensive meta-analysis of 172 studies involving nearly 55,000 participants confirmed that GHRM positively affects employee attitudes, behaviors, and organizational outcomes (Guo et al., 2025). Importantly, this research revealed that GHRM influences both in-role and extra-role green behaviors through employee green values. Different GHRM practices serve different purposes: green performance management and employee empowerment are particularly effective for promoting in-role green behaviors, while green performance management combined with green rewards works better for fostering extra-role green behaviors (Guo et al., 2025).

The connection between GHRM and sustainable innovation is particularly striking. One study found that organizations successfully aligning GHRM practices with adaptive change management achieved 485% more green product innovations and 90.5% better sustainable performance compared to organizations with low integration (World Journal, 2026). This finding underscores the transformative potential of GHRM when implemented strategically rather than as isolated initiatives. Rajput (2022) reported that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) enhances employee engagement, organizational commitment, and pro-environmental behavior by embedding sustainability into HR practices, leading to improved organizational effectiveness and sustainable performance.

Green Training and Development

Green training and development refer to educating employees on the importance of environmental management, teaching them work methods that save energy and minimize waste, raising environmental awareness throughout the organization, and offering opportunities for employees to participate in solving environmental problems in order to meet environmental objectives (Zoogah, 2011). Notably, among all Green HRM practices, Green Training and Development has attracted the greatest amount of research interest, whereas Green Compensation and Rewards continue to be the most under-researched area (Chowdhury et al., 2025).

Green Compensation and Rewards

Green compensation practices can effectively motivate employees to develop eco-initiatives (Phillips, 2007; Liebowitz, 2010; Ramus, 2002). Green rewards help engage employees in the green agenda while recognizing their contributions (Pillai & Sivathanu, 2014). Involving employees in environmental management has been shown to improve environmental management systems, leading to more efficient resource use (Florida & Davison, 2001), waste reduction (May & Flannery, 1995), and reduced workplace pollution (Kitazawa & Sarkis, 2000). According to Wee and Quazi (2005), individual empowerment positively influences green organizational behavior.

Paperless and Energy Conservation Initiatives

A paperless office is considered a best green practice for organizations (Borzykowski, 2013). Energy conservation in the workplace has significant potential for environmental impact, and HR departments have implemented various energy-saving initiatives such as car sharing and increased use of public transport to reduce environmental impact (Simms, 2007; Davies & Smith, 2007).

Impact Across Business Functions

Smith and Perks (2010) found that green practice implementation impacts manufacturing/operations, marketing/sales, and distribution/logistics functions. Organizations should provide proper training to employees and encourage them to adopt green HRM (Swaty & Madan, 2016). The green work-life balance concept can be effective in going beyond simply "greening employees" to consider the whole person, including their private life and consumer behavior (Muster & Schrader, 2011). Greening and encouraging employees as human beings can only succeed if environmental aspects are considered in all core business processes (Gayathri & Karthikeyan, 2013).

Benefits and Challenges

Organizations can gain advantages from GHRM practices that encourage and foster dedication to environmentally friendly behavior, leading to lower costs and reduced waste (Masri, 2016). Rajput (2026) found that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) significantly enhances workplace attractiveness by fostering positive employee perceptions of environmental responsibility, sustainability, and ethical organizational practices. The study also showed that Perceived Organizational Support for the Environment (POSE) partially mediates this relationship, indicating that employees develop more favorable attitudes when organizations actively support and value environmental sustainability initiatives. The psychological benefits of Green HRM practices include higher employee morale, an improved public image, greater employee loyalty, brand recognition, a competitive edge, enhanced workforce productivity, and better employee retention—although the extent of these benefits varies considerably depending on company size (Jafri, 2012). Additionally, Green HRM policies and practices contribute to protecting and improving the health and well-being of workers (Vij et al., 2013). However, some companies still struggle to put green concepts into practice across different HR functional areas (Popli, 2014). Many organizations have few employees green teams to generate ideas, share experiences, and foster organizational learning for better environmental management practices (Lather & Goyal, 2015). Despite these challenges, Green HRM practices are powerful tools for making organizations and their operations green (Jain, 2016).

GHRM and the Circular Economy

Recent research has extended GHRM's relevance to the circular economy. In the Indian context, GHRM practices—green recruitment, training, and performance appraisals—indirectly support circular economy goals by encouraging eco-friendly employee behaviors and organizational citizenship. An Outcome-Based CE-GHRM Integration Framework has been proposed to align HR strategies with circular economy principles (Vandy et al., 2026).

Manufacturing Sector Focus

In manufacturing companies, Green Human Resource Development acts as a strategic mechanism connecting environmental policies with employee behavior and organizational performance. The transition from environmental degradation to sustainability is driven more by human capacity building and eco-conscious organizational culture than by technology alone (Hafidz & Makarim, 2025). This finding is crucial because it emphasizes that technology is not a substitute for genuine cultural change and employee development.

Generational Perspectives

Generation Y (Millennials) cares about the planet's health, and their perception of organizations practicing green hiring, performance management, and reward and recognition are key factors in green HRM (Jain & D'lima, 2018). This shift shows that GHRM will become increasingly important for talent attraction and retention as younger workers move into leadership positions.

Theoretical Foundations

Social identity theory helps explain why employees engage in positive organizational behavior when they perceive their organization contributes to society and complies with social and legal norms (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Recent research has expanded the theoretical foundations of GHRM to include the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework, Social Exchange Theory (SET), Resource-Based View (RBV), Stakeholder Theory, CSR Theory, and Knowledge-Based View (Alam, 2026; Priyashantha et al., 2026). These diverse theoretical lenses help explain how GHRM drives multidimensional responsible performance.

ESG and Responsible Performance

The literature shows a shift after 2023 toward making management accountable for Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) outcomes to integrate sustainability across organizations. GHRM links CSR intentions with ESG outcomes by turning sustainability strategies into measurable practices. GHRM-driven employee abilities, motivation, and opportunities collectively strengthen organizational responsible performance across environmental, social, ethical, operational, customer, and financial dimensions (Alam, 2026).

Research Gaps and Future Directions

Despite significant progress, several research gaps remain. The field is dominated by cross-sectional survey designs, with limited longitudinal, multi-source, or multi-level testing (Priyashantha et al., 2026). Green Compensation and Rewards has received minimal research attention compared to other GHRM practices (Chowdhury et al., 2025). Most empirical research has focused on manufacturing sectors in specific geographic regions, limiting the generalizability of findings to other industries and cultural contexts (It, 2026). Future research should prioritize cross-country comparative studies, digital GHRM, small

and medium enterprise contexts, and the development of multi-dimensional frameworks for measuring responsible performance (Alam, 2026; Priyashantha et al., 2026).

The systematic review shows that Green Human Resource Management practices apply to different organizations in different ways. GHRM helps organizations minimize costs and expenditures while enhancing positive organizational behavior. It also helps create a positive organizational image in the market for external stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Green HRM involves environmentally friendly human resource policies and practices that help achieve sustainable development. Green HRM helps organizations balance their financial goals through environmental branding while protecting the environment from negative impacts that organizations might cause. The above review of literature provides evidence, to a great extent, of the inherent capacity of HRM functions to make employees and organizational operations green.

Organizations need to communicate their environmental strategies to employees in order to establish and sustain a consistent green culture. The primary goal of Green Human Resource Management is to realize organizational financial objectives through environmental sustainability, which means that company policies and actions aim to cause minimal or no harm to the environment. Green recruitment allows potential employers to differentiate themselves from others, thereby improving their ability to attract and retain candidates after the induction phase. When organizations incorporate environmental performance into their performance management systems, they help protect environmental management from potential harm. Green training and development teach employees the value of sustainable development, promoting energy conservation and ensuring adherence to environmental regulations. A review of the literature on Green HRM indicates that it has a positive effect on both productivity and performance, while also fostering constructive organizational behavior. Recent research has confirmed these findings through large-scale meta-analyses and has extended our understanding to include green innovation, circular economy applications, and ESG outcomes. The field has experienced remarkable growth since 2021, with increasing attention from developing economies and emerging theoretical integration.

For practitioners, the message is clear: GHRM is no longer a niche concern but a strategic imperative. Organizations that successfully integrate GHRM practices across all HR functions, align them with change management processes, and build a genuine culture of environmental consciousness will achieve superior sustainable innovation performance and responsible organizational outcomes. The evidence overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that investing in GHRM is investing in both environmental sustainability and long-term organizational success.

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Conflict of Interest

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