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THE ROLE OF GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has emerged as an important management approach for integrating environmental sustainability into organizational policies and employee-related practices. Organizations increasingly recognize that sustainable business performance depends not only on financial resources and technological innovation but also on employees' knowledge, motivation, participation, and environmentally responsible behavior. This study examines the role of Green Human Resource Management in promoting sustainable business performance, focusing on green recruitment, environmental training, performance appraisal, employee engagement, and green reward systems. The study adopts a qualitative research approach based on existing academic literature concerning green HRM, organizational sustainability, green innovation, and business performance. The literature is analyzed thematically to identify the relationships between environmentally responsible human resource practices and economic, environmental, and social outcomes. The study indicates that integrating sustainability into human resource management can encourage environmentally responsible workplace behavior, support green innovation, improve resource efficiency, and strengthen organizational sustainability. However, the effectiveness of green HRM depends on management commitment, employee participation, appropriate training, organizational culture, and the availability of resources. The study contributes to contemporary management research by explaining how human resource practices can support long-term business sustainability while balancing environmental responsibility, employee well-being, and economic objectives.

KEYWORDS

Green Human Resource Management, Sustainable Business Performance, Green Recruitment, Environmental Sustainability, Green Innovation, Employee Engagement, Organizational Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has become an important area of contemporary management research because organizations are increasingly expected to integrate environmental responsibility into their operational and strategic activities. GHRM refers to the incorporation of environmental considerations into human resource functions, including recruitment, selection, training, performance evaluation, compensation, and employee participation. These practices aim to develop a workforce that understands environmental objectives and contributes to sustainable organizational development. Joshi et al. (2023) examined GHRM in the context of organizational sustainability and highlighted the importance of integrating green human resource practices into broader sustainability strategies. Similarly, Miah et al. (2024) reviewed the relationship between GHRM and organizational sustainability, identifying environmental management, employee

behavior, and organizational sustainability as important themes in the literature. These studies suggest that human resource management can play a strategic role in translating organizational environmental commitments into practical workplace activities.

Sustainable business performance has become an important objective for organizations seeking to maintain competitiveness while responding to environmental and social expectations. It encompasses economic performance, environmental performance, and social performance, including profitability, resource efficiency, pollution reduction, employee well-being, and responsible business practices. Traditional performance approaches often emphasize financial indicators, whereas sustainability-oriented management recognizes the importance of balancing economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility. Lawter and Garnjost (2025) reviewed the relationship between GHRM and organizational performance, finding that GHRM is associated with environmental performance, sustainability outcomes, and green innovation, although its relationship with financial performance is more complex. This evidence highlights the importance of developing human resource strategies that support both organizational effectiveness and sustainability objectives.Green recruitment and selection represent important components of GHRM because they enable organizations to attract employees who possess environmental awareness, relevant competencies, and an interest in sustainable business practices. Organizations can incorporate environmental responsibilities into job descriptions, recruitment advertisements, and selection criteria to communicate their sustainability commitments to prospective employees. Employees who understand environmental objectives may be better prepared to participate in waste reduction, energy conservation, and environmentally responsible workplace initiatives. Joshi et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of understanding green HRM as part of a broader organizational sustainability framework. Recruitment alone, however, cannot guarantee improved environmental performance. Organizations must also provide appropriate training, establish clear responsibilities, and develop a workplace culture in which environmental objectives are consistently supported. Consequently, green recruitment should be integrated with other HR practices to create a coordinated approach to sustainability.Green training and development are equally important because employees require appropriate knowledge and skills to translate environmental objectives into daily work practices. Training programs may focus on energy conservation, waste management, responsible resource consumption, sustainable production, and environmentally friendly service delivery. Such programs can increase employee awareness and encourage participation in organizational sustainability initiatives. Verma et al. (2026) reviewed sustainable HRM and organizational performance, identifying green training and related HR practices as important components of sustainability-oriented management. Training can also encourage employees to identify operational inefficiencies and suggest improvements that reduce environmental impacts. Nevertheless, its effectiveness depends on whether learning

opportunities are relevant to employees' responsibilities and supported by organizational policies. Businesses therefore need to connect training with performance expectations, managerial support, and opportunities to apply environmental knowledge in practical situations.Green performance management and reward systems can further strengthen the relationship between human resource practices and sustainable business performance. Organizations can include environmental indicators in employee evaluations, departmental targets, and managerial performance assessments. These indicators may involve reducing material waste, improving energy efficiency, following environmental procedures, and contributing to green innovation. Green rewards, recognition, and incentives can encourage employees to participate in sustainability initiatives and acknowledge their contributions to organizational environmental objectives. Chowdhury et al. (2025) reviewed the major aspects of green HRM and identified green performance management, green compensation and rewards, green recruitment, and green training as central practices in the literature. Effective performance management should ensure that environmental objectives are measurable, realistic, and aligned with business responsibilities. When employees understand how their performance contributes to sustainability, organizations may be better positioned to develop consistent environmentally responsible practices.Despite the potential benefits of GHRM, organizations may encounter several barriers when implementing environmentally oriented human resource practices. These challenges include limited financial resources, insufficient employee awareness, weak management commitment, resistance to organizational change, and difficulties measuring sustainability outcomes. Green initiatives may also be treated as separate environmental activities rather than integrated components of business strategy. Lawter and Garnjost (2025) highlight the importance of examining the relationship between GHRM and different organizational performance outcomes, while Bindeeba et al. (2025) demonstrate the relevance of green innovation in connecting human resource practices with sustainable performance. These findings suggest that organizations need to align HR policies with environmental objectives, provide adequate resources, and establish evaluation mechanisms to assess progress. Without such coordination, green HR initiatives may produce limited results or fail to become embedded in organizational culture.Although research on green HRM has expanded, continued examination is necessary to understand how different human resource practices contribute to sustainable business performance and which organizational conditions strengthen their effectiveness. Organizations vary in their size, industry, resources, leadership practices, and environmental priorities, which may influence the implementation and outcomes of green HRM. The systematic review by Joshi et al. (2023) identifies the importance of integrating GHRM with organizational sustainability, while Bindeeba et al. (2025) examine the relationship between green HRM, green innovation, and sustainable business performance. Building on these contributions, the present study examines how green recruitment, training, performance management, rewards, and employee engagement can contribute to sustainable business performance. It also considers the

implementation challenges that organizations must address to integrate environmental responsibility into long-term management strategies.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the role of Green Human Resource Management practices in promoting sustainable business performance.
2. To analyze how green recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement contribute to environmental, economic, and social sustainability.
3. To identify the major organizational challenges affecting the effective implementation of Green Human Resource Management practices.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do Green Human Resource Management practices contribute to sustainable business performance?
2. How do green recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement influence environmental, economic, and social sustainability?
3. What major organizational challenges affect the effective implementation of Green Human Resource Management practices?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Green Human Resource Management has received increasing attention in organizational sustainability research because of its potential to integrate environmental objectives into workforce management. Joshi et al. (2023) conducted a systematic review of GHRM in the context of organizational sustainability and identified the importance of connecting human resource practices with broader organizational environmental goals. Their research provides a foundation for understanding how recruitment, training, performance management, and employee participation can contribute to sustainable workplace practices. By incorporating environmental criteria into HR policies, organizations can communicate sustainability expectations and encourage employees to contribute to environmental objectives. However, the effectiveness of GHRM depends on the consistency of implementation and the extent to which environmental responsibilities are incorporated into everyday organizational activities. This perspective suggests that green HRM should be considered a strategic management approach rather than a collection of isolated environmental initiatives.

The relationship between green HRM and organizational performance has also been examined through systematic reviews of existing research. Miah et al. (2024) reviewed the development of GHRM research and its relationship with organizational sustainability, identifying environmental

management, employee sustainable behavior, and environmental performance as important research themes. Their review also highlighted the need for further research on social sustainability and economic performance. This suggests that the relationship between green HRM and business sustainability should be examined through multiple dimensions rather than environmental outcomes alone. Organizations may introduce green HR practices to improve resource efficiency and reduce environmental impacts, but they must also consider employee well-being, organizational effectiveness, and long-term economic viability. The literature therefore emphasizes the importance of connecting human resource policies with a comprehensive sustainability strategy.

Lawter and Garnjost (2025) examined the relationship between green HRM and organizational performance through a systematic literature review. Their research considered environmental performance, sustainability outcomes, firm performance, and green innovation. The findings indicated that GHRM has a positive relationship with environmental performance, sustainability goals, and green innovation, while its relationship with financial performance is more complex and may operate indirectly. These findings suggest that green HRM can support sustainable business performance by encouraging environmentally responsible employee behavior and strengthening organizational sustainability practices. However, financial benefits may depend on implementation costs, organizational capabilities, industry conditions, and the time required to achieve measurable results. Therefore, businesses should evaluate green HRM using a range of performance indicators that reflect both environmental progress and economic outcomes.

Green innovation represents an important mechanism through which GHRM can influence sustainable business performance. Bindeeba et al. (2025) examined this relationship through a two-stage meta-analytic structural equation modeling study that synthesized evidence from 137 empirical studies. Their findings indicated that GHRM was positively associated with economic, environmental, and social performance and that green innovation helped transmit the effects of GHRM to these outcomes. Environmentally oriented recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and rewards may encourage employees to identify new approaches to reducing waste, improving production processes, and developing sustainable products. Green innovation can therefore connect employee-related practices with wider organizational improvements. Nevertheless, the economic benefits of green innovation may depend on the costs of implementation, the availability of complementary resources, and the organization's ability to translate environmental improvements into operational and market advantages.

Green training and employee development are important because environmental awareness alone may not provide employees with the practical competencies needed to improve organizational sustainability. Training can help employees understand environmental policies, identify wasteful activities, conserve energy, and adopt responsible work practices. Verma et al. (2026) reviewed

sustainable HRM and organizational performance, identifying green training, recruitment, performance management, and reward practices as important components of sustainability-oriented HR systems. Their review supports the view that environmental competencies should be developed through structured employee learning and integrated into organizational expectations. Training can be more effective when employees receive opportunities to apply their knowledge and when supervisors reinforce environmentally responsible behavior. Consequently, green training should be connected with workplace objectives, ongoing feedback, and organizational support rather than treated as a one-time awareness activity.

Employee engagement and organizational participation also contribute to the implementation of green HRM. Employees are more likely to contribute to sustainability objectives when they understand the purpose of environmental initiatives and believe that their contributions are valued by management. Participation may include suggesting energy-saving measures, identifying waste-reduction opportunities, supporting recycling activities, and contributing to the development of sustainable work procedures. Alrifae (2026) reviewed research on GHRM and sustainable performance, identifying green recruitment, training, performance management, compensation, employee engagement, and green workplace practices as important components of sustainability-oriented HR systems. This perspective suggests that employee engagement can help organizations use employees' practical knowledge to improve environmental practices. However, engagement requires supportive leadership, clear communication, appropriate resources, and opportunities for employees to participate in decisions affecting workplace sustainability.

Green performance management and reward systems can reinforce environmental responsibility by linking employee contributions to measurable organizational goals. Performance evaluations can incorporate indicators such as energy efficiency, responsible resource use, compliance with environmental procedures, and contributions to green innovation. Rewards and recognition can further encourage employees to adopt environmentally responsible behavior and participate in sustainability initiatives. Verma et al. (2026) identify green performance management and green rewards as important components of sustainability-oriented human resource systems. These practices can help organizations communicate priorities and evaluate progress toward environmental objectives. Nevertheless, performance indicators must be appropriate to employees' responsibilities and should avoid rewarding superficial compliance at the expense of meaningful environmental improvement. A coordinated approach to performance management can help connect individual behavior with broader sustainability objectives.

Overall, the reviewed literature suggests that Green Human Resource Management can contribute to sustainable business performance through green recruitment, employee training, environmental performance management, reward systems, employee engagement, and green

innovation. Joshi et al. (2023) provide a sustainability-focused review of GHRM, while Miah et al. (2024) examine its relationship with organizational sustainability. Lawter and Garnjost (2025) review its relationship with organizational performance, and Bindeeba et al. (2025) provide meta-analytic evidence concerning green innovation and sustainable business outcomes. Verma et al. (2026) and Alrifae (2026) offer additional perspectives on green HR practices and sustainability performance. Taken together, these studies indicate that green HRM is most likely to support sustainable business performance when HR practices are coordinated with environmental strategy, employee development, organizational leadership, and innovation. The present study synthesizes these themes to develop a broader understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with GHRM implementation.

METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a qualitative research methodology based on secondary academic literature to examine the role of Green Human Resource Management in promoting sustainable business performance. The study draws on scholarly journal articles, systematic literature reviews, and research examining green HR practices, organizational sustainability, green innovation, and business performance. The selected literature is evaluated according to its relevance to the research objectives and its contribution to understanding the relationships between HR practices and sustainability outcomes. Recent studies by Joshi et al. (2023), Miah et al. (2024), and Lawter and Garnjost (2025) provide important foundations for understanding the development of GHRM research and its relationship with organizational performance. Additional literature concerning green innovation, employee engagement, and sustainable HRM is used to consider the organizational conditions that may influence implementation. The methodology focuses on identifying recurring concepts, comparing existing findings, and examining the potential benefits and limitations of green HR practices. As the study relies on secondary sources, it does not involve new surveys, interviews, or experimental data collection.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study employs a qualitative, descriptive, and literature-based research design to investigate how Green Human Resource Management practices contribute to sustainable business performance. This design is appropriate because the research aims to understand organizational processes, environmental responsibilities, employee behavior, and the mechanisms connecting HR practices with sustainability outcomes. Relevant academic literature is reviewed to identify major GHRM practices, including green recruitment, environmental training, performance appraisal, compensation, and employee participation. The design also considers the three principal dimensions of sustainable business performance: economic, environmental, and social performance. Published findings are compared to identify common patterns and differences in

the reported relationships between GHRM, green innovation, employee engagement, and sustainability. The research is organized around the three research objectives and questions to ensure that the analysis remains focused on the study's central purpose. Rather than testing hypotheses through primary empirical research, the design synthesizes existing scholarly evidence to explain the potential contribution of green HRM to organizational sustainability.

DATA ANALYSIS

The study uses thematic analysis to examine and interpret information obtained from the selected academic literature. The analysis begins by identifying discussions relevant to green HRM, sustainable business performance, employee engagement, green innovation, and implementation challenges. The information is then organized into major themes corresponding to the research objectives. The first theme examines green HRM practices, including recruitment, training, performance management, rewards, and employee participation. The second theme focuses on sustainability outcomes, including environmental improvement, operational efficiency, economic performance, employee well-being, and green innovation. The third theme addresses organizational challenges such as limited resources, insufficient training, weak management commitment, employee resistance, and difficulties evaluating environmental outcomes. Findings from different studies are compared to identify consistent conclusions and important contextual differences. Research by Bindeeba et al. (2025) and Lawter and Garnjost (2025) is particularly relevant to understanding the relationship between GHRM and organizational performance, while Verma et al. (2026) and Alrifae (2026) contribute insights into sustainability-oriented HR practices. Since the analysis is based on secondary qualitative evidence, it does not generate new statistical estimates or claim to establish causal relationships through primary data.

FINDINGS

The literature review indicates that Green Human Resource Management can support sustainable business performance by integrating environmental responsibilities into employee recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and reward systems. Green HR practices may help organizations develop environmental awareness, encourage responsible workplace behavior, and align employee activities with sustainability objectives. Joshi et al. (2023) and Lawter and Garnjost (2025) provide evidence that GHRM is an important area of research for understanding organizational sustainability and performance. These findings suggest that environmental objectives can become more effective when they are incorporated into routine HR activities rather than treated as separate organizational initiatives. However, the benefits depend on appropriate implementation, management support, and alignment between environmental objectives and business strategy.

The reviewed literature also indicates that green innovation and employee engagement can help connect green HR practices with broader organizational outcomes. Bindeeba et al. (2025) found that GHRM was associated with improvements across economic, environmental, and social performance dimensions and that green innovation contributed to this relationship. Miah et al. (2024) and Alrifae (2026) further highlight the importance of organizational sustainability, employee behavior, and integrated green HR practices. These findings suggest that trained and engaged employees may help organizations identify opportunities to conserve resources, improve operational procedures, and develop environmentally responsible products or services. Nevertheless, the financial benefits of green initiatives may vary according to organizational resources, industry characteristics, implementation costs, and the availability of complementary capabilities.

The review further identifies management commitment, employee competencies, organizational culture, and resource availability as important considerations in the successful implementation of GHRM. Organizations may struggle to achieve meaningful sustainability outcomes when green HR policies are poorly communicated, employee training is insufficient, or environmental targets are disconnected from everyday work responsibilities. Verma et al. (2026) and Shaikh et al. (2025) highlight the importance of integrating environmental considerations into human resource management and broader organizational practices. The findings suggest that organizations should establish clear environmental responsibilities, provide relevant training, encourage employee participation, and evaluate progress through appropriate performance indicators. Overall, the literature supports the potential value of GHRM while indicating that its effectiveness depends on coordinated management practices and sustained organizational commitment.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of Green Human Resource Management in promoting sustainable business performance through a qualitative review of existing academic literature. The reviewed studies suggest that green recruitment, environmental training, performance management, rewards, and employee engagement can help organizations integrate sustainability into their daily operations and long-term strategies. GHRM may contribute to environmental protection, operational efficiency, employee participation, green innovation, and broader organizational sustainability. However, its effectiveness depends on management commitment, employee competencies, appropriate organizational resources, and alignment between HR practices and environmental objectives. Green HRM should therefore be treated as a strategic component of sustainable management rather than an isolated human resource initiative. Organizations can strengthen its contribution by developing environmental training programs, establishing clear performance indicators, rewarding meaningful green contributions, and encouraging employees

to participate in sustainability decisions. The study concludes that coordinated GHRM practices offer a useful approach to balancing economic objectives with environmental and social responsibilities. Since the research is based on secondary literature, future empirical studies could examine these relationships across different industries and organizational settings to better understand how green HRM influences sustainable business performance.

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