

## ADVANCEMENTS AND TRENDS IN GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (2010-2025)

### A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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#### ABSTRACT

Green Human Resources Management (GHM) practices are increasingly accepted by researchers and practitioners because of their importance for environmental sustainability. However, detailed analyses of their progress are still missing. The present study aims to fill this gap by reviewing the literature published on green human resources management from 2010 to 2025, highlighting the growth of the field of sustainable performance, green employee behavior, and environmental education programs. An analysis of 85 papers from different databases shows that the vast majority of studies involving both developed and emerging markets used quantitative approaches to understand how various human resources functions, such as recruitment, training, and performance evaluation, can improve sustainability. Organizational citizenship behavior towards the environment (OCBE) has emerged as a critical mediating factor affecting the effectiveness of green human resources management. Research is still limited to journal articles, which exclude conference papers and books, which are more thorough for further research. In conclusion, this review systematically follows the development of green HRM, clarifies its role in driving sustainable practices in organizations, and highlights areas for further research.

**Keywords:** Environmental Sustainability; Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment; Green Human Resource Management; Systematic Literature Review; HRM

#### Introduction:

The idea of green human resources management (green HRM) has emerged as a line of research at a time when organizations are increasingly acknowledging the importance of adopting environmental sustainability in their operations. Green HRM is the process of using HRM policies

to promote the sustainable use of people within organizations. The purpose of this paper is to explore and examine the recent development of research on green HRM, highlighting major contributions and novelties over the last ten years. Broad social shifts in recent times have led governments, businesses, consumers,

professionals, and academics to reconsider how environmental sustainability can be 'built in' to their everyday practices, since it is increasingly clear that social, economic, and environmental issues are becoming increasingly interdependent (Alkhatib et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2019; Usman & Balsalobre-Lorente, 2022; Vinkóczy et al., 2023). In addition, during the past 10 years, companies have shown more interest in green policies and actions and were able to benefit from environmental policies, since they provide a competitive advantage (Wu et al., 2021). These drivers appear to be migrating organizational policies and strategies towards taking a proactive stance in addressing environmental protection at rational levels of an organization, such as finance, marketing, and supply chain (S. Ahmad, 2015). The workforce is not likely to change unless the employees of the organization are willing to work together in accomplishing such a feat (Ángel del Brío et al., 2008). Accordingly, GHRM included environmental preservation in human resources management (Ansari et al., 2021). Environmental sustainability is achieved at the individual, organizational, and societal levels by strategic use of organizational resources in line with sustainability objectives as defined in human resources policies (Farrukh et al., 2020). Organizations can support the introduction of green practices through human resources functions that aim to increase the skills of their staff through GHRM processes integrated with recruitment, training, and compensation. A prominent aspect of the impact of the GHRM is the creation of a sustainable culture by encouraging employees to contribute to meeting the environmental objectives of the organization (Renwick et al., 2013). The growing interest in sustainability has led practitioners and researchers to study the human resources management of micro-level environmental management, but with a far-reaching impact on the economy and society (Wehrmeyer, 2017). If a company is to take a more environmentally conscious approach to its activities, its employees are key, said Wehrmeyer (p. 56) The GHRM is therefore multidisciplinary in nature, incorporating management, sociology, economics, and psychology Within the framework

of the GHRM, the HR policy is developed to respond to the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the company, including employee protection, health and safety and the social justice of the company, at the level of the Asian companies (Renwick et al., 2013). This study aims to analyse the development and patterns of citations and influential sources in the GHRM literature while exploring its sociological implications outside the field. Synthesis of knowledge through bibliographic analysis will facilitate the identification of gaps in GHRM research and unexplored opportunities. This study also addresses the shortcomings of previous single database studies by integrating data from the Web of Science and Scopus databases. By integrating these data sets, the aim of this research is to analyze GHRM in more detail, in order to improve understanding and insights in this emerging field. The findings will contribute to the identification of key players and key research agendas in the field of GHRM, and will also serve as a reference for researchers conducting future research in this field.

RQ 1: How has research in green HRM developed over time?

RQ 2: How do the different focus areas in the current literature on green HRM intersect?

The structure of this paper is as follows: Section 2 explains the literature review and methodology. The findings are revealed in Section 3. Section 4 provides an overview of the review and discussion. The conclusion is in Section 5, and the contribution as well as the future work of the present study, and the progress of the follow-up study that is planned.

### **Review method**

This paper's objective is to review, summarize, and draw conclusions from the body of research on GreenHRM using a systematic review methodology (Tranfield et al., 2003). The intention behind this survey is to revisit literature related to Green HRM and classify it into various thematic categories, which may act as the opportunity areas for future research. The approach of this research is an evolution of (Hohenstein et al., 2014). This review, which is

confined to a given time, initiates with database identification and selection, and ends with article selection and categorisation, as has been indicated previously, by four main phases.

#### **Time horizon for the selection of papers**

Only journal articles published between 2010 and the beginning of 2025 were included in this systematic review and evaluation of the literature. In this case, 2010 has been chosen as a starting point as it was around the time when green human resources management (green HRM) was attracting considerable interest from both academics and practitioners (Mtembu, 2017). It was also a period when the focus shifted to a sustainable environment, and the green perspective was adopted in HRM (Valentin, 2017).

#### **Database selection.**

The study looked through a number of online databases to locate current and pertinent research on green HRM. Articles were taken from reputable academic databases like Google Scholar, the Web of Science, and Scopus, and research was done in English. This research is not intended to be exhaustive or exhaustive. Although much effort has been put into including as many articles as possible, recognition of the efforts does not mean that the text is complete.

#### **Search Criteria**

The present study is structured according to a systematic review framework, as illustrated in Figure 1 and explained in the narrative that follows. The first step was to set up keywords as search parameters in different online databases.

Keywords include: environmental sustainability, environmental citizenship, environmental management, systematic literature review, environmental management, and environmental training. Consequently, all articles published in the major journals between 2010 and 2025 have been reviewed. This resulted in a backlog of 85 articles.

Reading the article abstracts allowed for a more thorough evaluation of the journal articles' applicability to the Green HRM. In order to maintain focus and reduce bias, articles that were not relevant to the study were removed. Furthermore, we have removed some redundancies so that no paper contributes to our analysis more than once (Amjad et al., 2021). In all, 90 articles were submitted for consideration through this process. These articles are chosen based on their novelty, defined objectives, and the relevance of the subject. The next step was to make a ranking system of these classifications.

#### **Article classifications**

Since Excel was used to collect everything written in these 85 journal titles, we have compiled a reference list of all publications. It was an easier way of analyzing the dataset for those interested in inferences. After the first evaluation, contributions are classified into five main groups that have been defined in previous work.

#### **Search Criteria**

These articles were collected by the search terms “green HRM”, “sustainable HRM”, and “environmental management”.

Findings

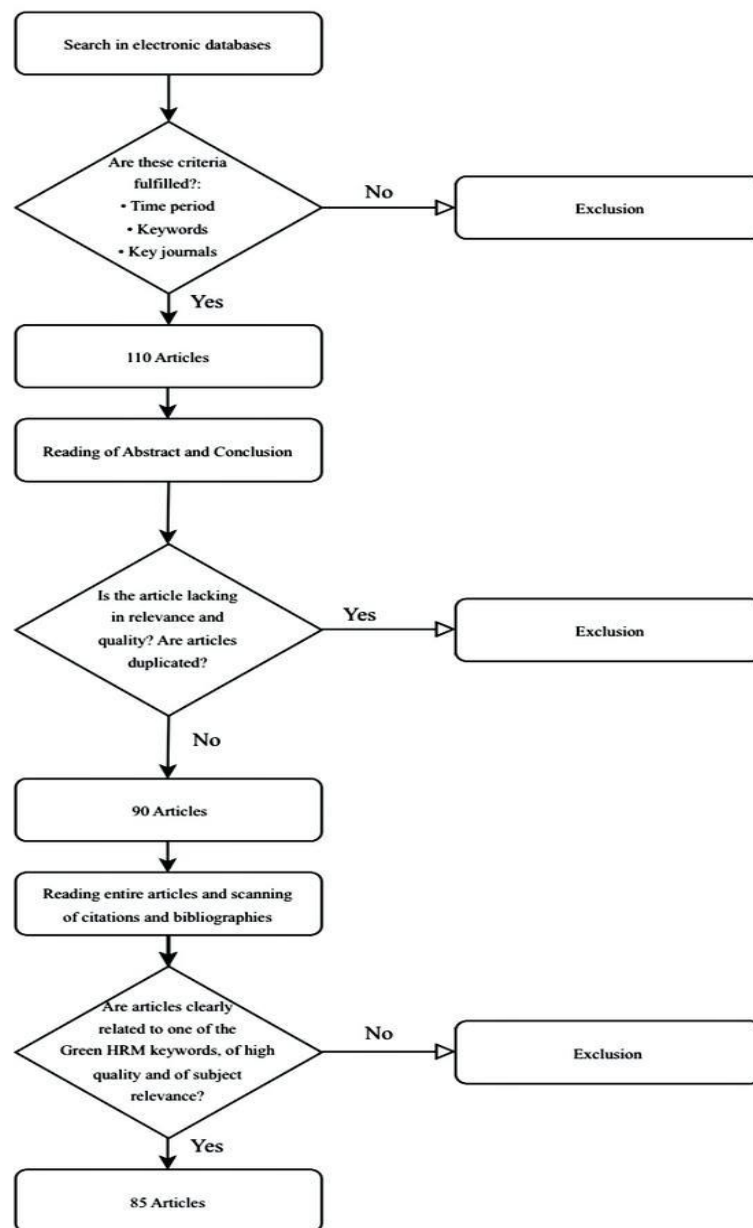


Figure 1. Summary of article selection process

In relation to Green HRM, a Systematic Review of 85 papers was performed and classified into five focus areas. Table 1 lists the key findings of the

included studies according to the focus areas. The most important parameters are described below.

**Focus Area 1: GHRM Practices and Organizational Sustainability**

In this regard, this chapter examines how green recruitment, training, and performance appraisal

would affect organizational sustainable performance in the new paradigm of GHRM (Amjad et al., 2021).

**Table 1. Key findings of each analyzed Green HRM study**

Focus area	Author's	Findings
GHRM Practices and Organizational Sustainability	(Renwick et al., 2013)	GHRM practices, including recruitment, training, and performance management, help organizations to reduce waste, pollution, and carbon emissions. They also attract environmentally conscious staff and improve the environmental performance of the organization.
	Zaida, A.A., Jaaron, A.A.M., and Bon, A.T. (2018)	Integrated GHRM practices (green recruitment, training, participation, and remuneration) combined with internal practices for green supply chain management significantly improve environmental, social, and economic sustainability outcomes.
	Benevene, P., and Buonomo, I. (2020)	GHRM promotes the sustainability of an organization by improving environmental performance and encouraging green employee behavior through strategic human resources practices such as green recruitment and training.
	(Jabbour & De Sousa Jabbour, 2016)	GHRM practices in line with sustainability strategies promote environmental and social sustainability and help organizations achieve wider environmental objectives.
	Choudhary, P., and Datta, A. (2022)	GHRM practices in the hospitality sector reinforce sustainability results through employee involvement, green recruitment and training initiatives, and address environmental challenges.
	(Ren et al., 2017)	Governance and human resources management practices in the Asia-Pacific region improve environmental performance by integrating environmental management into human resources policies and processes at all levels of the organization.
	Alghamdi, S. (2021)	Green performance management increases environmental awareness and aligns employee actions with the sustainability objectives of the organization.
	Amrutha, V.N., and Geetha, S.N. (2019)	Green recruitment and reward practices, for example, promote social sustainability by improving the well-being, equity, and inclusion of employees.
	Kramar, R. (2014)	Sustainable HRM integrates environmental, social, and financial results into HR strategies and provides long-term competitive benefits for organizations.
	Renwick et al. (2016)	By incorporating GHRM practices into their environmental sustainability initiatives, multinational corporations can enhance the results of their global sustainability efforts.
	(Muster & Schrader, 2011)	Green working-life balance policies encourage employees to adopt environmentally friendly work and personal behavior, increasing the sustainability of the organization.
Milliman (2013)	Organizations adopting GHRM practices see improved environmental and economic results through reduced waste and increased environmental awareness among staff.	

	(Mishra, Sarkar, & Kiranmai, 2014)	In Indian public enterprises, good human resources management practices are underutilized but have a significant potential to increase environmental sustainability through the integration of greening HR.
	(Guerci, Longoni, & Luzzini, 2016)	Stakeholder pressure from regulators and customers is forcing organizations to adopt GHRM practices, improving environmental and operational performance.
	(Jabbour & Renwick, 2018)	Aligning human resources practices with strategic environmental objectives promotes organizational sustainability and enhances environmental and economic results.
	Hina Zafar & Yuliani Suseno (2024)	Through the mediation process, the GHRM practices are linked to environmentally friendly behavior through the organization's pride in and green mental atmosphere. Strengthening the mechanisms of good governance.
	Aisha AlKetbi & John Rice (2024)	The positive impact of GHRM on green attitudes and green performance of organizations. Finds gaps in the understanding of customer and employee satisfaction.
	Masud et al. (2024)	GHRM promotes green innovation and environmental sustainability, emphasizing the role of a green organizational culture in developing economies.
	Al-Alawneh et al. (2024)	Demonstrates how GHRM practices enhance environmental performance, mediated by a supportive organizational culture.
	Mousa & Othman (2024)	Green HR practices improve sustainability results but face cost-related resistance and a lack of training.
Impact of GHRM on Employee Behavior	Pham, N.T., Hoang, H.T., and Phan, Q.P.T. (2019)	Green recruitment, training, and employee involvement encourage environmentally friendly behavior and improve the sustainability of the workplace.
	Jabbour, C.J.C., and Renwick, D.W.S. (2018)	The GHRM promotes a green corporate culture and encourages employees to adopt environmentally responsible behavior.
	Miah, M., Szabó-Szentgróti, G., and Walter, V. (2024)	Green training and leadership have a positive impact on employee commitment to sustainability objectives through increased awareness and motivation.
	Fazlurrahman, H., Wahyudi, M.F., and Arifah, I.D.C. (2021)	GHRM practices such as green training encourage environmentally friendly behavior and enhance the success of environmental programs in the hospitality sector.
	Ullah, M. (2017)	A green culture encourages employees to take green initiatives and thus improves the efficiency of the organization.
	Tang, G., Ren, S., and Jackson, S.E. (2017)	GHRM practices such as green training and appraisals motivate employees to meet green performance targets.
	Tariq, S. et al. (2016)	The empowerment of employees through GHRM processes increases their motivation and commitment to environmental initiatives.
	Ahmad, S. (2015)	GHRM practices like green rewards and involvement enhance employees' environmental awareness and behaviors.
	Chen, Y.S., and Wang, L. (2013)	Green innovation and creativity amongst staff are driven by GHRM practices promoting environmental consciousness.

	Milliman, J. (2013)	Motivating employees through green rewards improves their participation in environmental programs.
	Amrutha, V.N., and Geetha, S.N. (2019)	GHRM practices have a positive impact on social sustainability outcomes such as equity and well-being.
	Ren, S. et al. (2017)	GHRM will lead to stronger green behavior and better environmental performance through the creation of a green working culture.
	Zoogah, D.B. (2011)	Cognitive and incentive factors influence the green decisions of HR managers and drive employee involvement in sustainability.
	Cherian, J., and Jacob, J. (2012)	Green training and human resources practices increase the environmental awareness and commitment of employees.
	Tang, G. et al. (2017)	Effective green performance appraisals inspire employees to take proactive environmental actions.
Theoretical Frameworks Supporting GHRM	(Renwick, Jabbour, Muller-Camen, Redman, & Wilkinson. (2016)	The AMO theory explains how GHRM practices improve the aptitude, motivation, and participation of staff in sustainability initiatives.
	Zaida, A.A., Jaaron, A.A.M., and Bon, A.T. (2018)	The Triple Bottom Line framework links the GHRM to the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainability.
	Miah, M., Szabó-Szentgróti, G., and Walter, V. (2024)	AMO and Resource-Based View theories underline the potential of GHRM to improve sustainability performance.
	Ren, S., Tang, G., and Jackson, S.E. (2017)	Social cognitive and institutional theories explain how organizations incorporate GHRM into their environmental practices.
	Jabbour, C.J.C., and Sousa Jabbour, A.B.L. (2016)	The theory of stakeholders emphasizes the role of external pressures in shaping the adoption of GHRM.
	Guerci, Longoni, & Luzzini. (2016)	Stakeholder pressures mediate relationships between GHRM practices and performance, influencing outcomes.
	(Mishra, Sarkar, & Kiranmai. (2014)	AMO theory demonstrates the role of GHRM in developing skills and motivation for environmental practices.
	Kramar, R. (2014)	Sustainable HRM focuses on balancing long-term ecological, social, and financial goals.
	Tang, G., and Ren, S. (2017)	Social exchange theory explains how GHRM practices build trust and commitment on the part of employees.
	Muster & Schrader. (2011)	Work-Life Balance Theory shows how green HR policies can retain motivated employees.
Zaida, A.A., Jaaron, A.A.M., and Bon, A.T. (2018)	A Resource-based view highlights the role of GHRM in achieving a competitive advantage.	

	Cherian, J., and Jacob, J. (2012)	Environmental management theory integrates green HRM into a company's sustainability strategy.
	Zoogah, D.B. (2011)	Cognitive Social Information Processing Theory highlights how HR managers influence green decision-making.
	Renwick, Redman, & Maguire. (2013)	AMO theory aligns HR practices with employee capabilities and sustainability outcomes.
	Jabbour & Renwick. (2018)	Multi-theoretical approaches enhance understanding of GHRM's strategic potential.
	Sathasivam et al. (2023)	Developed a holistic model linking GHRM to sustainable performance, emphasizing theoretical frameworks such as the RBV and the AMO. Shortfalls in the measurement of outcomes at the level of individual employees have been highlighted.
	Huirong Xie & Teck Chai Lau (2023)	Synthesized 141 empirical studies, which revealed the link between the dimensions of GHRM and the results on sustainability, and stressed the need for diversified cultural and sectoral research.
	F.M. & M.A. (2023)	GHRM enhances employee awareness and pride, reduces costs, and improves organizational image. Research gaps exist in the application across diverse sectors.
Barriers and Challenges in Implementing GHRM	Alreahi, M., Bujdosó, Z., and Akaak, A. (2022)	High implementation costs and resistance to change are significant challenges in the hotel industry.
	Mishra, Sarkar, & Kiranmai. (2014)	Limited resources and low employee engagement are hampering the adoption of the GHRM in Indian public enterprises.
	Miah, M., Szabó-Szentgróti, G., and Walter, V. (2024)	Lack of leadership support and employee awareness are major barriers to effective GHRM implementation.
	Guerci, Longoni, & Luzzini. (2016)	Regulatory and market forces create difficulties in the adoption of GHRM procedures.
	Kramar, R. (2014)	Contextual and cultural challenges limit GHRM implementation in developing economies.
	Ullah, M. (2017)	Resource constraints and lack of expertise are barriers to the uptake of the GHRM in developing countries.
	Ren, S. et al. (2017)	Resistance to organizational change and a lack of green skills impede GHRM practices.
	Amrutha, V.N., and Geetha, S.N. (2019)	The high costs of implementing GHRM discourage many organizations.
	Zaida, A.A., Jaaron, A.A.M., and Bon, A.T. (2018)	The mismatch between human resources and sustainability objectives creates obstacles.
	Chen, Y.S., and Wang, L. (2013)	Developing green skills is limited by inadequate training frameworks.

	Benevene, P., and Buonomo, I. (2020)	Organizational resistance is slowing the adoption of the GHRM.
	Tang, G., and Ren, S. (2017)	Lack of leadership commitment and stakeholder engagement hinders GHRM's success.
	Zoogah, D.B. (2011)	Cognitive biases prevent human resources managers from prioritizing environmentally friendly strategies.
	Cherian, J., and Jacob, J. (2012)	Inefficient training programs limit the effectiveness of GHRM practices.
	Renwick, Jabbour, Muller-Camen, Redman, & Wilkinson. (2016)	Institutional gaps and regulatory challenges slow the adoption of GHRM.
	John Rice & Aisha AlKetbi (2024)	Identified resistance to change and cost barriers as key challenges. Recommendations include stronger leadership engagement and resource commitment.
	Aggarwal and Agarwala (2024)	Obstacles include weak regulatory frameworks and resource constraints. Highlights management support as a critical enabler to overcome these challenges.
Future Research Directions in GHRM	Ren, Tang, & Jackson. (2018)	Improve conceptual models and measurement techniques for GHRM.
	Pham, N.T., Hoang, H.T., and Phan, Q.P.T. (2019)	Explore the role of green creativity and innovation in achieving the objectives of sustainability.
	Miah, M., Szabó-Szentgróti, G., and Walter, V. (2024)	Investigate GHRM's impact on achieving social and economic sustainability.
	Benevene, P., and Buonomo, I. (2020)	Conduct evidence-based studies on underexplored GHRM practices.
	Jabbour & Renwick.(2018)	Examine cultural and contextual influences on GHRM globally.
	Amrutha, V.N., and Geetha, S.N. (2019)	Research GHRM's role in advancing social equity and sustainability.
	Alreahi, M., Bujdosó, Z., and Akaak, A. (2022)	Study barriers to GHRM in SMEs and family businesses.
	Guerci, Longoni, & Luzzini. (2016)	Investigate the role of stakeholders in driving GHRM practices.
	Ullah, M. (2017)	Explore GHRM adoption in low-income and underdeveloped economies.
	Zaida, A.A., Jaaron, A.A.M., and Bon, A.T. (2018)	Research technology-enabled GHRM in Industry 4.0 contexts.
Milliman, J. (2013)	Examine the economic benefits of implementing GHRM strategies.	

	Renwick et al. (2016)	Expand GHRM research into less-represented national contexts.
	Chen, Y.S., and Wang, L. (2013)	Study the impact of advanced technology on GHRM adoption.
	Mishra, Sarkar, & Kiranmai.(2014)	Explore public-private collaborations in advancing GHRM.
	Kramar, R. (2014)	Develop frameworks to address contextual and theoretical gaps in GHRM.

These practices are instrumental for the improvement of the environmental impact and the “ecological performance” of the organization due to the mobilization of employee and organizational efforts towards sustainable ecological productivity (Malik et al., 2021). ). Other authors also observed that GHRM is gaining importance in highly regulated, environmentally driven industries, positively impacting organizational performance and eco-friendly footprint (Umer & Saeed, n.d.). The major aim of GHRM is to enhance a sustainable change to be made in green corporate behaviors, which greatly helps in accomplishing the strategic corporate goals and sustaining eco-friendly operations (Jamil et al., 2023). In green recruitment, organizations fill their talent pipelines with candidates who, in addition to the requisite knowledge and skills, are willing to actively participate in sustainability initiatives (Pham & Paillé, 2020). Employees trained and developed through eco-friendly programs are equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills to implement the organization’s eco-friendly programs (Andoh et al., 2024). Restricting performance management to environmental metrics ensures that sustainability goals are contingent on organizational assessments, which fosters a culture where sustainable practice is a fundamental metric of organizational success (Amjad et al., 2021). Also, studies show that GHRM has a positive impact on the underlying principles of the triple bottom line of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic by aiding organizations in waste minimization, emission reduction, and resource materials containment (Amrutha & Geetha, 2020). underscore consumption with reference to GHRM’s impact on organizational sustainability, noting greater significance in high-impact

environmental sectors like manufacturing, hospitality, and corporate services (Susanto et al., 2022). Moreover, GHRM is said to enhance corporate reputation by attracting environmentally conscious stakeholders, investors, and customers (Jamil et al., 2023). Some recent works have focused on the role of GHRM in organizational resilience, claiming that firms with robust GHRM practices are more capable of adapting to environmentally stringent policies and sustainability market shifts (Elshaer et al., 2024). GHRM advances an organizational culture oriented towards sustainability, thereby strengthening environmental performance while simultaneously enabling the organization to achieve enduring cost reductions, bolster its strategic position, and boost employee morale as workers identify with socially responsible roles (Le & Tham, 2024).

### Focus Area 2: Impact of GHRM on Employee Behavior

GHRM influences employee behavioral propensities, induces pro-environmental behavior, and enhances job satisfaction and organizational commitment (J. Ahmad et al., 2023). The employees are more motivated and feel more satisfied, and they become more committed to the organization if they take part in green initiatives (Ababneh, 2021). It has also been noted in service-oriented sectors such as hospitality and other service sectors that GHRM practices lead to increased engagement, innovation and employee retention (Bhatti et al., 2022). The influence of GHRM on employee's behavioral predisposition is crucial as those practices reconcile organizations and environmental objectives and establish a long-term labor force strongly supportive of sustainable organizational practices (Al-Alawneh et al., 2024). Some GHRM practices promote employees to

become actively involved in pro-environmental behaviors, including green recruitment policy, training, performance appraisal as well as promoting employees' involvement (Carballo-Penela et al., 2022). These have the effect of improving organizational commitment and job satisfaction and making it more likely that staff will take actions to conserve the environment in the office and beyond (Bodhi et al., 2024). With GHRM, when employees perceive an environmental ethos, they begin to understand that they play a critical role in the sustainability of the organization with regard to the organizational mission, thus fostering an identity that reconciles personal values with organizational objectives (Rizal et al., 2024). Employees who are more engaged with GHRM practices tend to be more proactive in performing "green behaviors" like waste reduction, energy conservation, and sustainability activities (Ercantan & Eyupoglu, 2022). For example, motivation is enhanced, and sustainable behaviors are reinforced through the motives of green performance appraisal and reward systems that support pro-environmental behavior (Usman et al., 2023). GHRM practices have also been established to increase the level of employee engagement because employees feel they can pursue meaningful goals directed at the environment (Sarfo et al., 2024). This fit promotes employee's satisfaction and commitment and thus leads to reduce turnover and increase the retention. Moreover, GHRM is understood to enhance environmental psychology and generate proactive green organizational citizenship behaviors whereby employees would go beyond their required duties to help meet the goals of the organization towards the environment (Muisyo et al., 2022). With respect to the employee-customer-contact-intensive hospitality industry, this study suggests that employees in such an industry make perceptions of the hospitality firm from its sustainable organizational actions, and that employees further extended the positive effects of GHRM practices on organizational reputation and customer loyalty (Hassanein et al., 2024).

### **Focus Area 3: Theoretical Frameworks Supporting GHRM**

Different scholars have offered different reasons for the influence of GHRM practice, particularly on motivation and environmental sustainability (Rahman et al., 2023). One such theory is the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) theory, which suggests that GHRM practices have the potential to enable factors within the employees - their abilities, motivation, and opportunities for sustainable performing (Malik et al., 2021). Further, to some extent, Social Identity Theory, Stakeholder Theory and Resource-Based View (RBV) can explain why certain GHRM practices are effective and/or flexible within certain organizations (Chowdhury et al., 2023). Such theories are central to trying to make sense of and assess the effect of GHRM practice mechanisms (Benevene & Buonomo, 2020). (Iftikar et al., 2022) identified some of the key GHRM theories that they believed were pertinent to organization and employee performance, the most mentioned being Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) theory. Consistent with the AMO model, GHRM effectiveness is achieved by increasing employees abilities (with training and development), motivation (with rewards and recognition for taking greening initiatives) and opportunities (to undertake work related to greening) (Obereder et al., 2022). This method helps in promoting pro-environmental behavior among employees while achieving organizational sustainability. (N. Ahmad et al., 2022) As N. Ahmad and others described in 2022, it is crucial to analyze how integration within an organization affects effort towards engagement in environmental practices. One of the theories that helps to identify this issue is Social Identity Theory (SIT). As per this theory, employees tend to align with the organizational identity more when there is evidence that the organization is actively engaging in Sustainable Development (SD) practices.

This usually results in an increased commitment towards the environmental and emotional connection with the organization (Zafar et al., 2023). This identification of policy alignment with green values increases sustainability participation by facilitating conservation and waste reduction

(Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2021). Stakeholder Theory has an important relevance in GHRM because it describes the role of customers, society, and even regulators regarding green practices (Jiang et al., 2024). It is maintained under the Stakeholder Theory that to address the concerns of some sustainable stakeholders, firms would be compelled to adopt GHRM and enhance corporate image, thus maintaining business activity and social responsiveness balance or synergy (Zihan et al., 2024). Moreover, based on the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, GHRM policies may lead to competitive advantage by fostering organizational distinctive capabilities to support business sustainability initiatives (Gazi et al., 2024) and strengthening employees' green competencies.

While supporting the development of environmental responsibility, talent development helps organizations enhance their capabilities, which makes sustainability a core competency that is harder for competitors to replicate (Kuo et al., 2022). The combination of GHRM and RBV components underlines the strategic dimension of human resources for the overall organizational value creation process through continuous implementation of a far-reaching strategic orientation (Malik et al., 2020).

#### **Focus Area 4: Barriers and Challenges in Implementing GHRM**

The low level of integration of GHRM systems is linked to old work practices, Industry 4.0 resistance and cost of implementation (Viterouli et al., 2025). These drawbacks are even sharper in hospitality, in which a high level of capital investment is needed for GHRM practices to evolve, and change may be highly disruptive (Elshaer et al., 2024). Tackling these barriers can facilitate concentrating on strategic shifts aimed at augmenting agility. A variety of practical, financial, and cultural barriers arise in the implementation of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices (Kodua et al., 2022). Elimination of these hurdles is vital as their existence makes GHRM ineffective, especially for industries where entrenched mindsets dominate or the counter expenses for greening them are steep (Zihan et al.,

2024). The most significant barriers identified were the firm's financial commitment to achieving sustainability benchmarks, new sustainable routines, change fatigue, and lack of HR managerial competence to effectively spearhead and execute green HR policies (Bombiak, 2020). Restricted funding for green initiatives is a crucial obstacle. The integration of new technology, eco-conscious materials, or employee training programs in GHRM practices is an investment that may overextend budgets, particularly in resource-scarce industries (Rajput, 2022). For example, in the hospitality sector, the widespread adoption of GHRM is hindered by the severe outward bleed for financing green infrastructure and green certifications (Irani, 2022). Numerous studies recognize the advantages of implementing GHRM strategies, but the absence of immediate return on investment delays organizational enthusiasm (Machado, 2022). As with most organizational changes, an unwillingness to change is frustrating. Green GHRM implementation, especially for employees who do not benefit directly from the green changes or feel that the changes subject them to extra work without any tangible perks (Tamunomiebi & Akpan, 2021). It is proposed that GHRM initiatives are often met with negative reception and reluctance to accept innovative practices aimed at enhancing an organization's environmental impact if these practices are forced from the leadership level without involving employees in the decision-making process (Xiao, 2021). Providing employees a voice in GHRM decisions and outlining practical environmental and organizational benefits (Adegoke et al., 2024) reduces this opposition. Adding to these challenges are the limited directives pertaining to specific industries, which make the application of GHRM more difficult.

Although there may be some overarching frameworks available, details for specific industries seem to be lacking guidance that organizations may readily adopt (Hettiarachchi, 2021). For example, the healthcare sector does have some unique environmental concerns regarding waste disposal and energy consumption in healthcare facilities, but very few GHRM policies have been

tailored for this sector (Tanveer et al., 2024). This scenario forces companies to adopt more adaptive global human resource management (GHRM) strategies, which are resource-intensive and difficult. These, along with organizational and regional cultural diversity, affect the adoption of GHRM (Kodua et al., 2022). In some cases, the alignment of core organizational values and principles of social responsibility may not be strong enough so that the organization can comfortably implement GHRM (Jide, 2023). Zoned cross-culturally, it has been noted that firms operating within regions with weak regulatory controls tend to implement supporting GHRM policies, unlike firms from more regulated areas, who have no incentive to exercise those policies (Cheng, 2022).

#### **Focus Area 5: Future Research Directions in GHRM**

This paragraph underscores some of the gaps, like the multi-level or hierarchical interaction of GHRM practices, the external environmental considerations, the role of technology regarding the advancement of GHRM, and the prospects of technology concerning the advancement of GHRM. More research is needed to address the relation of GHRM to Industry 4.0, green behaviors outside the workplace, and its contribution to the circular economy (De et al., 2024). Additionally, a longer-term perspective is essential in this respect, both with regard to the development of GHRM practices and with regard to their application in new contexts. The field of GHRM is emerging and still being developed, and new topics of inquiry are more increasingly suggesting directions for relevance (Yong et al., 2020). As other researchers have claimed, there is an urgent call for multilevel integration of GHRM in which the impact of GHRM is considered not only at the organizational level but also at the individual, team and societal level. Such a multiple-level framework would facilitate studying the impact of GHRM practices on employee collective action toward the societal sustainable development goals. Also increasingly brought to the fore in GHRM literature are the legal/regulatory, societal, and market forces-angle.

Given that no organization can survive in isolation from its environment, examining outside forces that affect the extent of implementation and influence of GHRM practices can offer further understanding (Kumari et al., 2025). For example, enterprises located in more regulated ecological zones are more willing to implement GHRM than those in less regulated zones (Freihat et al., 2024). What are the impacts of legal regulations, societal expectations, and global policies on sustainable development concerning the implementation and impact of GHRM practices? This question could guide future investigations. Technology and digital transformation are other interesting issues that may impact GHRM innovation. The innovation of new technologies such as Big Data Analytics provides opportunities to monitor environmental performance, resource efficiency and employee engagement in sustainable practices and allows GHRM to get better (Sohu et al., 2025). The automation, IoT, AI and other intelligence tools of Industry 4.0 – based production will also add more power to the GHRM by generating workforce performance/eco-result analytics in real time and transforming the data into workable intelligence (Dawra et al., 2024). Therefore, using technology with GHRM allows practitioners to monitor live environmental scorecards which lead to decision-making based on evidence and feedback-based evaluations (De et al., 2024). Interest is growing in GHRM, the circular economy and sustainable supply chain management.

With the integration of GHRM practices into the circular systems of production, it is now feasible for GHRM to promote eco-friendly skills and waste-reducing practices at the employee level (Viterouli et al., 2023). As noted by (Subramanian & Suresh, 2022), GHRM may also advocate for participation in the waste reduction and sustainable procurement activities associated with a circular economy. Last but not least, green organizational citizenship behavior (green OCB) is an unexplored topic that offers a great deal of opportunity for research. Green OCB describes the actions that employees undertake voluntarily, which are regarded as beneficial to the environment that go beyond their job descriptions

(Abdou et al., 2023). (Al-Swidi et al., 2021) Posited that knowing what motivates green OCB, especially the role of GHRM and organizational culture on an employee's eco-friendly behavior, would foster more sustainable workplace cultures.

### **Summary of review and discussion**

Research on Green HRM has been published in a number of prestigious journals over the past few decades, including ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, SpringerLink, Taylor and Francis, Wiley Online Library, SAGE Publications, and Inderscience Publishers. In the subsequent sections, we outline the evolution of this knowledge base by discussing the Green HRM literature focus areas, article polarization, publication year, country, theories, and methodologies used.

### **Focus Area of the Literature on Green HRM.**

Five focus areas were identified from the Green HRM literature based on our findings. "GHRM Practices and Organizational Sustainability" (20 papers) and "Theoretical Frameworks Supporting GHRM" (18 papers) were the most prominent. Notably, the focus area "Barriers and Challenges in Implementing GHRM" received the lowest evaluation rate of all the literature surveyed was given with 17 papers. Furthermore, "Impact of GHRM on Employee Behavior" (15 papers) has been increasingly studied over the years. There is an important trend toward understanding how GHRM affects organizational and employee outcomes. Additionally, the focus "Future Research Directions in GHRM" (15 papers) points out the need for strategically addressing gaps left

in the literature and new dimensions regarding the practices of Green HRM. The analysis demonstrates the importance of incorporating green concepts into the field of Human Resource Management. The data suggests a shift toward a higher number of publications in critical areas, highlighting the necessity for Green HRM in fostering organizational sustainability, engagement, and innovation.

### **Distribution of Articles**

The study collected 85 articles from reputable databases such as Scopus and Web of Science. As illustrated in Figure 2, a subset of five journals contributed approximately 40 percent of the publications. Many of these studies were published in the Journal of Cleaner Production (10), International Journal of Human Resource Management (7), Journal of Human Resource Management (6), Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management (5), Business Strategy and the Environment (4), Sustainability (3), Journal of Business Ethics (2), Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources (2), Personnel Review (2), and other additional 43 journals. This shows that Green HRM is an interdisciplinary subject of concern in environmental management, organizational behavior, and HRM-focused journals. Regionally, there is a greater concentration of research in developed and emerging markets, particularly from China, India, and the United States. Research from other regions, however, remains underrepresented, illustrating a gap in studying Green HRM in diverse socio-economic and cultural settings.

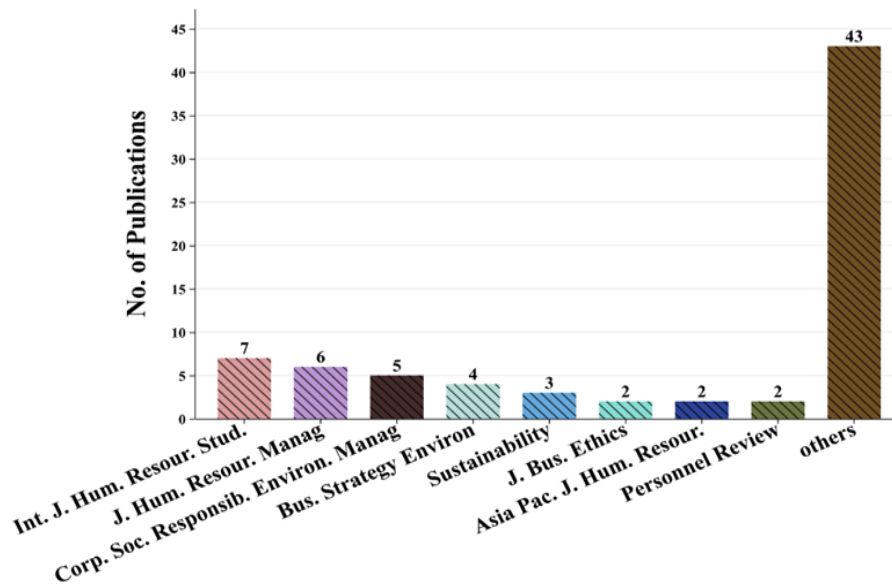


Figure 2. Assessment of the 85 chosen journal articles published between 2010 and 2025.

Note. Classification as “other” applies to all journals where fewer than two papers were published on a given subject. Figure 2 makes it evident that research on green human resource management has spread to a wide range of journals.

#### Years of publication

We began our review of the literature in 2010, which was around the time that the green/environmental perspective in HRM was taking shape (Unnikrishnan & Hegde, 2007). Nonetheless, back in the 2007-2015 period when Green HRM was taking shape, publications on the topic were scant as the industry was more absorbed with E-HRM and technology in HRM. In recent

times, with the advancement of the environmental shift, there has been a greater focus put forth by organizations on Environmental Management, thereby leading to increased focus on Green HRM. Looking at Figure 3, attention toward research seems to have surged after 2016 and has maintained a steady upward trajectory along with fuller attention on the topic. After 2016, Green HRM has turned into a substantially favored academic topic of research worldwide. Many theoretical and practical innovations have been made towards the Green HRM concept, resulting in its extensive adoption across industries. This sustained rise is likely received constant focus on the subject.

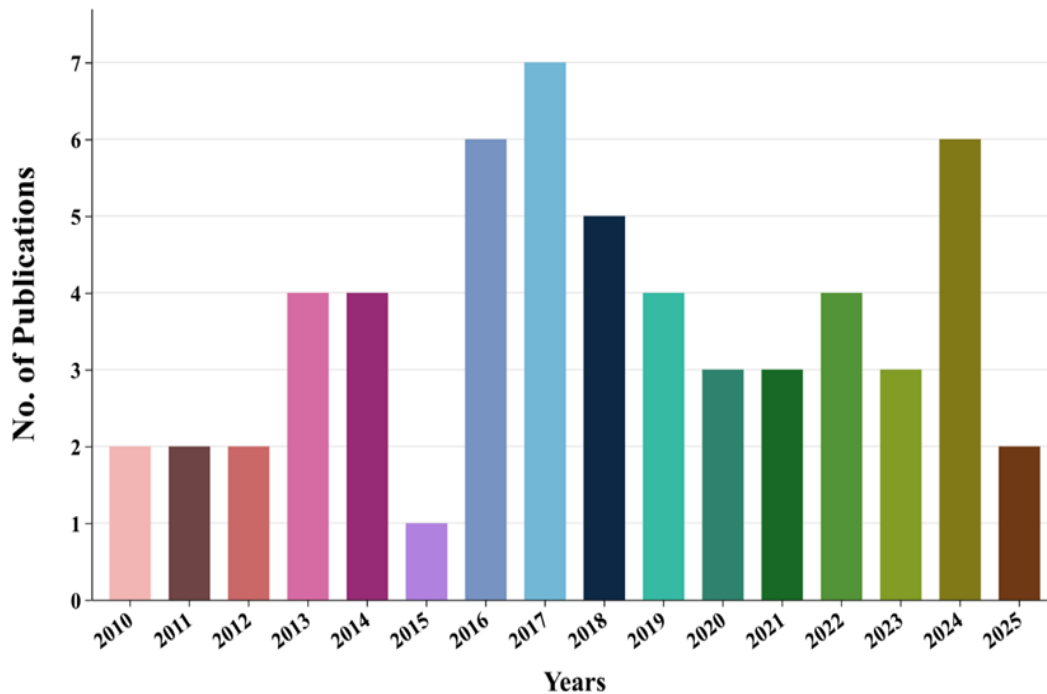


Figure 3. Years of publication

**National context**

Four national divisions were established by this study to supplement the reviewed literature: "Developed Country," "Developing Country," "Cross Country," and "Not Applicable" (Figure 4). For the twelve articles that were not restricted to any one nation, the notation "Not Applicable" was applied. Analysis showed that most of the studies aimed at identifying the practices of Green HRM in a specific country's context, more so in developed countries. Pakistan stands out as a significant contributor in the developing countries category, with massive attention devoted to the hospitality and tourism industries. The focus here is on the adoption of Green HRM policies such as recruitment, training, caring for the environment, and performance management, and their impacts on environmental performance and employee engagement. Other developing countries have also studied the consequences of of Green HRM on both an individual and organizational level, including sustainable employee actions, environmental protection, and overall green

practices. In contrast, developing countries account for only 28 studies, which indicates a lack of research in these contexts. Studies from the UK, Germany, and the Netherlands focus on the implications of Green HRM on organizational loyalty and eco-sustainability, which is primarily theoretical.

Of these, the comparative ones, like analyses of the European branches of multinationals for Green HRM, provide perspectives on some aspects of culture-in-country differences. There are surprisingly few cross-country studies, with only two articles found in this category. These studies focus on the concept and processes of Green HRM in European organizations, demonstrating the impact of regulators and culture on commonalities and differences. As a whole, the results assert that regardless of whether a country is developed or developing, both types of countries exist in a highly competitive business world and pay attention to Green HRM policies. However, striking is that most of the studies from both groups seem to analyze performance aspects rather

than undermining the enacting factors or challenges to the functions of these practices. This illustrates the picture of understanding such

management that is far from reality and lacks focused regional study of the management systems for Green HRM.

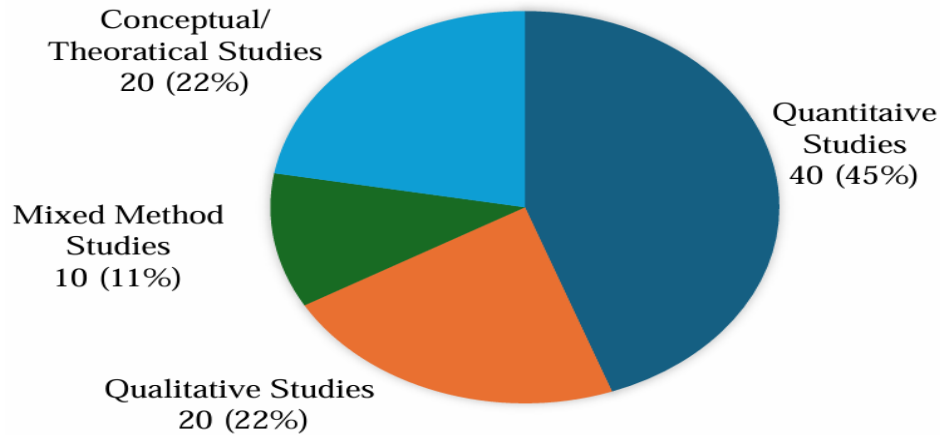


Figure 4. National context distribution of articles

### Methods Employed

The methods used for this research on Green HRM were of various types. This particular study identified four research types based on the journal articles reviewed, namely, the mixed, qualitative, quantitative, and conceptual approaches. Conceptual studies created novel concepts, models, and gaps that needed more research while concentrating on the body of existing literature. In

a quantitative study, the researcher investigates the participants' adoption of Green HRM and its individual and organizational performance outcomes on a multi-level basis. Qualitative studies analyze a subject and report the findings through case studies, interviews, and observational analysis. Those based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative research are defined as mixed-method research.

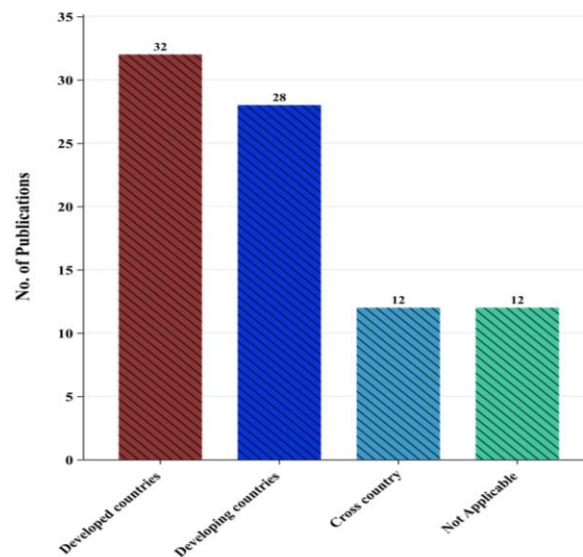


Figure 5. Research methods applied in Green HRM studies

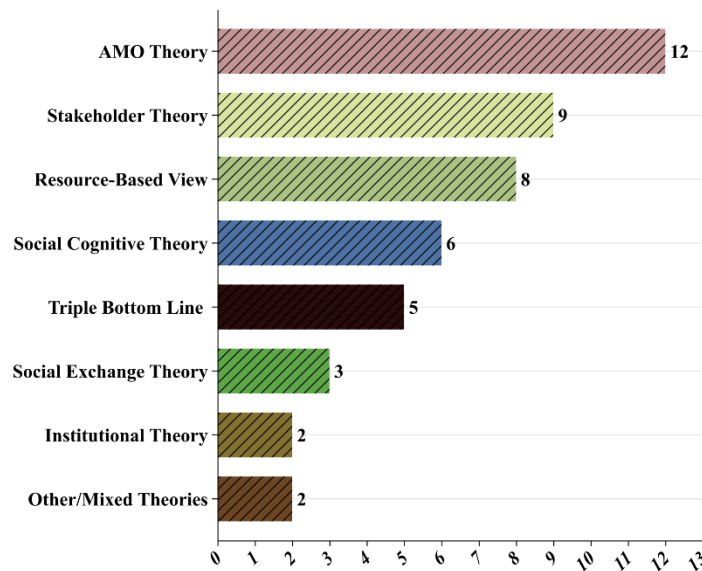
The distribution of methodologies in Green HRM literature is illustrated in Figure 5. It is clear from the study period that surveys were the most common quantitative method used to investigate Green HRM—40 out of 45 papers used this approach. Additionally, a great deal of focus has been placed on the factors that influence and result from Green HRM through quantitative analysis. A conceptual paper was also published by a considerable portion of the researchers (approximately 22 percent). This tendency suggests an accentuated focus on empirical investigation while similarly expecting a greater proportion of qualitative or explorative inquiry in subsequent publications of academic journals focused on Green HRM. According to this study, in order to assess real-world applications of Green HRM and determine the best sustainable development practices, researchers have recently concentrated on real-time case studies from varied industries (Aragão & Jabbour, 2017). Other researchers incorporated mixed approaches to the problem; however, the application of mixed methods to Green HRM research remains quite scarce.

### Theoretical Framework

The frameworks analyzed in the literature review provide insights into the relations between Green HRM and an organization's productivity. Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) Theory. According to AMO Theory, employment performance increases with effective Human Resource Management (HRM) practices due to the improvement of skills, motivation, and involvement opportunities (Renwick et al., 2013). This explains the impact of Green HRM practices, such as environmental training and participation in decision-making, on enhancing employees' green behaviors and achieving sustainable performance results. Also, Environmental Management Theory is another Green HRM-Environmental Management Theory that seems to capture a widely known gap in HRM research that focuses on environmental issues; it focuses on the impact of organizational policies and strategies on the environment. It advocates that Green HRM integration into an organization's environmental

management framework will lead to improved organizational sustainability (Cherian & Jacob, 2012). By doing so, corporations strategically and proactively move towards the goals of Social Responsibility (CSR) and therefore reinforce the culture of environmental conservation. Moreover, The Work-Life Balance affects attitudes and behaviors through the intersection of professional and personal responsibilities.

Research indicates that implementing "green" work-life balance frameworks can positively influence employees to adopt pro-environmental practices both professionally and personally (Muster & Schrader, 2011). This underlying structure supports the working framework of how Green HRM practices motivate employees to participate in sustainability initiatives. Lastly, Cognitive Social Information Processing Theory focuses on information and its retention, recalling relevant social interactions in decision-making, and how this influences different actions (Zoogah, 2011). This applies to exploring the vital HRM green decisions and behaviors. In addition, "greening" as an HRM practice more deeply defines the concept of "green signatures" introduced in this study, highlighting HRM practices and their relation to environmental management. The bar graph depicts the frequency of the theories utilized in 85 studies of Green HRM cumulatively. AMO Theory leads the pack with 12 citations, which signifies its importance in addressing how myriad HR functions enable employees to participate in organizational ecosystem engagement. Stakeholder Theory (9) and Resource-Based View (8) come next, underscoring the importance of external and internal factors in the adoption of GHRM. Social Cognitive Theory (6), Triple Bottom Line (5), and Social Exchange Theory (3) are also lesser cited, focusing on behavioral and multi-faceted components, while Institutional Theory (2) and Other/Mixed Theories (2) dominate the small space allocated for mixed theory. Importantly, 45% of the studies (38 out of 85) tend to have no clearly stated theory, which illustrates the lack of adequate conceptual frameworks in subsequent research.



**Conclusions, distinct contributions, suggestions, and areas for further inquiry**

The sustained increase in green human resource management (HRM) practices, as evidenced by the literature reviewed, aligns with global sustainability initiatives, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. Comprehensive international frameworks are now focusing on the significance of Green HRM as a strategic approach to corporate environmental responsibility. The outlined recommendations and conclusions in this research were formulated based on results highlighting the growing trend of publications underpinning this phenomenon, as well as the socialist character of post-2016 literature with regard to implementing Green HRM. It is clear that the concepts underlying Green HRM and eco-innovation are interrelated; thus, this research seeks to bridge the two disciplines in order to address the apparent deficiency in dual approaches, while simultaneously ensuring proper implementation of eco-initiatives in enterprises. A remarkable gap exists in adopting and implementing Green HRM from the perspective of establishing international standards and legal frameworks. This study attempts to address the taxonomy of eco-innovations within HRM contours by introducing a structured framework

that classifies existing literature on Green HRM into five concentration areas, defining the scope for future-focused interdisciplinary explorations. The integration of Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE) as an intervening variable accentuates the strong impact of proactive sustainability on organizational productivity. The results prove that Green HRM plays an important role concerning employees' eco-friendly attitudes, not only in influencing behavior but also in facilitating the practice within diverse organizational settings in alignment with global sustainability aspirations. Green HRM does not escape the restriction of purposefully directed attitude-behavior gaps at the associative level, defined by high costs, absent guidelines, industry-dominant paradigms, and resistance to change. Moreover, the studies showed that there is a notable focus on Green HRM in some emerging economies, while developed countries seem to have a lack of focus, suggesting a gap that needs to be explored further. To cultivate sustainable practices, businesses need to engrave these systems within the corporate frameworks by incorporating Green HRM into the recruitment process, training sessions, employee engagement, and performance management. For businesses practicing Green HRM, the government should implement policies, for instance, tax cuts that would aid in covering

the costs to help remove the cost barrier. In addition, working contexts such as the type of industry, size of the organization, and company culture should be viewed for greater efficiency in the implementation of Green HRM. Highlighting the absence of these gaps would be useful for further research on the active role employees have in upholding Green HRM to explore the triggers of green actions within organizational and personal environments. Exploring how Green HRM aligns with new technologies in the context of Big Data and Industry 4.0 offers concrete ways of measuring and improving sustainability efforts. Understanding how culturally diverse rules and regulatory frameworks navigate the implementation of Green HRM principles would further broaden comparative studies. Green HRM can be approached differently if theories like NRBV and Social Exchange Theory, which are currently less utilized, are applied, shedding light on the scope of organizational and employee outcomes. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative strategies can help obtain a richer dataset, thus improving the accuracy and breadth of findings in Green HRM studies. Lastly, expanding the focus on the role of Green HRM toward fostering circular economy practices, including the reduction of waste and reusability of resources, can enhance the sustainability applications of Green HRM. The above findings and recommendations provide a comprehensive path for organizations and scholars to harness the strategic value of Green HRM while aligning it with the global efforts of sustainable development.

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