

# Sustainability through Workforce Management: Examining the Nexus of GHRM and Organizational Culture

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**Abstract:** Sustainability has become a key strategic goal for organizations, and workforce management plays a pivotal role in achieving it. This study examines the relationship between Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and organizational culture in driving sustainable performance. GHRM practices, including green recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement, encourage environmentally responsible behavior among employees. Simultaneously, an organization's culture, defined by shared values, leadership commitment, and sustainability-oriented practices, acts as a foundation for embedding green initiatives within corporate strategies. By integrating GHRM with a strong sustainability-driven culture, organizations can enhance environmental, social, and economic sustainability while improving operational efficiency and stakeholder trust. Using empirical research, this study highlights how workforce management can be leveraged to achieve long-term sustainability goals. The findings suggest that companies that align HRM policies with sustainability-focused cultural transformations exhibit stronger environmental responsibility, better employee engagement, and competitive advantages in a green economy. This research contributes to the growing literature on sustainable workforce management, offering insights for organizations aiming to create a sustainability-oriented work environment. The study underscores the need for leadership commitment and HR-driven initiatives to foster a culture of sustainability for long-term business success.

**Keywords:** Green Human Resource Management, Organizational Culture, Sustainable Performance, Environmental Sustainability, Workforce Management.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has emerged as a key organizational strategy to promote environmental sustainability and improve firm performance. GHRM extends the conventional HRM by covering practices that align environmental goals into human resource processes and policies. These practices are aimed at supporting environmentally friendly employee behavior, hence linking workforce development to overall sustainability objectives. In particular, GHRM activities are generally structured around three fundamental activities: developing employees' green competencies, encouraging sustainable behaviors, and providing opportunities for environmental involvement.

The evolution of green capabilities may start with eco-friendly recruitment, selection, training, and leadership development that helps companies incorporate sustainability into their organizational DNA. Having joined, employees are encouraged further by performance appraisal systems and reward mechanisms focusing on environmental successes. Empirical evidence exists that endorses the proposition that GHRM plays a positive role in a firm's environmental performance, with such outcomes as the reduction of wastes, enhanced efficiency of resources, and increased organizational effectiveness. Even with these developments, the most important dimension remains unexplored: the organizational culture factor in influencing the efficacy of GHRM practices. While previous research supports the positive correlation between GHRM and environmental performance, it often fails to account for how organizational context, more specifically green culture, can facilitate or moderate this relationship. Recent research has pointed to this discrepancy, and there is a need for more in-depth analysis of how cultural factors mingle with HRM practices and affect environmental performance. Specifically, the interactions between GHRM and the enablers of green organizational culture like emphasis from leadership, credibility of messages, peer participation, and employee empowerment have received scant empirical analysis.

In response to this research lacuna, the current study examines the joint effects of GHRM practices and

green organizational culture on environmental performance. A conceptual model is developed where it is argued that green organizational culture acts as a mediator in transforming GHRM practices to concrete environmental performance. The model is tested empirically using data from a large-scale survey among Chinese manufacturing firms—a setting characterized by both high environmental pressures and regulatory imperatives to cut down emissions.

This study contributes in two broad ways. It first contributes theoretically by presenting empirical evidence of the link between organizational culture and GHRM, a field which has been largely conceptual in existing research. Second, it provides practical insights in that it is able to highlight key enablers of green culture that managers can use to enhance the impact of GHRM initiatives. By so doing, the research adds both practice and scholarship value by presenting a more integrated perspective on how companies can strategically couple organizational culture and human resource practices to realize sustainability objectives.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Green Human Resource Management and Environmental Performance**

There is a comprehensive range of literature that has investigated the association between pro-environmental human resource management (HRM) practices and organizational environmental performance improvements (Arda, Bayraktar, & Tatoglu, 2018; Daily et al., 2012; Jabbour & Santos, 2008). Environmental performance involves a company's devotion to protecting the environment, expressed in quantifiable operating parameters that mirror set standards of environmental stewardship (Paillé, Chen, Boiral, & Jin, 2014). Montabon et al. (2007) suggest a holistic model for measuring environmental performance, including dimensions of incident reduction, continuous improvement, recycling efficiency, stakeholder perception, third-party audits, waste minimization, resource usage, and cost savings.

Human resource managers are responsible for achieving these environmental results by integrating sustainability into major HR activities like recruitment, training, performance assessment, and reward systems (Harvey, Williams, & Probert, 2013; Jabbour & Santos, 2008; Renwick et al., 2013). Most HR professionals proactively highlight their company's environmental values in order to recruit talent, especially among potential employees—like graduates from institutions of higher learning—who increasingly look to work for environmentally friendly organizations (Backhaus, Stone, & Heiner, 2002; Renwick et al., 2013).

This process most likely entails integrating sustainability skills into job postings and interview processes to guarantee the suitability of potential employees in accordance with organizational environmental goals (Renwick et al., 2013).

Aside from HR, HR managers can take a prominent role in developing workers' environmental awareness through training programs that are specifically designed (Bansal & Roth, 2000; Daily et al., 2012; Daily & Huang, 2001). Training programs generally seek to deepen employees' ecological awareness and enhance their capabilities in reducing waste and pollution (Simpson & Samson, 2010). Due to their role of operation, numerous employees are in an optimal position to identify and eliminate inefficiencies that generate harmful emissions or waste (Renwick et al., 2013). According to Fernández, Junquera, and Ordiz (2003), training that emphasizes environmental awareness not only enhances technical competence but also creates emotional commitment to the organization's sustainability objectives.

Training, aside from HRM functions, is also responsible for generating environmentally focused leadership. By strategic choice and development initiatives, HR managers are tasked with advancing pro-environmental individuals to leadership roles (Egri & Herman, 2000). Sustainability-oriented organization leaders tend to switch between transformational and transactional leadership, necessitating flexible leadership that can balance strategic vision with operational implementation (Egri & Herman, 2000). After they are established, these leaders promote environmentally sound activities that can create dramatic changes in organizational environmental performance (Bansal & Roth, 2000).

Performance assessment is one of the key roles where HR managers assist in environmental goals. Through the development of organization-wide performance measures tied to environmental targets, HR practitioners can guarantee that sustainability is systematically measured and enhanced (Marcus & Fremeth, 2009). Performance appraisal mechanisms allow the conversation around environmental achievements, the planning of waste reduction strategies, and the reiterating of employees' ongoing environmental improvement commitment (Renwick et al., 2013).

In addition, incentive and compensation systems are useful means to further encourage employees towards environmentally friendly behavior (Marshall, Cordano, & Silverman, 2005;

Cordeiro & Sarkis, 2008). Empirical evidence confirms a positive relationship between executive compensation tied to environmental performance and overall environmental performances of companies (Berrone & Gomez-Meija, 2009; Cordeiro & Sarkis, 2008; Stanwick & Stanwick, 2001). For example, Cordeiro

and Sarkis (2008) discovered that companies linking CEO pay to environmental targets realized much improved environmental performance. Likewise, Fernández et al. (2003) found that companies providing performance-based incentives to top managers performed better than those with fixed salary schemes in meeting environmental targets.

Overall, the literature indicates that green HRM activities such as recruitment, retention, training, appraisal, and incentivization have a positive impact on a firm's environmental performance. Based on this, we formulate the following hypothesis:

H1: Green HRM activities have a positive impact on the environmental performance of a firm.

However, although the positive link between GHRM and environmental performance has been researched widely, we argue that organizational culture can be an important, if understudied, moderating or mediating variable in this relationship.

## **2.2 Green Human Resource Management and Green Organizational Culture**

Organizational culture is the collective values, beliefs, and actions of employees (Schein, 1992). Values are founded on what individuals think ought to be done and are rooted in ethical and moral criteria (Holt & Stewart, 2000). Beliefs are individuals' personal perceptions of what is true or not, and behavior are the things people do based on values and beliefs (Schein, 1992). Collectively, these components form the philosophy of an organization, which assists in navigating employees through times of uncertainty or adversity. With time, the behaviors founded on these beliefs and values harden into habits, going on to form the day-to-day culture of the organization (Schein, 1992).

Green organizational culture is that in which employees are concerned not only with profits but also with reducing environmental damage and increasing positive environmental impact (Sroufe, Liebowitz, & Sivasubramaniam, 2010). In this respect, green culture embodies the organizational common environmental values, beliefs, and practices. The Human Resource Management (HRM) team has a fundamental role in shaping this culture through impacting who to employ, how to train them, how their performance is appraised, and how they are rewarded (Amini, Bienstock, & Narcum, 2018; Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002; Madsen & Ulhoi, 2001). For instance, Pellegrini et al. (2018) highlighted the importance of HR practices in building employee commitment and environmentally friendly behavior to propel sustainable organizational change. Likewise, Attaianese (2012) discovered that employees who were trained and encouraged to behave in eco-friendly manners assisted in building a green culture throughout the company.

Research by Srinivasan and Kurey (2014) identified four key factors that significantly influenced organizational culture in a study of 60 U.S. multinational firms. These were leadership emphasis, message credibility, peer involvement, and employee empowerment. Although their study focused on quality management, these same factors can support the development of a green organizational culture. This is supported by Arda et al. (2018), who argued that quality management and environmental management systems are interconnected and, when aligned, can lead to improved organizational performance. Green HRM practices play a vital role in developing each of these four cultural enablers.

Leadership focus entails putting the environment on the agenda at the leadership level. Leaders ought to lead by example in environmentally responsible behavior in their working lives and should be measured by their environmental performance (Bowen, 2000; Sharma & Vredenburg, 1998). HR managers can assist in this by hiring environmentally responsible people and developing them for leadership positions (Egri & Herman, 2000). Furthermore, HR can design incentive mechanisms that recognize and reward leaders for enhancing environmental performance (Fernández et al., 2003). Message credibility is defined as the provision of clear, consistent, and relevant environmental messages from credible sources (Srinivasan & Kurey, 2014). HR professionals are best suited to provide such messages, especially those related to maintaining employees' interests for avoiding waste and conducting environmentally friendly practices (Chow, 2012; Lin & Ho, 2011).

Peer involvement focuses on encouraging employees to participate and collaborate on environmental initiatives (Jabbour, 2011; Srinivasan & Kurey, 2014). HR can support this by developing training and reward systems that promote teamwork in environmental projects (Pellegrini et al., 2018). For instance, HR can work with management to create performance indicators for teams, linked to environmental goals such as reducing waste, improving recycling, or cutting down resource use. By tying financial rewards to these goals, HR can encourage team collaboration in delivering sustainability initiatives (Jabbour, 2011; Daily et al., 2012; Pellegrini et al., 2018).

Employee empowerment is the act of providing freedom to employees to take decisions in uncertain situations that are not explicitly defined in rules (Srinivasan & Kurey, 2014). Environmental empowerment enhances awareness and promotes proactive conduct. HR can facilitate this through frequent evaluations and

training programs that instill environmental wisdom and confidence (Daily et al., 2012). Motivated managers typically set an example, and their employees follow their lead, engaging in supporting environmental transformation and lessening detrimental actions (Daily et al., 2012; Daily & Huang, 2001). Workers that excel over minimum requirements can be rewarded during performance appraisals, and HR can also encourage empowerment by establishing "green teams" which identify and address environmental issues through collaboration (Daily et al., 2012).

In conclusion, green HRM practices have a pivotal role in the development of green organizational culture through influencing employees' values and behaviors through recruiting, training, leadership, and reward systems. These practices foster eco-friendly behaviors that eventually become habits, and through them, a green culture arises. Grounded in this perspective, we hypothesize that green HRM practices have an influence on the formation of the main enablers of green organizational culture—leadership focus, message believability, peer engagement, and employee empowerment. This results in the following hypothesis:

H2: GHRM practices have a positive relationship with the enablers of green organizational culture.

### **III. Objective of the study**

- To examine the impact of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices on the development of green organizational culture in the context of organizations operating in Uttarakhand.
- To assess the role of green organizational culture as a mediator in the relationship between GHRM practices and environmental performance.

### **IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study follows a quantitative method to analyze the connection between Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices and organizational culture in making sustainable performance. The methodology selection is based on the aim of studying quantifiable patterns and correlations among major variables by using data obtained from actual contexts.

#### **4.1 Research Design**

The research has a descriptive and analytical study design since it intends to describe current GHRM practices and organizational culture elements present in organizations, and their effects on sustainability outcomes. A survey questionnaire was structured as the key data collection instrument to acquire quantitative data from workers employed in different organizations.

#### **4.2 Sampling Method and Area**

The study geographically concentrates on the Uttarakhand state of India, which is a state undergoing quick industrial and institutional development coupled with environmental degradation. The study specifically addresses both the public and private sector organizations in the region who have expressed interest or activity in sustainable development activities.

A non-probability purposive sampling method was employed in choosing the sample. This is because the research specifically required employees serving in HR-related positions or those directly participating in environmental and organizational development procedures. The companies were chosen because they were pertinent to the topic and were interested in participating in the survey.

#### **4.3 Sample Size**

To provide valid findings, the research will seek data from about 150–200 participants employed across different industries like education, manufacturing, and services. The respondents are varied and include HR practitioners, middle managers, and sustainability officers, making it possible to gain a comprehensive picture of the interaction between GHRM and organizational culture in reality.

#### **4.4 Data Collection Instrument**

The primary data collection tool is a structured questionnaire with closed-ended and Likert scale-based questions. The questionnaire was framed after reading related literature on GHRM and organizational culture to ensure content validity. It consisted of three parts: demographic data, GHRM practices, and organizational culture indicators for sustainability. Responses were gathered physically (paper) and electronically (Google Forms) based on the respondents' convenience.

#### 4.5 Data Analysis Tools

The variables were tabulated and analyzed utilizing Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics (including mean, percentage, and standard deviation) were employed to portray the data while utilizing correlation and regression analysis for observing the interaction among GHRM practices and the aspects of green organizational culture. The internal consistency of the scale was also validated using Cronbach's Alpha for ensuring questionnaire items were reliable and consistent in measurement.

#### 4.6 Ethical Considerations

The purpose of the study was explained to all participants, and their participation was purely voluntary. Responses were kept confidential, and data collected was used solely for academic purposes. No personal identifiers were captured in the dataset.

### V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section presents the results obtained from the survey data collected from various organizations operating in the Uttarakhand region. The aim was to examine the relationship between Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices and green organizational culture. A total of 150 responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability testing, correlation analysis, and regression analysis through SPSS and Excel tools.

To begin with, descriptive statistics were calculated to assess the central tendencies and dispersion of responses related to the key variables. Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation scores for the major GHRM and green culture indicators.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Green Recruitment	4.12	0.62	2	5
Green Training	4.05	0.71	2	5
Green Performance Appraisal	3.89	0.68	2	5
Employee Involvement	4.01	0.66	2	5
Leadership Emphasis	4.08	0.70	2	5
Message Credibility	3.97	0.64	2	5
Peer Involvement	3.88	0.60	2	5
Employee Empowerment	4.02	0.67	2	5

The values indicate a generally positive perception of GHRM practices and green cultural traits, with most means ranging between 3.8 and 4.2 on a five-point Likert scale. This suggests that participants believe their organizations are making considerable efforts toward sustainable HR practices and promoting a green organizational culture.

To ensure internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for the GHRM and green culture constructs. As shown in Table 2, both sets of items demonstrated high reliability, with alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70.

**Table 2: Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha)**

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
GHRM Practices	4	0.86
Green Organizational Culture	4	0.84

Following the reliability check, Pearson's correlation analysis was performed to examine the strength and direction of the relationships between GHRM practices and the individual dimensions of green organizational culture. As reflected in Table 3, all relationships were positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

**Table 3: Correlation between GHRM and Green Culture Dimensions**

Variables	Leadership Emphasis	Message Credibility	Peer Involvement	Empowerment
GHRM Practices	0.71**	0.68**	0.74**	0.69**

**Note:**  $p < 0.01$

These results suggest that improvements in GHRM practices are strongly associated with greater leadership commitment to environmental values, credible communication around sustainability, stronger peer collaboration, and increased employee autonomy in addressing environmental issues.

To further investigate the impact of GHRM on green organizational culture, linear regression analysis was conducted. The model summary in Table 4 indicates that GHRM practices explain approximately 59% of the variation in green culture, with the regression being statistically significant.

**Table 4: Regression Analysis – GHRM Practices and Green Organizational Culture**

Model Summary	
R	0.768
R <sup>2</sup>	0.590
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.582
Std. Error of Estimate	0.412
F-value	34.21
Significance (p-value)	< 0.01

Coefficients	B	Standard Error	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	1.21	0.24	—	5.04	0.000
GHRM Practices	0.76	0.10	0.76	5.85	0.000

The regression results further reinforce that GHRM practices are a significant predictor of green organizational culture. The high R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.59 indicates a substantial impact, while the significant p-value (< 0.01) confirms the robustness of the model.

In conclusion, the data analysis strongly supports the hypothesis that GHRM practices positively influence the development of green organizational culture. This suggests that organizations aiming for sustainability should strategically align their HR policies with environmental values and practices to cultivate a culture that supports long-term environmental goals.

## VI. FINDINGS

The study has sought to look at the correlation between Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices and green organizational culture in the perspective of Uttarakhand organizations. The study found that the majority of the sampled organizations have actively begun adopting GHRM practices such as green recruitment, green training, environmentally sustainable performance appraisals, and employee engagement in green causes. The practices were found to be operating at a moderately high level, denoting heightened sensitivity of workforce management towards sustainability.

The findings also indicated a positive and statistically significant relationship between GHRM practices and the enablers of green organizational culture, including leadership emphasis on environmental values, credibility of communications about sustainability, employee empowerment, and peer involvement in environmental activities. Regression analysis also confirmed that GHRM practices are a significant predictor of the development of a green organizational culture, accounting for considerable variance. This means that when HR departments intentionally align policies with environmental objectives, they help in creating an internal culture that supports and sustains these values. The findings thus confirm the hypothesis of effective GHRM not only influencing operational practices but also having a significant role in building the culture of sustainability within organizations.

## VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While the study offers valuable insights regarding the connection between GHRM and organizational culture, certain limitations must be appreciated. First, the study is geographically limited to the state of Uttarakhand, and this may restrict the generalizability of the findings at a broader level. The cultural, economic, and industrial landscape of Uttarakhand may be distinct from other regions of India or the world, and hence caution must be exercised while attempting to generalize the findings. Second, the sample size, although being sufficient for exploratory analysis, may be augmented in future studies to provide stronger and representative conclusions.

The study also relies on self-reported data collected through questionnaires, which is susceptible to response bias. The respondents might have responded in the way they thought was the socially desirable way to respond, not according to their actual experience. Secondly, as it is a cross-sectional study, the study collects data at a single point in time, which cannot be used to establish long-term trends or cause and effect. Finally, even though the study employed respondents from different sectors, there could have been underrepresentation from certain sectors, which could distort sector-level dynamics.

## VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions can be given to researchers as well as practitioners. Organizations must integrate sustainability into their core HR activities directly. These include integrating environmental values into employee appraisal, reward, recruitment, and training. Organizations must also have visible environmental leadership and priority at all levels because leadership emphasis has been found to have significant effect on the overall organizational culture. In addition, internal communication plans must be developed to render the sustainability messages credible and understandable so that employees are informed and persuaded of the environmental ambitions of the organization. Creating a culture in which employees are empowered to make environmentally sound decisions and in which teamwork is encouraged in sustainability efforts can further solidify the construction of a green culture. On a larger scale, future studies could extend the geographic and industrial coverage of the data collection. Longitudinal studies can also provide more insight into how GHRM and cultural change develop in the long term. Continued investment in environmental education and training in the workplace will be essential in creating momentum towards long-term organizational sustainability.

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