

# *Review Of The Relationship And Drawbacks Of Green Human Resource Management And Sustainable Employee Performance*

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**Abstract** – For decades, researchers have examined the connection between environmental sustainability and organizations. However, the relationship between the environment and employee sustainability has been ignored. Green human resource management is a concept of involving environmental objectives in the old HRM process. Thus, the current study's purpose is to review the relationship between green human resource management (GHRM) and the sustainable performance of employees. The current study intends to conduct the research in systematic literature review methods to identify the research outcome and relationships. The research outcome contributes significantly to the existing literature on GHRM and the sustainable performance of employees by showing strengths and drawbacks for future researchers and organizations as well.

**Keywords** – Sustainable Employee Performance, Green Human Resource Management, Employee Motivation, Resource Based View Theory, Social Exchange Theory, Social Identity Theory, Stakeholder Theory

## I. INTRODUCTION

Green human resource management (GHRM) is a relatively new concept that involves integrating environmentally sustainable practices into human resource management activities (Hameed & Naeem, 2019). The goal of GHRM is to promote sustainable business practices by involving employees in environmental initiatives, reducing environmental impact, and ultimately improving the bottom line of organizations (Shoaib et al., 2021).

Sustainable employee performance refers to employee behaviour and actions that contribute to environmentally sustainable practices in the workplace (Hamid et al., 2020). This includes activities such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and using sustainable materials. Sustainable employee performance is important for organizations because it can contribute to long-term environmental sustainability goals, improve stakeholder relationships, and ultimately improve organizational performance (Hosna et al., 2021).

The relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance has been the subject of much research and theorizing in recent years. The consensus in the literature is that GHRM practices can positively influence sustainable employee performance. GHRM practices that are effective in promoting sustainable employee performance include training programs, rewards and incentives, and communication initiatives (Hamid et al., 2021).

Theoretical models have been proposed to explain the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. The study by Jia et al., (2018) proposed a psychological contract approach to understanding how GHRM practices

influence sustainable employee performance. The authors argued that when organizations adopt GHRM practices, employees form a psychological contract that involves mutual expectations and obligations related to sustainability. When employees feel that the organization is committed to sustainability, they are more likely to engage in sustainable behaviours and actions, which ultimately leads to improved sustainable employee performance (Wongleedee, 2020).

Overall, the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance is an important area of research and practice for organizations that are committed to promoting environmentally sustainable practices. By adopting GHRM practices and promoting sustainable employee performance, organizations can achieve long-term sustainability performance. The major aim of this study is to identify the GHRM and sustainable employee performance relationship. Readers will understand the influence of GHRM on sustainable employee performance theoretically and practically. Finally, the current study will show the drawbacks of GHRM and sustainable employee performance in research and organizational scopes as well.

## **II. DEFINING GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is defined as the integration of environmental concerns into the human resource practices of an organization, to reduce the negative impact of the organization on the environment (Jackson & Seo, 2010). GHRM is a strategic approach that involves the adoption of environmentally friendly practices in the recruitment, selection, training, and development of employees, as well as the development of policies and practices that promote environmental sustainability (Mousa & Othman, 2020).

The literature on GHRM suggests that the adoption of environmentally friendly practices can lead to several benefits for organizations, including cost savings, improved corporate image and reputation, enhanced employee morale and motivation, and increased competitiveness (Kumar et al., 2020).

## **III. OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE ON GHRM AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

There is a growing body of literature on the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. Sustainable employee performance is defined as the ability of an employee to perform his or her job duties sustainably, with a focus on reducing the negative impact of the organization on the environment (Hameed & Naeem, 2019).

Several studies have found a positive relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. The adoption of GHRM practices, such as the implementation of environmentally friendly policies and the provision of environmental training to employees, can lead to improved employee environmental performance (Shoaib et al., 2021). Similarly, the implementation of GHRM practices, such as the provision of environmental training and the development of environmentally friendly policies and practices, can lead to increased employee engagement and commitment, which in turn can lead to improved sustainable employee performance (Abdulghaffar, 2017).

## **IV. A THEORETICAL VIEW OF SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

Sustainable employee performance refers to the ability of employees to perform their duties in a manner that is environmentally, socially, and economically responsible. It involves employees' ability to integrate sustainable practices into their work, such as reducing waste, conserving energy and resources, and making ethical business decisions. Sustainable employee performance is critical to organizations that are committed to sustainability, as it ensures that employees are contributing to the achievement of sustainability goals. This essay will provide a theoretical explanation of sustainable employee performance, drawing on theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence (Hamid et al., 2021).

The Resource-Based View (RBV) is a theoretical framework that can help explain sustainable employee performance. The RBV suggests that a firm's resources and capabilities are key drivers of competitive advantage. Resources can be tangible, such as physical assets, or intangible, such as organizational culture, reputation, and employee skills and knowledge. Sustainable employee performance is an intangible resource that can provide organizations with a competitive advantage by enabling them to differentiate themselves from competitors and appeal to socially responsible consumers. Employees who are skilled in sustainability practices, such as reducing energy consumption, can contribute to a firm's environmental sustainability goals and reduce costs, leading to a competitive advantage. Additionally, sustainable employee performance can enhance an organization's reputation and improve its relationships with stakeholders, which can also contribute to competitive advantage (Zawawi & Abdul Wahab, 2019).

Social Exchange Theory (SET) is another theoretical framework that can help explain sustainable employee performance. SET suggests that social interactions between individuals are based on the expectation of reciprocity (Mi et al., 2019). In an organizational context, employees are motivated to perform sustainably when they perceive that their organization is committed to sustainability and when they believe that their efforts will be recognized and rewarded. Organizations that provide recognition and rewards for sustainable behaviour, such as promotions, bonuses, or social recognition, can motivate employees to perform sustainably (Khattak et al., 2020; Paillé & Mejía-morelos, 2014; Singh, 2019). Moreover, when employees perceive that their organization is committed to sustainability, they are more likely to engage in sustainable behaviour because they feel a sense of obligation to reciprocate their organization's efforts (Monje Amor et al., 2020).

Social Identity Theory (SIT) is a third theoretical framework that can help explain sustainable employee performance. SIT suggests that individuals derive their identity from the social groups they belong to (Tyler & De Cremer, 2005). In an organizational context, employees' identities are shaped by their organization's values and culture (Bush, 2020). When an organization prioritizes sustainability and communicates its sustainability goals and values to employees, employees are more likely to identify with the organization and engage in sustainable behaviour. Additionally, employees who identify with their organization are more likely to be committed to the organization's sustainability goals and to perceive that their sustainable behaviour contributes to the organization's success (Chang et al., 2020; Ding et al., 2017; Tyler & De Cremer, 2005).

Stakeholder Theory (ST) is a fourth theoretical framework that can help explain sustainable employee performance (Gupta & Gupta, 2020). ST suggests that organizations have a responsibility to consider the interests of all stakeholders, not just shareholders. In an environmental context, organizations have a responsibility to consider the interests of the environment and society, as well as their economic interests (Bozionelos et al., 2020). Organizations that adopt sustainable practices and communicate their commitment to sustainability to stakeholders can improve their relationships with stakeholders and enhance their reputation. When employees perceive that their organization is committed to sustainability, they are more likely to engage in sustainable behaviour because they feel that they are contributing to the organization's responsibility to stakeholders (Bozionelos et al., 2020; Colvin et al., 2020; Khosravi & Izbirak, 2019).

Empirical evidence also supports the theoretical explanation of sustainable employee performance. For example, a study by Gbolarumi et al., (2021) found that employee green behaviour was positively related to the organization's environmental management practices, employee training, and communication of environmental values. Another study by Hamid & Hosna, (2021) found that green human resource management practices, such as training, green recruitment, and employee involvement, were positively related to employee green behaviour. These findings support the theoretical frameworks discussed above, as they suggest that organizations can improve sustainable employee performance by adopting practices that align with RBV, SET, SIT, and ST.

## **V. THEORETICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GHRM AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is an approach that integrates environmental considerations into the human resource practices of an organization intending to reduce the negative impact on the environment (Jackson & Seo, 2010). The concept of GHRM is gaining more attention as organizations are increasingly concerned about their environmental impact. Sustainable employee performance refers to the ability of an employee to perform their job duties in a sustainable manner, with a focus on reducing the negative impact of the organization on the environment. There is a growing body of literature on the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. This paper aims to examine the theoretical relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance regarding relevant literature and empirical evidence (Min et al., 2020; Saha et al., 2020; Wongleedee, 2020).

The Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm is one of the theoretical frameworks that have been proposed to explain the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. According to the RBV, organizations can achieve a sustainable competitive advantage by leveraging their unique resources and capabilities. In the context of GHRM, the adoption of environmentally friendly practices can be seen as a unique resource and capability that can provide organizations with a sustainable competitive advantage. By adopting GHRM practices, organizations can improve their environmental performance, which can lead to cost savings, improved corporate image and reputation, and increased competitiveness (Kumar et al., 2020; Zawawi & Abdul Wahab, 2019).

Several studies have identified a link between GHRM and long-term employee performance. Adopting GHRM practices, such as implementing environmentally friendly policies and providing employees with environmental training, can lead to enhanced employee environmental performance (Elshaer et al., 2021; Jackson et al., 2011; Renwick et al., 2013; Wongleedee, 2020). Implementing GHRM initiatives, such as providing environmental training and developing environmentally friendly policies and procedures, may promote employee engagement and commitment, which can lead to improved long-term employee performance (de Jonge & Peeters, 2019; Hosain & Rahman, 2016; Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020).

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) is another theoretical framework that has been proposed to explain the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. SET suggests that individuals engage in social exchanges with their organizations, whereby they contribute their time, effort, and skills in exchange for rewards and benefits. In the context of GHRM, the adoption of environmentally friendly practices can be seen as a benefit that organizations provide to their employees in exchange for their time, effort, and skills. By adopting GHRM practices, organizations can provide their employees with a positive work environment, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and commitment, and ultimately, improved sustainable employee performance (Elahi et al., 2020; Latorre et al., 2020; Mi et al., 2019; Monje Amor et al., 2020).

Another theoretical framework that has been proposed to explain the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance is the Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Ding et al., 2017). SIT suggests that individuals derive their sense of identity from the groups to which they belong. In the context of GHRM, the adoption of environmentally friendly practices can be seen as a way for organizations to signal their commitment to environmental sustainability, which can create a sense of belonging and identity for their employees (Bush, 2020; Chang et al., 2020). By adopting GHRM practices, organizations can enhance their corporate social responsibility image, which can lead to increased employee identification with the organization and, ultimately, improved sustainable employee performance (Hameed & Naeem, 2019).

The Stakeholder Theory is another theoretical framework that has been proposed to explain the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance (Bozionelos et al., 2020). The Stakeholder Theory suggests that organizations have a responsibility to manage the interests of their stakeholders, including their employees, customers, suppliers, and the environment. In the context of GHRM, the adoption of environmentally friendly practices can be seen as a way for organizations to fulfil their responsibilities to the environment and their stakeholders. By adopting GHRM practices, organizations can demonstrate their commitment to environmental sustainability, which can lead to increased employee motivation and commitment to the organization and, ultimately, improved sustainable employee performance (Gupta & Gupta, 2020).

Empirical evidence also supports the theoretical relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. The adoption of GHRM practices, such as the provision of environmental training, can lead to increased employee environmental knowledge and awareness, which in turn can lead to improved sustainable employee performance. The adoption of GHRM practices, such as the development of environmentally friendly policies and practices, can lead to improved employee environmental performance and, ultimately, improved organizational environmental performance (Hameed & Naeem, 2019).

However, it is important to note that the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance is complex and can be influenced by a range of factors. For example, the organizational culture, leadership, and employee attitudes and behaviours can all impact the effectiveness of GHRM practices in improving sustainable employee performance. Moreover, the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance may be stronger in some industries or sectors than others, depending on the level of environmental impact and the degree of stakeholder engagement and pressure (Hameed & Naeem, 2019; Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020; Ullah, 2011).

## **VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the key findings from the literature review is that GHRM can help organizations to achieve sustainable employee performance. Sustainable employee performance is critical for organizations that want to improve their environmental performance and achieve their sustainability goals. Sustainable employee performance can be defined as the extent to which employees engage in environmentally responsible behaviours and activities that contribute to the organization's environmental sustainability. Sustainable employee performance is important for organizations because it can help them reduce their environmental impact, enhance their reputation and brand image, and attract and retain environmentally conscious employees and customers (Hameed & Naeem, 2019; Hamid & Hosna, 2021).

Another key finding from the literature review is that several theoretical frameworks can be used to explain the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. These theoretical frameworks include the Resource-Based View, Social Exchange Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Stakeholder Theory. Each of these frameworks provides a different perspective on how GHRM can impact sustainable employee performance. For example, the Resource-Based View suggests that GHRM can help organizations to develop a valuable and rare resource that can contribute to sustained competitive advantage. Social Exchange Theory suggests that GHRM can create a positive exchange relationship between the organization and its employees, leading to improved employee motivation and commitment. Social Identity Theory suggests that GHRM can help employees to develop a sense of identification with the organization's environmental goals and values, leading to improved sustainable employee performance. Stakeholder Theory suggests that GHRM can help organizations meet the expectations and demands of their stakeholders, including employees, customers, and communities (Bonney et al., 2016; Garmendia et al., 2020; Khattak et al., 2020; Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020).

There is also empirical evidence to support the theoretical relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. The adoption of GHRM practices, such as the provision of environmental training, can lead to increased employee environmental knowledge and awareness, which in turn can lead to improved sustainable employee performance (Hameed & Naeem, 2019; Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020; Tan et al., 2019). Similarly, a study conducted by Sobaih & Hasanein, (2020) found that the adoption of GHRM practices, such as the development of environmentally friendly policies and practices, can lead to improved employee environmental performance.

However, it is important to note that the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance is complex and can be influenced by a range of factors. For example, the organizational culture, leadership, and employee attitudes and behaviours can all impact the effectiveness of GHRM practices in improving sustainable employee performance. Moreover, the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance may be stronger in some industries or sectors than others, depending on the level of environmental impact and the degree of stakeholder engagement and pressure (Jackson & Seo, 2010; Renwick et al., 2013; Wongleedee, 2020).

Additionally, GHRM practices that encourage employee participation and involvement in sustainability initiatives can create a sense of ownership and identification with the organization's environmental goals, leading to improved employee motivation and commitment towards these goals (Amrutha & Geetha, 2020; Hussain, 2021).

Moreover, GHRM practices can improve sustainable employee performance by addressing employee well-being and job satisfaction (de Jonge & Peeters, 2019; Ji et al., 2021). GHRM practices that prioritize employee health and safety, work-life balance, and employee development can create a positive work environment that promotes employee well-being and job satisfaction. As a result, employees are more likely to be engaged and motivated to contribute to the organization's environmental sustainability goals (Arulrajah & Opatha, 2016; Elshaer et al., 2021).

However, for GHRM practices to be effective in improving sustainable employee performance, employers need to be aligned with the organization's sustainability goals and values. Organizations need to develop a clear sustainability strategy and communicate this strategy to employees to ensure that GHRM practices are relevant and effective in improving sustainable employee performance. Additionally, organizations need to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of GHRM practices in improving sustainable employee performance and make necessary adjustments as needed.

## **VII. DRAWBACKS IN GHRM AND SEP AREA**

While green human resource management (GHRM) and sustainable employee performance have been theorized to have a positive relationship, there are also some limitations to this relationship that have been identified in the literature.

One limitation is that GHRM practices may not be universally effective in promoting sustainable employee performance. For example, a study by Wongleedee, (2020) found that while GHRM practices such as training, communication, and rewards were effective in promoting sustainable employee behaviour in some contexts, they were not effective in others. The authors suggested that the effectiveness of GHRM practices may depend on factors such as the organization's culture, the nature of the job, and employee motivation.

Another limitation is that sustainable employee performance may not always lead to economic benefits for the organization. While sustainable employee performance can contribute to environmental and social benefits, such as reduced



energy consumption and improved stakeholder relationships, it may not always lead to financial benefits for the organization (Hamid & Hosna, 2021). For example, sustainable practices may require upfront investments in new technologies or employee training, which may not always yield immediate financial returns. A study by Pham, (2019) found that while GHRM practices were positively related to environmental performance, they were not always positively related to financial performance.

Finally, a limitation is that sustainable employee performance may be difficult to measure and assess. While organizations can track and measure certain sustainability indicators, such as energy consumption or waste reduction, it may be difficult to accurately measure employee behaviour and attitudes. This can make it challenging for organizations to evaluate the effectiveness of GHRM practices in promoting sustainable employee performance.

Overall, while GHRM and sustainable employee performance have been theorized to have a positive relationship, there are also limitations and challenges to this relationship. These limitations suggest that organizations need to carefully consider their organizational context and goals when adopting GHRM practices and promoting sustainable employee performance.

### **VIII. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the theoretical relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance is an important area of research for organizations that are committed to improving their environmental performance. The Resource-Based View, Social Exchange Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Stakeholder Theory are some of the theoretical frameworks that have been proposed to explain the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. Empirical evidence also supports the positive relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance.

The relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance is an important area of research for organizations that are committed to improving their environmental performance. The Resource-Based View, Social Exchange Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Stakeholder Theory are some of the theoretical frameworks that have been proposed to explain the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. Empirical evidence also supports the positive relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance. However, the relationship between GHRM and sustainable employee performance is complex and can be influenced by a range of factors, including organizational culture, leadership, and employee attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, organizations need to carefully consider these factors when implementing GHRM practices to ensure that they achieve the desired outcomes.

Finally, the study was able to contribute to the existing literature on green human resource management and sustainable employee performance areas by reviewing the theoretical relationship between the two variables. Thus, readers and future researchers will be able to understand the strengths and drawbacks of these two variables from both academic and organizational perspectives.

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