

## Exploring the Role of Green HR Practices in Promoting Organizational Sustainability

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### Abstract

This research paper explores the role of Green HR practices in contributing to sustainable development in organizations. In an era where sustainable development is at the forefront of many organizations, green HRM practices become essential for fueling efforts towards long-term ecological and economic objectives. The findings of this study articulate three significant drivers that compel organisations to move towards the Green HRM, namely, regulatory compliance, corporate social responsibility, and pressure from stakeholders. Hence, this paper also discusses the hurdles organizations encounter implementing these practices, which include resistance to change, unawareness with regards to the practices and lack of resources. Through analysing multiple case studies and relevant literature, this study shows the performance results of effective Green HR practices based on their positive outcomes such as employee engagement, reputation of the organization, and its sustainability performance. This study highlights how tailored HR practices integrating sustainability objectives can improve employee engagement, thus leading to increased productivity and overall well-being on both organizational and community levels. Conducting a systematic review of secondary data using the PRISMA tool, this paper adds to the burgeoning HR management and sustainability literature, with implications for both practice and research. It highlights the importance of promoting sustainability in organizations and argues the case for implementing Green HR practices as an essential part of modern-day Business Strategy. This exploration leads to the proposed framework, which it brings out the light on how these Green HR practices act as a catalyst for organizational sustainability and sets the path for future studies and practice in this domain.

**Key Words:** Green Human Resource Practices, Organizational Sustainability, Performance Outcomes, Challenges, Drivers

### Introduction

Green Human Resource Management is a framework that incorporates concepts of environmental sustainability into various HR activities. Green HRM aims to attain a positive environmental impact while also developing a sustainable work environment. The evolution of Human Resource (HR) practices over the decades has undergone substantial transformations especially as organizations are becoming more aware of sustainability. Traditionally, HR was concerned with administrative tasks and managing employees. But in recent years, with the growing recognition of climate change and other environmental challenges, HR professionals have been called upon to play a more strategic role in fostering sustainability within their organisations. Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) was first conceptualized in the early 1990s together with the emergence of initiatives oriented on environmental awareness and corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Douglas W.S. Renwick, 2013).

Sustainability is one of the most pressing issues facing businesses in the 21st century, and businesses must grapple with pooling regulatory forces, consumer demands for sustainability, and the competitive advantages of placing sustainability at the center of decision-making. Sustainability is seen as an essential ingredient capable of generating a sustainable competitive advantage, which is reflected in superior financial and business performance. (G. Cachón-Rodríguez, 2021). It is now expected that organizations will embed environmental concerns into their daily operations as such HR departments are adopting practices that benefit employee well-being while reducing ecological footprints (Santos, 2008). Thus, the question remains whether we should focus on GHRM implementation or whether there is still a need to improve it (Komang Oka Permadi, 2024). Nevertheless, it is not without its challenges in implementing these best practices. Resistance to change, lack of resources, and insufficient training are common obstacles for organizations (Ababneh, 2021).

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As environmental and sustainability issues attract more attention, many companies practice Green HRM more and more by social demand and increasingly stringent legislation (Alghamdi, 2021). Green HRM is the underlying force in promoting more environmentally friendly and responsible behaviours among employees (Aulia, 2023).

Green HRM not only ensures compliance with environmental standards but also creates a culture in which employees are encouraged to act environmentally friendly. With green HRM practices, organizations can bring sustainability ideals into the work setting, and also motivate employees to get involved in environment protection initiatives that encourage better employee performance (Julie Haddock-Millar, 2015). Employee performance is among the top priorities for businesses and organizations to achieve their operational goals; marked especially for those who have green practices as one of their operational goals. Corporate culture and managerial support play large roles in employee performance today (Hussain Hakro, 2023). When people feel supported and valued at work, they tend to do their jobs better, helping the organization achieve its objectives. According to (Alghamdi, 2021), design of effective employee performance in profit sustainable context is a function of productivity and the individual employee contribution of every employee towards the organization sustainable environmental goals. Encouraging green behaviours among their employees can aid businesses in achieving sustainability goals and improve their market position (Khan, 2022).

## Literature review

**Table 1 : Literature Review**

Author Name and Year	Paper Title	Key Issues Addressed
Dumont et al. (2017)	The role of green human resource management in promoting sustainability.	Examines the impact of GHRM on organizational sustainability and employee engagement.
Renwick et al. (2013)	Green Human Resource Management: A Review and Research Agenda.	Reviews the literature on GHRM and identifies research gaps and future directions.
Jabbour & Santos (2008)	The importance of human resource management in the adoption of green practices.	Discusses the role of HRM in facilitating the adoption of sustainable practices in organizations.
Zibarras & Ballinger (2011)	HRM in the New Economy: The Role of Green HRM	Explores how GHRM practices can enhance organizational performance and sustainability.
Jackson (2012)	Toward the Sustainable Enterprise: The Role of Human Resource Management	Analyses the strategic role of HRM in achieving sustainability goals within organizations.
Gupta et al. (2019)	Green HRM: A Review of the Literature and Future Directions	Provides a comprehensive review of GHRM literature and suggests future research avenues.
Ahmad et al. (2020)	Green HRM Practices and Organizational Performance: A Study of the Malaysian Context	Investigates the relationship between GHRM practices and organizational performance in Malaysia.
Ali et al. (2021)	The Impact of Green HRM on Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment	Examines how GHRM influences employee engagement and commitment to sustainable practices.
Lee et al. (2020)	The Role of Green HRM in Enhancing Organizational Performance	Discusses the mechanisms through which GHRM contributes to improved organizational performance.
Iqbal et al. (2021)	Green HRM and Employee Performance: A Mediating Role of Employee Engagement	Investigates the mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between GHRM and performance.

Singh et al. (2022)	Green HRM Practices and Their Impact on Organizational Sustainability	Explores the relationship between GHRM practices and overall sustainability outcomes in organizations.
Madsen & Uihøi (2019)	Green Human Resource Management: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Implications	Discusses theoretical perspectives on GHRM and its practical implications for organizations.
Ong et al. (2020)	The Role of HRM in Corporate Sustainability: A Systematic Review	Conducts a systematic review of the role of HRM in corporate sustainability initiatives.
Govindarajulu & Daily (2004)	Motivating Employees for Environmental Improvement: A Leadership Approach	Examines leadership's role in motivating employees towards environmental sustainability through HRM practices.
Renwick et al. (2016)	The Role of Green HRM in Sustainable Business Practices	Discusses how GHRM can support sustainable business practices and enhance competitive advantage.
Chen et al. (2021)	How Green HRM Influences Organizational Citizenship Behaviour	Investigates the influence of GHRM on employees' organizational citizenship behaviour.
Kramar (2014)	Beyond Strategic Human Resource Management: The Importance of Green HRM	Explores the importance of integrating GHRM into strategic HRM frameworks for sustainability.
Saeed et al. (2020)	Green HRM and Organizational Performance: A Study of the Impact of Green Practices	Analyses the impact of implementing GHRM practices on organizational performance metrics.
Arulrajah et al. (2015)	Green HRM: A Review of the Literature and Implications for Future Research	Reviews existing literature on GHRM and its implications for future research directions.
Bhatia et al. (2021)	Green HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment: A Study of Indian Firms	Examines the relationship between GHRM practices and organizational commitment in the Indian context.
Jabbour et al. (2013)	Green Human Resource Management: A Review of the Literature	Provides a comprehensive review of GHRM literature and its implications for organizational sustainability.
Paille et al. (2014)	The Role of HRM in Promoting Sustainable Development: A Review	Discusses HRM's role in promoting sustainable development through effective GHRM practices.
Yusoff et al. (2021)	The Impact of Green HRM on Employee Performance: Evidence from Malaysia	Investigates the impact of GHRM on employee performance in Malaysian organizations.
Zaid et al. (2022)	Green HRM and Employee Turnover Intention: The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction	Explores the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between GHRM and employee turnover.
Boiral & Paillé (2012)	Organizational Learning and Environmental Practices: The Role of HRM	Examines the role of HRM in facilitating organizational learning related to environmental practices.
Rani et al. (2023)	Green HRM Practices: A Catalyst for Sustainable Development	Analyses the role of GHRM practices as catalysts for achieving sustainable development goals.
Kaur et al. (2023)	Green HRM and its Impact on Employee Well-Being: A Study of Indian SMEs	Investigates the impact of GHRM practices on employee well-being in small and medium enterprises in India.

## Theoretical Background of the Study

This study is based on a theoretical framework which contemplates with several theories to explain the connections between the practices of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and organizational sustainability. These theories help us understand how sustainable practices are driven within the organizations by Human Resource department.

**Resource-Based View (RBV):** RBV assumed that the effective use of resources including human capital can provide organizations with competitive advantage. From the GHRM point of view, based on this theory, organizations can improve their overall performance by capitalizing on their human resources to adopt sustainable practices (Barney, 1991). The transformative potential of GHRM lies in the fact that organizations create unique capabilities through fostering a culture of sustainability (Jabbour, 2008).

**Stakeholder Theory:** This is because the theory encourages consideration of the interests of many stakeholders such as the employees and customers and the community.

GHRM is consistent with stakeholder theory since it focuses on the significance of driving environmental sustainability along with ethical behaviours which these days individuals are more inclined towards and key focus point/responsibility rather than just profit making (Freeman, 1984). GHRM operations is more likely to make stakeholders involved in sustainability programs of the organizations and increase stakeholder satisfaction and loyalty (Douglas W.S. Renwick and Tom Redman, 2012).

**Social Exchange Theory:** This theory argues that social relevant behaviour is an exchange process aiming to maximize the outcome and minimize the costs. Green human resource management measures such as GHRM are categorized into two types, however, this fact still holds that when an organization introduces any green practices, it conveys to its employees that sustainability is an important part of their contribution. This may enhance employee engagement, motivation and commitment to the organization sustainability goals (Mitchell, 2005). Through building a favourable exchange relationship, GHRM can promote organisational citizenship behaviours regarding environmental practices.

**Institutional Theory:** Comparative advantage results from positionality, cultural context and institutional theory (understandings of organizations that infiltrate society) as institutions set the boundaries of acceptable behavior. Organizations may implement sustainable practices through regulatory pressures, industry standards, or societal expectations in the context of GHRM (Paul J. DiMaggio, 2000). The institutional theory emphasizes how such pressures lead to the adoption of GHRM practices as organizations strive to comply with the prevailing sustainability norms as a means of improving their legitimacy and reputation.

**Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB):** One of the main concepts of TPB is that people's engagement in certain behaviours is directed by intentions, which can be predicted by their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). This theory is relevant in GHRM as it helps you understand how an employee's attitude towards sustainability and perception of organizational support for sustainable practices can influence his/her engagement in green behaviours. GHRM is promoting attitudes and behaviours conducive to sustainability within organizations, helping employees to practice sustainable behaviours through organizational support.

**Gap of The Study:** Even though there is a significant and growing body of literature examining Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), and its influence on organizational sustainability, many important gaps remain. While there are qualitative and anecdotal studies on GHRM practices, there is a lack of empirical studies quantifying the impact of GHRM practices on organizational performance. Furthermore, previous studies have mainly been carried out in developed countries, which does not give a significant understanding of the GHRM concept in developing countries or specific industries. In particular, the mediating effects of employee engagement and organizational culture on the relationship between GHRM and employee behaviour and outcomes have not received adequate attention. In addition, existing research is predominantly developed in isolation within specific theoretical lenses, and toward understanding longitudinal effects of GHRM, most studies are cross-sectional in design. Last but not least, employees are often neglected stakeholders regarding their perceptions and engagement of GHRM interventions, which are important for measuring their effectiveness. The purpose of this study is to fill these gaps, both theoretically, by adding to the GHRM body of literature and practically, by providing implications for organizations wishing to improve their sustainability activities.

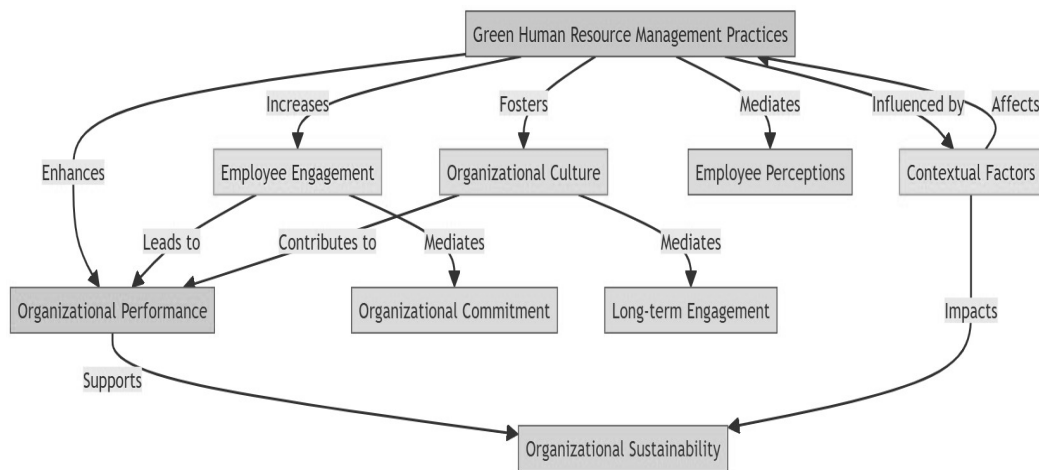
## Objectives

1. To Empirically Analyse the Impact of GHRM Practices
2. To Explore Context-Specific GHRM Implementation
3. To Examine the Mediating Roles of Employee Engagement and Organizational Culture

## Research Methodology

This study will adopt a qualitative approach on the secondary method to study the influence of GHRM practices on organizational sustainability. Using the PRISMA tool for a systematic review of secondary data, a detailed literature review will be gathered from academic journals, books and credible online databases to determine any existing research, theories and empirical studies related to GHRM. This will be complemented with secondary data through reviews of various case studies of organisations which have successfully implemented GHRM practices and sustainability disclosures. The data collected will be thematically analysed for common themes and patterns, then subject to comparative analysis to understand differences and similarities between contexts. Results will be summarized to make conclusions regarding the impact of GHRM practices on organizational sustainability, and investigate the mediating effect powered by employee engagement and organizational culture. Finally, our estimated associations could be confounded by issues of secondary data and differences in data quality. Ethics guide this process by ensuring proper citation, and adherence to put academic integrity in focus. Through use of this method, the study aspires to deliver insightful contributions regarding the role of GHRM in developing sustainability, supporting previously identified gaps in the literature.

## Conceptual Model for GHRM Practices in Promoting Organizational Sustainability



**Fig 1: GHRMP (Authors Compilation)**

An integrated conceptual model this is, showing the holistic relationships among the components (i.e. Green Human Resource Management practices, employee engagement, organizational culture, and consequently organizational sustainability). It additionally showcases mediating elements that modify the interrelationships between these relationships.

**GHRM Practices:** The base layer of the model, illustrating the different types of practices organizations adopt to move towards sustainability. These practices include recruitment, training, performance management and employee involvement in sustainability initiatives.

**Employee Engagement:** Research proves that GHRM practices boost employees' engagement. Engaged employees are more likely to get involved in sustainability initiatives, resulting in improved outcomes for the organization.

**Organizational Culture:** GHRM practices cultivate a sustainability-oriented culture. Having a positive organizational culture will enable employees to align their behaviors as per their sustainability goals which helps the enterprise to create a suitable environment for GHRM initiatives.

**Organizational Performance:** Employee engagement and culture drive higher organizational performance. The node conveys the essentials of performance offering through GHRM effectiveness as Sustainable objectives requires high productivity and efficiency.

**Organizational Sustainability:** The long-term results of the implementation of successful GHRM practices, the powerful commitment to employees, and a positive organizational culture are improved organizational sustainability. This includes elements of sustainability, social and economic sustainability to ensure that organizations are able to sustain themselves in the long-term.



**Contextual Factors:** The context, including industry characteristics, regulatory environment, and cultural aspects, shape the deployment and impact of GHRM practices. These elements establish a feedback loop, which can influence both the GHRM practices and organizational sustainability.

**Mediating Factors:** It presents a content model with theoretical perspectives consisting of three mediating factors in relationship of GHRM practice to employee engagement, employee engagement to organizational culture and organizational culture to sustainability:

**Employee Perceptions:** Positive GHRM Perceptions and Performance Outcomes: Positive GHRM perceptions can foster employee engagement and commitment resulting in improved performance and sustainability outcomes.

**Organizational Commitment:** Additionally, employees with high levels of organizational commitment can act as mediators in the engagement-performance relationship, thereby amplifying the positive effect of GHRM Practices.

**Long-term Engagement:** Continuous improvement in organizational performance and sustainability as a result of sustained engagement over time reinforces the importance of longterm strategies in GHRM.

## Key Drivers in Green HR Practices on Organizational Sustainability



**Fig 2: Key Drivers in GHRP (Authors Compilation)**

**Leadership Commitment:** Green initiatives must be driven by strong commitment from leadership. They inculcate the vision and tone for sustainability within the organization and inspire employees to work towards organizational sustainability goals (Jackson et al., 2011).

**Employee Involvement:** Corporate sustainability programs that are inclusive of employees can in still commitment and participation in sustainability outcomes. Employees who feel engaged are more likely to contribute to green initiatives (Renwick et al., 2013).

**Training and Development:** Providing training and development opportunities enables employees gain knowledge and skills to incorporate sustainability practices in their work. Investing in human capital is key to developing that green culture (Jabbour & Santos, 2008).

**Performance Management:** Integrating sustainability into performance management systems Sustainability has to be a part of performance management systems so that employees are incentivized and held accountable for their contributions toward sustainability goals. Such consistency highlights the relevance of green practices (Daily & Huang, 2001).

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Sustainability cannot be achieved by organizations in isolation; hence, organizations receive stakeholder input, such as from customers, suppliers, and the community, to understand expectations and strengthen sustainability efforts. Stakeholder feedback can spark creativity in green initiatives (Freeman, 1984).

**Regulatory Compliance:** One of the primary motivators of Green HR practices is complying with environmental regulations. Legal compliance is mandatory for organizations to prevent penalties and promote sustainability (Aguilera et al., 2007).

**Corporate Social Responsibility:** An organization's commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a mark of maintaining ethical practices, including eco-friendliness. CSR activities usually run parallel to Green HR practices and mitigate the sustainability (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

**Enhanced Organizational Culture:** Each driver plays a role in establishing a stronger organisational culture focused on sustainability. A supportive culture leads to a desire to implement green practices among employees and the environment agenda office.

**Organizational Sustainability:** These key drivers lead to the ultimate impact of stronger organizational sustainability through effective Green HR practices. These include sustainable environmental, social, and economic practices, which ensure that the organization functions responsibly and ethically over the long-term.

## Challenges in Green HR Practices in Promoting Organizational Sustainability



**Fig 3: Challenges in GHRP (Authors Compilation)**

**Lack of Awareness:** There might be fewer climate change awareness Green HR practices in the workplace. So little awareness may result in inadequate engagement in sustainability efforts.

**Resistance to Change:** There may be resistance to change associated with new green initiatives from employees as they may be fearful of the unknown or uncomfortable with changing the way they do things. This can delay the change that needs to happen.

**Insufficient Training:** With insufficient programs for training, employees might not have the ability and the expertise to become a sustainability deliverer. Such a gap may result in poor implementation of green initiatives.

**Limited Resources:** Organizational constraints such as financial, human, or technological resources, as well as the implementation of Green HR practices Ed: Challenges and Opportunities in implementing sustainability Initiatives — Poor Resourcing

**Inadequate Policy Framework:** Without clear policies and guidelines about sustainability, the implementation of Green HR practices can be inconsistent and create confusion. Silos could emerge from a weak framework.

**Measurement Difficulties:** It is difficult to measure the potency of Green HR practices and study its outturn on sustainability. The reality is that without the proper metrics, organizations will have a difficult time measuring progress or seeing data that allows them to make informed decisions.

**Short-term Focus:** It shows how the lack of long-term orientation in organizations leads to preferring short-term financial gains over sustainability goals. In such situations, the need of the hour is to practice Green HR practices that are a long-term approach that can be ignored.

### Impact on Organizational Sustainability:

The challenges in the diagram above can play a substantial role in preventing an organization from reaching its sustainability goals:

- **Engagement and Participation:** There may also be barriers to participation at the employee level, with initiatives being meaningful only to a few.
- **Skill Gaps:** Limited training restricts employees from applying green practices, leading to ineffective implementation and lost potential for enhancement.
- **Resource Allocation:** Limited resources means less ability to invest in necessary initiatives, so sustainability programs can become inadequate.
- **Policy Clarity:** The absence of comprehensive policy frameworks can lead to practices that do not align, rendering organizational endeavors toward sustainability incoherent.
- **Progress Assessment:** Measurement challenges prevent organizations from assessing the success of their initiatives, which can stall progress and contribute to disillusionment with sustainability initiatives.
- **Long-term Vision:** The lack of commitment to a sustainable practice due to this short term focus threatens the organizations long term survival and reputation.

**Strategies to Overcome Challenges in Green HR Practices:** To promote organizational sustainability through Green HR practices, organizations can adopt several methods to minimize the barriers that have been identified in the former diagram. Each challenge comes with actionable solutions:

**Education and Communication:** Create campaigns that raise awareness on the importance of sustainability and Green HR practices. Educate your employees on similar initiatives and their benefits and goals by hosting workshops, seminars and through internal communications Foster Executive Support: Engage executives to take up the cause of sustainability, signalling seriousness and embedding awareness into the organizational culture.

**Change Management Programs:** Conduct well-structured change management programs with active employee involvement. Tackle concerns and suggestions using feedback channels. **Encouraging Participation:** By offering incentives to employees who engage in sustainability programs, you create a positive reinforcement loop and drive acceptance to change.

**Comprehensive Training Programs:** Enhance employee capabilities for Green HR implementation through targeted training programs. Add examples and want training in it. **Offer Continuous Learning Opportunities:** Organize workshops, online courses, and other forms of training to help employees stay updated on sustainability best practices.

**Resource Allocation:** Among each of the above: make budgets for sustainability initiatives a priority. Instead, consider diverting current resources to invest in green programs. This may include, as examples, partnerships and collaborations with organizations, NGOs or academic institutions to share resources, knowledge and best practices in sustainability.

**Policy Development:** Create policies and guidelines that define the organization's commitment to sustainability. Ensure that everyone in your organization understands these policies. **Regular Review and Updates:** There should be periodic reviews and updates of the policies to ensure they align with the changing sustainability goals and practices used, keeping the policies relevant and effective.

**Develop Clear Metrics:** The proposed Green HR model should help develop metrics that are specific and measurable to verify how effective Green HR practices are. Implement KPIs related to sustainability objectives. **Collaboration Tools:** Facilitate communication and collaboration among teams, stakeholders, and partners involved in sustainability initiatives, ensuring everyone is aligned and working towards common goals.

**Long-term Vision and Goals:** Organization to think beyond short-term goals and more toward long-term sustainability goals. Craft a list of actionable sustainability objectives with corresponding timelines in a strategic plan. **Embed Sustainability in Business Strategy:** Embed sustainability considerations into the overall business strategy and ensure all stakeholders contribute to it.

## Findings

**Table 2: Findings**

Key Findings	Description
Importance of Leadership Commitment	Strong leadership commitment is crucial for motivating employees and setting a vision for sustainability.
Employee Engagement is Critical	High levels of employee involvement lead to better outcomes in sustainability initiatives.
Training Enhances Effectiveness	Comprehensive training equips employees with the skills needed for effective Green HR practices.
Resource Allocation Matters	Adequate resources are necessary for successful implementation of Green HR practices.
Clear Policies Drive Consistency	Well-defined policies create consistency in executing sustainability initiatives.
Measurement is Key to Improvement	Specific metrics and data systems enable assessment and continuous improvement of sustainability efforts.
Long-term Focus is Essential	Integrating sustainability into business strategy ensures meaningful long-term progress.
Overcoming Resistance to Change	Effective change management strategies can mitigate resistance and foster acceptance among employees.
Collaborative Approaches Enhance Success	Partnerships with external stakeholders provide valuable resources and expertise for Green HR practices.
Impact on Organizational Performance	Successful Green HR practices improve employee morale, enhance brand reputation, and lead to better financial outcomes.



## Conclusions

The focus of this research paper has been on the complex and critical intersection of Green Human Resource (HR) practices and organizational sustainability and the myriad challenges and strategies involved in the transition towards effective implementation of these practices. The results highlight that effective Green HR practices are not an additional piece, rather they form an essential aspect of an organization's total sustainability approach. In summary, it is clear from the highlights that key factors such as commitment from top management, involving employees, and thorough training programs play a pivotal role in creating a sustainability culture. Moreover, the need for focused policies and resource allocation is needed to successively manage Green HR practices. Measuring and monitoring these practices is essential for continuous improvement, and a long-term focus allows for potential meaningful sustainability benefits.

So, to achieve buy in from everyone in the organization, it is important to overcome the resistance to change that always comes with the need to get up and move through effective change management strategies. External engagement and collaborative practices partner with stakeholders to enhance sustainability and community outcomes even more. This research provides considerable insight into the gaps currently holding organizations back and those that act early and proactively on such challenges will be better equipped to take appropriate steps and instigate truly Green HR themselves. Not only does this make an organization more sustainable, but it also improves performance as well as employee morale and the reputation of the brand. Further studies is required within the context of Green HR practices evolving in light of generations, technology and global sustainability trends. Such an approach allows organizations to stay ahead of the curve in sustainable development, while also contributing to wider societal goals related to environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

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