



# **THE EFFECT OF GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY: AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE**

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## **Abstract**

*The objective of this study was to establish the effect of green human resource management practices on organizational effectiveness and efficiency in Africa. The methodology was aligned to Grant and Booth (2009) whereby secondary data is considered a sufficient methodology for data collection. The findings revealed a strong relationship between green human resource management practices and organizational effectiveness and efficiency. The study concluded that implementation of green human resource management practices by organizations contributes to benefits such as improvement of the public image of an organization, competitive advantage, a loyal and committed staff, high performance, more awareness on environmental protection and an organizational ability to adhere to the laws on environmental protection. The recommendations were: more training programmes should be designed and implemented in organizations in order to create awareness and understanding on Green Human Resource Management Practices and how these practices contribute to organizational effectiveness and efficiency, Academic Institutions of Higher Learning and professional institutions should include in their curricula, content on Green Human Resource Management Practices in order to produce graduates who are knowledgeable in green behavior. Organizations should also adopt policies that support green behavior hence protecting the environment. Organizations should hire employees who are knowledgeable in green behavior.*

*Keywords: Green Human Resource Management Practices, Organizational Effectiveness, Organizational Efficiency, Green Behaviour, Environmental Sustainability*

## INTRODUCTION

The issue of environmental protection has become a global concern in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Organizations in Africa and all over the world have been blamed for contributing to the degradation of the environment through air, water, noise, soil and other means of pollution. As stakeholders to the environment, organizations are called upon to take the leadership role to protect the environment by attracting smart professionals with experience in green behavior. Organizations therefore have come up with the necessary strategies to protect the environment while ensuring that the organization continues to achieve effectiveness and efficiency. Hence Green Human Resource Management Practices is one of the strategies that organizations have come up with in order to ensure that the environment is protected and at the same time organizations are able to achieve effectiveness and efficiency. Some of the Green Human Resource Management Practices that organizations have come up with that form the basis of this research study are green recruitment and selection, green training and development and green reward management. In addition, modern organizations are encouraging employees to adopt green behavior in their work in order to conserve and protect the environment from degradation. Consequently, modern organizations are focused on hiring employees who are knowledgeable in green behavior. Organizations are also adopting policies that support green behavior hence protecting the environment.

Green human resources management refers to the alignment between Human Resource Management (HRM) and the environmental management (EM). This alignment aims to motivate the firms to improve the commitment of the employees towards the environment, in order to stimulate the environmental performance (Schuler and Jackson 2014). According to Mwita (2019), Green Human Resource Management is a process of making use of human resources at workplaces in order to achieve organisational goals with deliberate efforts to make sure the process contributes towards environmental sustainability. Green Human Resource Management is still a new and an emerging field that needs more attention from researchers and Human Resource Management Practitioners. According to Roscoe et al., (2019), Green Human Resource Management (GRHM) practices offer a practical way for organisations to develop human capital that can enhance the environmental performance and sustainable development of the firm. GHRM refers to the HRM aspects of environmental management and is defined as HRM activities that have positive environmental outcomes. GHRM practices can be categorised into three primary activities: developing green employee abilities, motivating green employees and providing green opportunities. Developing an employee's green abilities involves integrating positive

environmental thinking into the firm using Human Resource activities such as recruitment, selection, training and leadership development. Once recruited and trained, employees remain motivated through performance measurement and reward systems that are focused on providing opportunities for environmental performance improvement.

This research paper therefore investigates the effect of green human resource management practices on organizational effectiveness and efficiency in Africa. Section one discusses the background to the study, section two focuses on the literature review, section three highlights the research methodology, section four discusses the analysis and findings of the research study, section five gives conclusions and lastly section six discusses the recommendations and suggestions for further research studies.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Organizations have been blamed for contributing to environmental degradation through actions such as air, water, noise, soil and other means of pollution practices. This has resulted to the degradation of the environment hence the change in climate and food insecurity. Scientists have been warning the world of dire consequences of environmental degradation such as global warming, rise in sea level, drought, and poor quality of air among other consequences. In addition, some diseases i.e. some cancers are associated with environmental degradation factors. Life expectancy of people living in areas where there is immense environmental degradation has been shortened as a result. Consequently, modern organizations all over the world have since come up with strategies to conserve the environment while enhancing organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Experts in the field of human resource management have derived innovative strategies that are aligned to conservation of the environment. These strategies are meant to encourage employees to adopt green behavior in their work while enhancing better performance. Examples of these practices include green recruitment and selection, green training and development, green reward management among other practices. Hence, Green Human Resource Management Practices is steadily gaining popularity among modern organizations globally as a means of conserving the environment.

Green Human Resource Management Practices and green behavior has not been fully embraced by many organizations in Africa. As a result, exploitation and wastage of natural resources in organizations based in Africa is still a common practice. This could be due to lack of awareness and insufficient skills among the management and employees, on how to design and implement policies that support green behavior at work.

Green Human Resource Management Practices is a relatively new area in the field of Human Resource Management; therefore there is insufficient information and lack of awareness among employees and all stakeholders. This explains why very few organizations are currently practicing Green Human Resource Management. Therefore there is need to create awareness and sensitize organizations on the importance of adopting Green Human Resource Management Practices and Green Behaviour in Organizations. Hence the need for this research studies.

### **General Objective**

To investigate the effect of green human resource management practices on organizational effectiveness and efficiency in Africa.

### **Specific Objectives**

- i) To establish the relationship between green recruitment and selection and organizational effectiveness and efficiency
- ii) To ascertain the relationship between green training and development and organizational effectiveness and efficiency
- iii) To determine the relationship between green reward management and organizational effectiveness and efficiency

### **Research Questions**

- i) What is the relationship between green recruitment and selection and organizational effectiveness and efficiency?
- ii) How does green training and development affect organizational effectiveness and efficiency?
- iii) What is the relationship between green reward management and organizational effectiveness and efficiency?

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study is guided by AMO theory. AMO stands for Ability, Motivation and Opportunity. According to the theory, performance is a function of employees' ability, motivation and availability of opportunities to perform. This implies that, a firm is more likely to perform better when employees have right knowledge and skills, are well motivated and are offered with opportunities to use their knowledge and skills.

The choice of the theory has been done based on its relevance to green HRM. Practicing green HRM may be influenced when employees have the right green knowledge and skills (ability), are offered financial and non-financial incentives to adapt and use green HRM (motivation) and are given chances to use their green knowledge and skills in organisations (Opportunity) (Mwita 2019).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A systematic literature review on Green Human Resource Management and Green Human Capital by Shoaibi et al., (2021) revealed that green HRM is imperative for the implementation of environmental sustainability. More importantly, green human capital is considered an important strategic tool for HR managers and policy makers for devising human resource policies. Policy makers and managers to pay attention towards environmental sustainability and future research agenda to carry out analytical and empirical research. Scholars should explore the emerging areas of human resource management such as green intellectual capital and green human capital to achieve sustainable development and competitive advantage.

Karthika and Iswarya (2021) investigated the relationship between green behavior and green human resource management practices in the city of Chennai. The study revealed that green human resource management practices have more impact on pro-environmental behavior inside the organization than outside the society. In addition, most employees prefer to keep their working place as green as their homes, they also prefer to work in places of pleasant atmosphere and good ambience.

Sakharina et al., (2020) investigated the impact of green human resource practices on the sustainable environmental performance. The results indicated that green training enhances the worker's capability to identify the problems regarding the environment, to have a vast range of knowledge regarding difficult problems faced by the environment and an efficient understanding on how the environment is influenced through their job practices. The companies who are working with the target to attain the outstanding environmental performance are projected to appoint workers having higher environmental sensitivity and competencies.

Roscoe et al., (2019) examined the relationship between Green Human Resource Management practices, the enablers of Green Organisational Culture and a firm's Environmental Performance. The findings suggested that pro-environmental Human Resource Management practices including hiring, training, appraisal and incentives support the development of the enablers of green organizational culture. The study suggested that

the key enablers of green organizational culture include leadership emphasis, message credibility, peer involvement, and employee empowerment.

Gharibeh (2019) investigated the impact of the green human resources management practices (GHRM) on the Jordanian educational organization competitive advantage. Furthermore, the study attempted to investigate the relationship between the GHRM and the competitive advantage of the organization; in terms of the Green selection and recruitment (S&R), training and development (T&D) and rewards system (RS) in the Jordanian educational organization. The study found that the implementation of the green human resources management practices have a positive relationship with the competitive advantage of the educational organizations in Jordan.

Mose (2019) investigated the effect of green human resource management practices on organizational effectiveness of Universities in Kenya. The study revealed that green recruitment and selection, green HR performance management, green training & development and green pay and reward recorded a positive and significant relationship with organizational effectiveness of Universities in Kenya. The study also concluded that during recruitment and selection, the management seeks to employ and recruit staff and personnel that are conversant and ready to apply their skills and expertise to better the ecological surrounding. The employees recruited are not only left on their own to work out the plan, but are also coached and trained on their specific matters and issues that relate to the environment. Motivation of the staff is instrumental. However, the reward system was not that adequate and satisfactory which was evident by delayed rewards/compensations towards the met green standards to the employees and unclear promotional framework. Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study therefore, recommended that the Universities need to be diverse and timely in their motivational strategies as well as meet their compensation obligations towards the employees. Initiation of green stakeholders' involvement initiatives to help in improving the environment, employee health and safety as well as enlargement of the pool of knowledgeable employees and supervisors is necessary.

A study by Mwita (2019) on the Conceptual Review of Green Human Resource Management Practices revealed that Green HRM offers multiple advantages to organisations; from those relating to corporate social responsibility, business performance as well as facilitating environmental sustainability. Organisations that are willing and able to practice Green HRM are likely to attract more customers, shareholders and comply with legal and ethical standards. Hence the study recommended that more training programmes have to be organised and provided to managerial and non-managerial members of various

organisations to raise awareness and understanding of Green HRM. In addition, Education institutions have to include Green HRM in their curricula to ensure that more green graduates are produced in these institutions. Also, more researches have to be done in the area of Green HRM to provide more evidence based findings that will explain the essence of Green HRM in contemporary organisations.

Jabbar, H., & Abid, M. (2015) analyzed the impact of Green Human Resource Management practices on environmental performance. The findings of the study revealed that employees recruited on the basis of their environmental cognizance achieve higher grades of satisfaction when they are more involved in decisions and day to day operations.

### **Knowledge Gap**

Studies conducted by Shoaibi et al., (2021), Karthika and Iswarya (2021), Sakharina et al., (2020), Roscoe et al., (2019), Jabbar, H., & Abid, M. (2015) established a strong relationship between Green Human Resource Management Practices and Environmental Performance and Sustainability. Another study by Gharibeh (2019) revealed a strong relationship between green human resource management practices and competitive advantage of organizations. A study by Mwita (2019) revealed a strong relationship between green human resource management practices and corporate social responsibility, business performance and environmental sustainability. Out of all the literature that was reviewed, only one study by Mose (2019) established a strong relationship between green human resource management practices and organizational effectiveness. Other research studies emphasized more on environmental sustainability than organizational effectiveness and efficiency. In addition, only one research study focused on Africa, other research studies focused on other parts of the world.

Therefore there is insufficient knowledge on the effect of green human resource management practices on organizational effectiveness and efficiency in Africa.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The methodology of the study was aligned to Grant and Booth (2009) whereby secondary data is considered a sufficient methodology for data collection. Hence the research methodology was restricted to the literature that was reviewed from previous research studies on the Effect of Green Human Resource Management Practices on Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency.

## FINDINGS

The following analysis and findings are drawn from the literature that was reviewed for this study:

Table 1: Summary of the Analysis and Findings based on the Literature Review

No.	Author	Discussions
1	Shoaibi et al., (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green HRM is imperative for the implementation of environmental sustainability.</li> </ul>
2	Karthika and Iswarya (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most employees prefer to keep their working place as green as their homes, they also prefer to work in places of pleasant atmosphere and good ambience.</li> </ul>
3	Sakharina et al., (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The companies who are working with the target to attain the outstanding environmental performance are projected to appoint workers having higher environmental sensitivity and competencies.</li> </ul>
4	Roscoe et al., (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The key enablers of green organizational culture include leadership emphasis, message credibility, peer involvement, and employee empowerment.</li> </ul>
5	Mose (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiation of green stakeholders' involvement initiatives to help in improving the environment, employee health and safety as well as enlargement of the pool of knowledgeable employees and supervisors is necessary.</li> </ul>
6	Mwita (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisations that are willing and able to practice Green HRM are likely to attract more customers, shareholders and comply with legal and ethical standards.</li> </ul>
7	Jabbar, H., & Abid, M. (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees recruited on the basis of their environmental cognizance achieve higher grades of satisfaction when they are more involved in decisions and day to day operations.</li> </ul>

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, this research study therefore concludes that green human resource management practices affect the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations. In addition, implementation of green human resource management practices by organizations contributes to benefits such as improvement of the public image of an organization, competitive advantage, a loyal and committed staff, high performance, more awareness on environmental protection and an organizational ability to adhere to the laws on environmental protection. The



research study has contributed to the body of knowledge by affirming that green human resource management practices affect the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study therefore recommends that more training programmes should be designed and implemented in organizations in order to create awareness and understanding on Green Human Resource Management Practices and how these practices contribute to organizational effectiveness and efficiency. In addition, Academic Institutions of Higher Learning and professional institutions should include in their curricula, content on Green Human Resource Management Practices in order to produce graduates who are knowledgeable in green behavior. Organizations should also adopt policies that support green behavior hence protecting the environment. Organizations should hire employees who are knowledgeable in green behavior.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research study investigated the effect of green human resource management practices on organizational effectiveness and efficiency in Africa. The limitations of this research study should form the basis for future research study. The time scope for this research study was very short i.e. one month. The time therefore was not sufficient for extensive review of literature. Future research studies should therefore increase the time scope to allow extensive review of literature. The methodology used in this research study was restricted to secondary data. Therefore future research studies should adopt other methodologies such as descriptive, explanatory, survey, case study etc. In addition, future research studies should consider a suitable research model derived from the literature review. Hence the research model should be tested using Chi Square, F-Test, T-Test etc. This research study was limited in its scope because it only focused on Green Human Resource Management Practices in Africa and ignored the rest of the world. Therefore future research studies should widen the scope to cover other parts of the world because environmental degradation is a global problem affecting organizations across the globe.

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