# A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ON THE IMPACT OF GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ON EMPLOYEE GREEN PERFORMANCE

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**Abstract**

*This conceptual paper examines the correlation between the dimensions of green human resource management (GHRM) and employee green performance in Bangladesh, emphasizing the growing impact of these functions on employee green performance. As Bangladeshi garment firms ascend to become the leading garment exporters globally, they face continual pressure to uphold environmental sustainability through their employees' eco-friendly practices. The greening of organizations has emerged as a prevalent issue in the past five years, whereas the greening of people has not received adequate attention. This article examines the influence and correlation of GHRM practices on employee green performance. The framework elucidates the primary components of GHRM, their interconnections, and the potential impact on employee green performance. The article is a foundational guide for managers across many industries concerning GHRM practices. Numerous studies in the GHRM domain have prompted enquiries among academics on employees' insufficient green awareness concerning sustainable practices and the disinterest of top management in incorporating green strategies into corporate*

*policy. Nevertheless, there has been limited emphasis on green employee performance in recent years. Research in the GHRM domain has proliferated since the year 2020 suggesting that there remain significant areas requiring further exploration, specifically, about the fundamental GHRM practices. The quantity of research on these practices is minimal and has yet to provide empirical evidence that substantiates their potential for achieving a competitive edge for any organization.*

*Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Employee Green Performance, Green Rewards, Green Recruitment, Green Training, Green Behavior*

## INTRODUCTION

The growing emphasis on sustainable business worldwide has heightened stakeholders' awareness about the importance of going green. Accordingly, the Bangladeshi government has implemented various environmental policy initiatives to alleviate the adverse impacts of development and foster social harmony (Anand & Gaur, 2019). However, in 2022, only 155 of the 5,000 garment manufacturers in Bangladesh were certified as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green factories. To address this issue, Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is a useful tool to promote environmentally responsible behavior among employees, thereby improving sustainability in the workplace and the organization overall (Ahmad, 2015). Consequently, the integration of GHRM in company practices, policies and strategies is now a global necessity.

GHRM practices, such as green recruitment, green training and development, and green rewards, are primary factors that enhance environmental knowledge and green behavior among garment manufacturing workers (Aktar & Islam, 2020). Despite the considerable emphasis given to employee green behavior in the literature (Anwar et al., 2020), there remains contention on the underlying motivators of this behavior and the influence of organizational strategies such as GHRM on it. Therefore, this conceptual paper aims to develop a framework on the effects of GHRM practices on employee green performance through the mediation of environmental knowledge as an underlying mechanism.

## Green Human Resource Management

GHRM is a management system that integrates environmental considerations within the workplace to cultivate an ecologically efficient organizational culture. It involves employing and developing individuals who are environmentally accountable. Thus, GHRM within an organization denotes the robust connection between human resource management and

environmental management (Tan et al., 2018). This paper discusses three main GHRM practices: green recruitment, green training and development, and green rewards.

## Green Recruitment

For companies aiming to achieve sustainability performance goals, it is crucial to identify and recruit individuals who align with their dedication to environmental stewardship (Jabbour & Jabbour, 2016; Renwick et al., 2016). For example, recruiting managers who demonstrate a genuine commitment to environmental sustainability (e.g., shutting off lights, reducing paper usage, etc.) can encourage subordinates to emulate these behaviors, thus creating an eco-friendly workplace (Jiang et al., 2019). However, the "war for talent" poses several obstacles for green recruitment, making it difficult to acquire elite eco-conscious talent (Kazmi et al., 2022).

## Green Training & Development

Green training and development involves human resource efforts to increase environmental consciousness, instill sustainable principles, and improve eco-friendly work capacities among employees (Zoogah, 2011). Its goal is to enhance staff members' psychological receptivity, ecological awareness, knowledge, and skills (Pinzone et al., 2016). Employees who undergo green training and development are thus more motivated to undertake actions aligning with corporate green objectives and more prepared to tackle environmental challenges (Chaudhary, 2019).

## Green Rewards

By supplying the necessary impetus for participation in eco-friendly actions, green compensation and incentive systems motivate employees to exhibit both task-oriented and discretionary behaviors that align with organizational environmental objectives (Chaudhary, 2019). Compensation packages should recognize and reward green skills and achievements. For example, employees who exceed expectations in maintaining cleanliness, adhering to health and safety standards, and minimizing paper usage may be awarded extra bonuses (Hosain & Rahman, 2016).

## Environmental Knowledge

Research indicates that personnel with a profound understanding of the environment exhibit greater commitment to achieving environmental performance objectives (Fawehinmi et al., 2020). Anwar et al. (2020) assert that "recruiters favor candidates possessing environmental

knowledge and a positive environmental attitude, as they are more likely to participate in eco-initiatives." Due to the varying levels of environmental awareness among employees, it is essential to examine if this knowledge acts as an underlying mechanism in the impact of GHRM on an employee's green behavior (Ahmad et al., 2021).

**Employee Green Performance**

Jabbour et al. (2008) defined green performance as the methodology for evaluating the efficacy of an organization's workforce in relation to environmental and other critical concerns. Corporate environmental sustainability is crucial for improving employees' eco-friendly habits, attainable only through employee environmental performance (Niazi, 2023). Previous empirical research has largely overlooked the predictive significance of the amalgamation of green strategy and GHRM practices on employee green performance (Chen et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019; Singjai et al., 2018).

**RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

Figure 1 presents the proposed framework of this study, wherein three GHRM practices—green recruitment, green rewards, and green training and development—are proposed to enhance employee green performance through the mediation of employees' environmental knowledge.

Yusoff et al. (2018) identified that green recruiting and selection, green training and development, and green remuneration positively affect environmental performance. To attract more environmentally concerned personnel, companies may develop an environmental identity and image that encourages their workforce to prioritize environmentalism (Kapil & Sharma, 2015; Guerci et al., 2016). According to the findings of Calia et al. (2009), incentives paired with greening programs in an organization can improve the ability of workers to make decisions that are environmentally sustainable. Similarly, green training aims to improve employees' skills and comprehension of environmentally sustainable practices, emphasizing the transformation of their emotional commitment and perspective towards ecological goals (Zibarras & Coan, 2015).

By recruiting, training, and rewarding employees using green strategies, firms can enhance employees' environmental knowledge, and in turn, boost their green behaviors. Ultimately, the outcome of green performance aims to augment employees' propensity for environmental duties and obligations (Pinzone et al., 2016). Despite these potential correlations, limited research has been undertaken to examine the associations between

GHRM, environmental knowledge, and green performance, presenting a crucial research gap (Munawar et al., 2022). Therefore, this paper proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Green recruitment significantly impacts the employee green performance of an organization.

H2: Green rewards significantly improve the employee green performance of a firm.

H3: Green Training and development significantly influence employee green performance.

H4: Environmental knowledge mediates the relationship between green recruitment and employee green performance.

H5: Environmental knowledge mediates the relationship between green rewards and employee green performance.

H6: Environmental knowledge mediates the relationship between green training and development and employee green performance.

H7: Employee green performance is significantly influenced by green recruitment, green rewards, and green training and development.
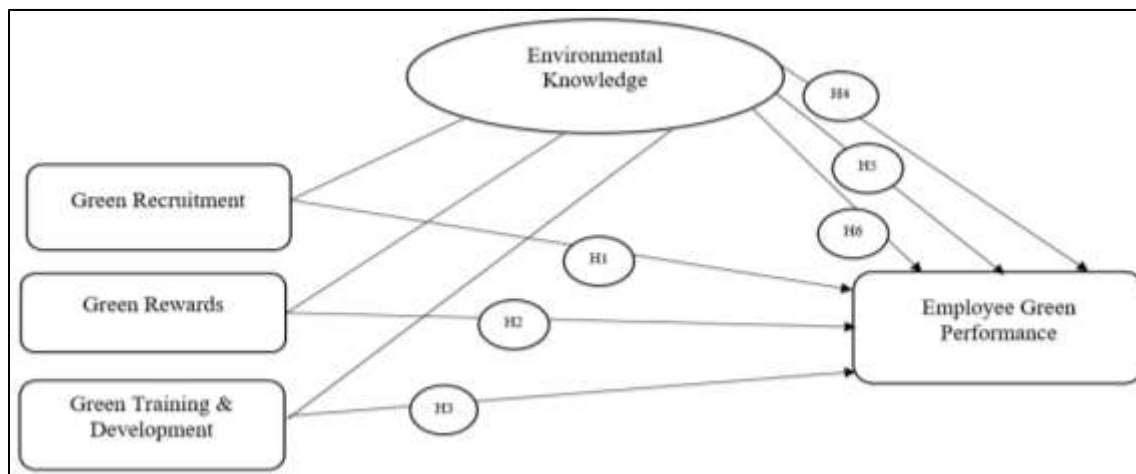


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

**DISCUSSION**

This study advocates that the integration of GHRM into corporate strategy and policy offers numerous benefits. As such, to align sustainability initiatives with broader organizational objectives, entities should incorporate GHRM into their strategy planning (Zihan et al., 2024). Indeed, Yong (2016) posits that strategic alignment between company plans and environmental goals is crucial to promote the institutionalization of GHRM. When this is achieved, every employee will routinely engage in environmental performance initiatives, hence enhancing their sustainability-related awareness, knowledge, and behaviors (Fayyazi et al., 2015; Jabeen et al.,

2024). Therefore, to maximize environmental performance, firms must better understand GHRM practices and their influence on employees' eco-friendly behaviors.

Despite its potential, adopting GHRM is time-intensive, requiring sustained commitment from both senior management and employees (Jabeen et al., 2024). It also demands ongoing process advancement, characterized by global trends and regulatory mechanisms (Agarwal et al., 2011). Challenges may further arise in transitioning from conventional HRM to GHRM, such as in assessing the impact of GHRM practices on employee behavior (Mehta & Mehta, 2017). In addition, internal stakeholders' insufficient awareness of environmental issues might limit the implementation of GHRM and diminish collaboration (Fayyazi et al., 2015).

## CONCLUSION

GHRM signifies the strategic integration of environmental stewardship and HRM, reflecting a commitment to sustainability via human resource policies and practices (Zihan et al., 2024). As a relatively novel research topic, the GHRM literature presents critical gaps, particularly regarding the specific dimensions of GHRM and their influence on employee green performance. Although prior studies have linked certain GHRM practices to workplace sustainability and organizational environmental performance, the development of green human capital and its performance implications have received limited attention.

To address these gaps, this conceptual paper has developed a framework focusing on the impact of three dimensions of GHRM on employee green performance. These dimensions (i.e., green recruitment, green rewards, and green training and development) have been only vaguely discussed in previous literature; nonetheless, they hold the potential to foster green behavior among employees, ultimately enhancing their green performance. The growing importance of green or environmental knowledge has also come to prominence in recent years. For effective integration of GHRM, it is imperative for employees to possess environmental knowledge. Accordingly, this paper's framework proposes that environmental knowledge mediates the relationship between GHRM dimensions and employee green performance, contributing further to the body of GHRM literature.

Ultimately, this study's comprehensive overview on GHRM and its relationship with employee green performance offers relevant references to guide researchers in exploring the concept of GHRM more thoroughly. Future studies should empirically test and validate the proposed framework to produce vital theoretical and practical implications. Scholars should also incorporate control variables such as green organizational culture to further support the necessity of implementing GHRM practices for improved employee green performance.

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