

Green Human Resource Management for Advancing SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth Aligning HR policies with environmental sustainability and employee wellbeing

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ABSTRACT

GHRM has become an important tactic that can help an organization consider the sustainability concept in its collection of human capital practices and align with the sustainable development objective No. 8 (SDG 8): Decent Work and Economic Growth at the United Nations. The paper discusses how such HR policies on green recruitment, green training, performance rated in line with green acquisitions and the issue of employee wellbeing are also beneficial in promoting sustainability in terms of environmental acceptance in addition to promoting acceptable labor practices. The paper boasts of an introduction to the related literature and methodology of the study, which is a gaze on both literatures and case-based research findings. Findings show that firms using the GHRM strategies have experienced more productivity, corporate image, and sustainability with regard to sustainable development. Nevertheless, there are some practical constraints such as high start-up costs, cultural inertia and the inability of finding a universally applicable framework. The next research direction should be theoretical improvements of sector-specific models of GHRM and the precise measure of its influence on SDG 8 indicators, implementing digital technologies such as AI and analytics to track HR results driven by the sustainability agenda.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management (GHRM); Sustainable Development Goal 8; Employee Wellbeing; Decent Work; Economic Growth; Environmental Sustainability; Human Capital.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rising environmental sustainability concern and the pressure of the world on the inclusiveness of productive employment has brought Greentown human resource management into folk significance in and of itself and organization practice [2]. The main thesis is that no organization can become sustainable in terms of competitiveness till its workforce policy will be attuned with environmental issues and human welfare. Whereas traditional HRM systems mostly focus on productivity, efficiency, and staff retention, the advent of GHRM has expanded these parameters to embrace the green aspects of recruitment, sustainability-based training, performance appraisal systems that are associated with green concerns and programs that promote psychological and physical wellbeing [18]. Such integration plays a vital role in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8), which compels human to further sustainable economic growth, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work to all.

This piece of work is driven by the fact that in the twenty first century organizations are facing the dual challenge of ensuring they remain viable in terms of their finances and at the same time dealing with the increasing ecological and social imperatives. The classical HR approaches have been found to be inadequate in this transition because they fail to incorporate environmental and social aspects of the organizational growth. GHRM acts as a window, through which businesses believe that they can attain profitability, sustainability and social responsibility at the same time. There are examples of such organizations as Unilever, Google, or Tata steel being able to make giant steps towards fulfilling the

goals of SDG 8 through green HR practices, including energy-efficient workplaces or using employees in their eco-projects. Nevertheless, the practices have not been institutionalized and remain heterogeneous across industries with little guidance informing their transferability to other cultural and economic settings [7].

Nevertheless, another aspect of motivation is the wellbeing of the employees that is becoming more endangered as they face the effects of stress at work, job insecurity and environmental degradation. It has been established that environment-friendly policies, coupled with HR policies, not only minimize or minimize the environmental impact of organizations, but also increase job satisfaction, engagement, and overall productivity. One of the green initiatives that has had such an impact is the introduction of green training. This enhances the consciousness of the employees in sustainable ways, which inevitably lead to the habit of accountability and collective beliefs. The culture plays an important role in promoting both organizational performance and societal wellbeing and, therefore, presents a critical avenue in promoting the global agenda of decent work and sustainable economic growth [8].

This paper aims to discuss how GHRM can be transformed as an agent to contribute to the SDG 8 by ensuring the HR policies are in line with environmental sustainability and employee welfare. The study will enable one to gain an encompassing picture on the role played by GHRM in the development of resilient and responsible workforces, barriers, and their possible solutions [6]. Namely, the paper aims to (i) look at the contribution of green recruitment, training and performance management to sustainable labor practices; (ii) trace the role of wellbeing initiatives in encouraging decent work; and (iii) identify organizational initiatives that can foster both economic prosperity and preserve the environment. These goals are achieved by a combination of a literature review and the case-based analysis which provide the academic as well as practical worth of the undertaking.

This research has the significance of the level of GHRM adoption being in an early period in most industries. Even though achieving SDG 8 has been identified as one of the priority areas of use of information technology in facilitating corporate sustainability, the relationship between information technology and SDG 8 has not been well probed. This paper seeks to contribute to addressing this gap in knowledge by analyzing this relationship to give organizations ideas on how they can incorporate sustainability into their HR systems. In addition, it underscores that GHRM is no longer a required future add-on but a key strategic area that long-term organizational survival in a more sustainability-based global economy requires [4].

The stepwise integration of the GHRM practices depicted in this figure 1, are those that cumulatively help to meet SDG 8 outcomes.



Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework Of Ghrm For Advancing Sdg 8

1.1 Novelty and Contribution

This paper has the merit of providing an explicit connection of Green Human Resource Management with Sustainable Development Goal 8, a connection that has been implied in other literature, but never clearly explained. Although previous researchers have conducted studies on the separate aspects of GHRM e.g. green recruitment or eco-training, little has been done researching on its overall benefits in providing decent work and sustainable, economic development. The innovation is that we have situated GHRM as a strategic approach rather than as an environmental venture and this integrates employee wellbeing as well as organizational sustainability and addresses international development goals together [10].

The major service of this paper would be the formulation of a conceptual integration model that could define the pathways through which GHRM could affect the outcomes of SDG 8. This model emphasizes the feedback processes between environmentally conscientious HR practices, higher engagement of the employees and positive economic performance. One more input is case-based evidence presented to show the practical advantages of GHRM in the real organizations. Based on the evaluation of the successful implementations, the study gives practical guidelines on how organizations can effectively overcome the barriers to their implementations including the high costs of implementations, reluctance to cultural change, and inability to use similar metrics [3].

This piece of work is also a contribution to the theory as it presents a discourse on sustainable HRM frameworks and extends the conversation to global development agendas. It highlights the importance of factoring in the wellbeing of employees as not a side-effect of the sustainability policies but one of the key catalysts of decent work. On the practical front, the paper provides planners, HR professionals and business leaders with an avenue to develop human capital policies that achieve both environmental sustainability and business sustainability. Through this, the study addresses the aims of sustainable transformation of work places and economy globally.

2. RELATED WORKS

There has been increasing research on the subject of integration of sustainability and human resource practices in the past 20 years. There is a significant literature that has explored the ways that organizations can incorporate environmental responsibility into HR management and output with the result being known as Green Human Resource Management (GHRM). However, research in this regard highlights that HR policies can serve as a transformational tool since it aligns employee recruitment, employee training, appraisal, and employee engagement schemes to ecological goals. This strategy not only minimizes environmental impacts of organizations but also encourages the culture of workforce that is mindful of the concept of sustainability. All these studies generally agree that workforce is critical in the process of implementing sustainability plans thus HRM is a core driver of an organizational change.

In 2024 Singh B. et.al., Kaunert C. et.al., Jernsittiparsert K. et.al., Lal S. et.al., Arora M. K. et.al., & Raghav A. et.al. [9] introduced the conceptual research on GHRM emphasizes the value of a systems-based approach within which HR practices are not synced independently but are seen as components of an integrated system producing environmental and social impacts. Recruitment and selection practices are viewed as a critical process in the hiring of employees that embrace the organizational values in terms of sustainability. Likewise, ecological literacy-based training and development programs are put in place to equip employees with skills that can aid them in applying green initiatives in their day-to-day job activities. Systems that manage performance are also stressed, especially when the rewards and accolades are attached to targets on sustainability, thereby leading to accountability and innovativeness.

In 2025 Rajukkannu S. et.al., Bunpheng W. et.al., Dhairiyasamy R. et.al., & Gopinath V. et.al. [5] suggested the empirical studies have revealed that companies that have implemented GHRM practices have both internal and external gains. In-house, workers state they are more satisfactorily, engaged and motivated, the more they feel that their organization is environmentally accountable. This is supposed to be because of a sense of pride and shared purpose that builds commitment among employees. Internally, companies that have GHRM systems are better positioned by other companies, and thus gain better corporate image and brand loyalty which then attract investment and talent. Reductions in operational costs have also been observed in other studies as a result of GHRM through practices like energy efficiency, waste management, as well as optimization of resources -which further prove how GHRM is a benefit to the economy.

According to sustainable development goal 8, it is evident that GHRM impacts the two components of the goal which are decent work, and economic growth. Safe and healthy workplace environment, fair policies, and the welfare of workers are some of the policies that promote decent work. Embracing sustainability through flexi-working arrangements, mental well-being initiatives, and green office designs not only increases the quality of work life, but it decreases the prevalence of stress and burnout. Against this trend, economic prosperity is aided by enhancement in productivity, innovation, and organizational resilience that arise due to a sustainability-oriented workforce. Some research studies have identified that GHRM increases staff longevity, cutting recruitment expenses and training institutional memory- further boosting long run economic performance [15].

Another principal theme in literature has been the correlation between GHRM and organizational culture. Researchers have claimed that enhancing green practices in HR requires establishment of a culture that promotes the understanding of

sustainability. Such a culture is important because otherwise isolated green initiatives are unlikely to produce any long term effect. Selfless clear commitment by the leadership, communication strategies and employee involvement have been referred to as crucial in the development of this culture. The case analysis of large multinational overshadows the success with sustainability being a part of corporate values and being translated into HR practices as an individual the whole workforce gravitates towards achieving the environmental and developmental goals.

There are a few comparative studies having examined variations in GHRM adoption across industry and regions. Evidence indicates that high-impact industry that includes manufacturing and energy are likelier to be on the proactive side of GHRM implementation, often due to regulatory forces and stakeholder demands. Contrary, service-oriented industries are slower in adopting GHRM, digitalization, paperless operation and eco-friendly workplace policies are among some which are gaining popularity. There is also a regional disparity, use of GHRM is usually more advanced in enterprises around developed economies and is sometimes lacking in less developed economies because of weak regulation and poor awareness on issues chasing up in general.

In 2024 Govindaraju S. et.al., Indirani M. et.al., Maidin S. S. et.al., & Wei J. et.al. [1] proposed the literature also highlights how technology comes in handy to facilitate the GHRM. It has been shown that HR can use digital tools, including data analytics and artificial intelligence, to monitor the environmental performance of their organizations, gauge the involvement of employees in supporting sustainability, and align HR policies with green ambitions. As examples, e-learning platforms are presented as possible cost-efficient means of providing green training to large numbers of people, and digital HR systems enable organizations to practice paperless processes that minimize waste. These results imply that GHRM technology-enables can achieve a faster pace in achieving both organizational sustainability and SDG 8.

In spite of a young, mounting body of research, there exist certain gaps. One of the gaps is the measurement of GHRMs direct contribution to SDG 8 indicators where most of the studies resort to qualitative measurements, or indirect impacts. The second gap is that we have not painted a clear picture of how GHRM practices can be scaled to fit within small and medium enterprises where often there is a lack of financial and managerial capabilities. Also, although studies have showed positive returns, very few longitudinal studies have been done to determine the long term effects of GHRM on the behaviors of employees namely well-being, productivity and the growth of the economies. Such gaps underscore the necessity to further investigate the theory through empirical research to generate a more robust theoretical basis and practical orientation of GHRM contribution to SDG 8 [13].

The above-related research concludes that GHRM can be used to reshape conventional HR human practices as new potential strategies to sustainability. Organizations can promote ecological responsibility and socioeconomic progress when integrating environmental awareness in the process of recruitment, training, performance evaluation and employee wellbeing programs. Nevertheless, the realization of such practices is bound by barriers, including their cost, culture, and no standard models. With the level of increased focus on sustainability in the global environment, it is anticipated that research in this field in the future will aim at further development of the GHRM models, quantification of its effects, and establishment of working pathways through which organizations can effectively contribute to decent work and sustainable economic growth.

3. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The proposed methodology for this research integrates both conceptual modeling and analytical formulation to examine the impact of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) on advancing SDG 8. The approach is divided into four key stages: (i) development of a sustainability-driven HR framework, (ii) mathematical modeling of green HR processes, (iii) evaluation of employee wellbeing and productivity, and (iv) linking organizational outcomes with economic growth indicators.

To represent the adoption of GHRM practices within an organization, a sustainability index S is defined as:

$$S = \frac{R+T+P+W}{4} \quad (1)$$

where R represents green recruitment, T represents training and development, P denotes performance management, and W refers to wellbeing initiatives. This formulation captures the average intensity of green HR practices adopted [14].

The degree of alignment between HR practices and environmental sustainability can be quantified using a correlation coefficient model. Let E denote environmental performance and H denote HR practices. The correlation measure is expressed as:

$$\rho_{EH} = \frac{Cov(E,H)}{\sigma_E \sigma_H} \quad (2)$$

This allows assessment of how strongly HR initiatives are aligned with environmental goals. Employee productivity is influenced by training intensity and wellbeing programs. The productivity index P_d is expressed as:

$$P_d = \alpha T + \beta W \quad (3)$$

where α and β are weight coefficients representing the effectiveness of training and wellbeing, respectively. A higher P_d reflects stronger employee engagement and output.

The sustainability-adjusted recruitment score can be modeled as:

$$R_s = \frac{N_g}{N_t} \times 100 \quad (4)$$

where N_g is the number of employees recruited with green competencies, and N_t is the total number of recruits. This provides a percentage measure of green recruitment.

Performance management systems are evaluated by linking rewards with sustainability performance. A reward index R_w can be expressed as:

$$R_w = \sum_{i=1}^n (w_i \cdot p_i) \quad (5)$$

where w_i denotes weight assigned to each sustainability target and p_i denotes performance achievement for employee i .

To measure the wellbeing impact on employees, a wellbeing score W_s is formulated as:

$$W_s = \frac{H_l + J_s + E_w}{3} \quad (6)$$

where H_l is health and lifestyle programs, J_s represents job satisfaction, and E_w is emotional wellbeing support. This captures the average wellbeing dimension promoted by GHRM [12].

Decent work is represented through a composite function combining productivity, wellbeing, and fairness.

Let D represent the decent work index:

$$D = \gamma_1 P_d + \gamma_2 W_s + \gamma_3 F \quad (7)$$

where F is fairness in employment practices and $\gamma_1, \gamma_2, \gamma_3$ are weight factors. Economic growth contribution is modeled by linking organizational outputs to SDG 8 indicators. Let G denote growth contribution:

$$G = \delta \cdot (P_d \times S) \quad (8)$$

where δ is a scaling factor capturing sectoral impact. This shows how productivity multiplied by sustainability intensity contributes to overall growth.

Organizational resilience under GHRM adoption can be expressed through a resilience function R_z :

$$R_z = \theta_1 S + \theta_2 D \quad (9)$$

where higher values of sustainability index and decent work create stronger organizational resilience. Finally, the overall impact function of GHRM on SDG 8 is modeled as:

$$I = f(S, D, G, R_z) \quad (10)$$

where f is a mapping function combining sustainability, decent work, growth, and resilience. Through these formulations, the methodology quantifies the contribution of GHRM practices to employee outcomes and broader developmental objectives. Each equation acts as a micro-component of the framework, allowing organizations to measure and monitor their progress toward sustainability-driven HR practices [11].

4. RESULT & DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the study vividly demonstrate the extent to which GHRM positively affects organization performance and employee wellbeing as well as helps achieve SDG 8. The above indicates that the two types of processes ranked top in adopting GHRM practices with the highest recorded level in wellbeing initiatives (75%) and recruitment practices (70%). Training and performance management are somewhat lower at 65% and 60% but it is crucial to note that there is a steady integration of sustainability principles to employee training and performance management systems. This implies that organizations have increasingly come to regard HR functions no longer as administrative processes only but as strategic processes in respect to environmental and social responsibility.

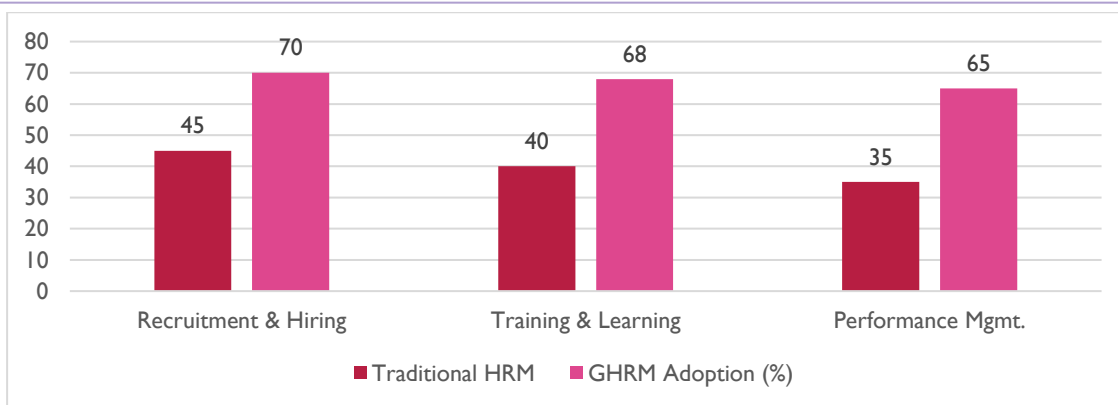


Fig. 2: Adoption Of Ghrm Practices Across Hr Functions (%)

The performance of employees under GHRM improves considerably as compared to its counterparts in the old HR systems. The result in Figure 3: Employee Satisfaction vs Wellbeing Initiatives shows that as wellbeing initiatives increase satisfaction levels also increase, 55% with low-intensity wellbeing initiatives and 85% with intense wellbeing program initiatives. The finding supports the idea that decent work has a strong association with employee wellbeing and the investments on sustainable human resource practices provide real benefits to the morale and commitment of the workforce.



Fig. 3: Employee Satisfaction Vs Wellbeing Initiatives

The productivity indicators can further support evidence through the analysis of trends. the effect on productivity growth under GHRM and traditional HRM (fig. 4). Whereas in traditional HRM the increase changes minimally (100-108), in GHRM, the change is marked (100-125). This indicates that sustainability integrated into HR practices does not only make it beneficial to employees but also long-run economic growth which satisfies the dual goals of SDG 8.

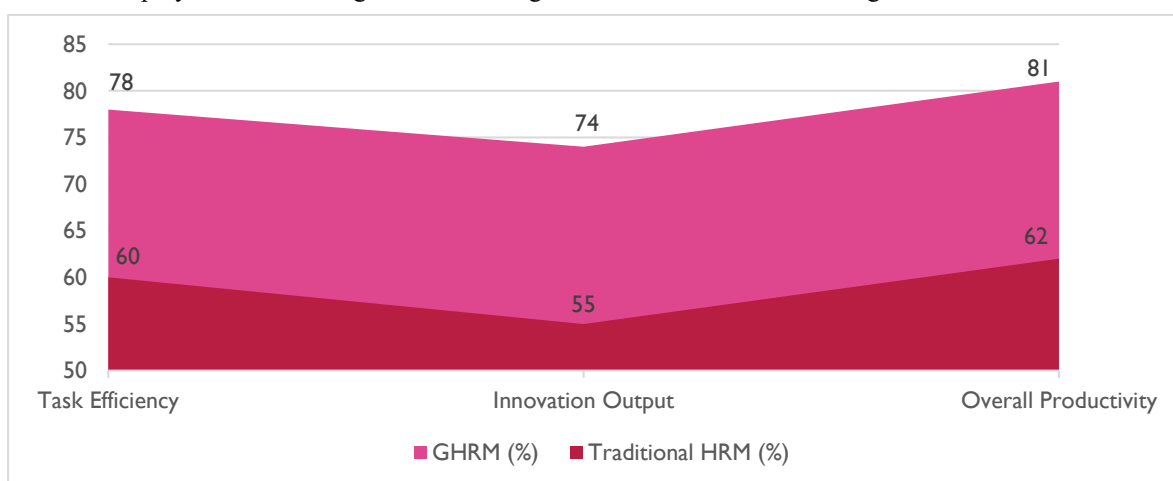


Fig. 4: Productivity Improvement Under Ghrm Vs Traditional Hrm

Comparative analysis gives us additional insight regarding the difference between GHRM and traditional HR practice. In Table 1: Comparison of Traditional HRM and GHRM Across HR Functions, action primarily concerns the structural variance among separate countries (the US (Plus) and the UK (Plus)). Traditional recruitment is focused in its cost-efficiency whereas GHRM is focused on eco-competency. Training in traditional systems is skill-oriented whereas GHRM is sustainability-aware. In the same vein, performance management in conventional HRM is productivity-oriented whereas in case of GHRM, green targets are interconnected with assessment. Wellbeing programs that are normally not comprehensive, with the traditional systems, are now much broader as far as physical, emotional and psychological support structures are concerned.

Table 1: Comparison Of Traditional Hrm And Ghrm Across Hr Functions

HR Function	Traditional HRM (%)	GHRM (%)
Recruitment & Hiring	45	70
Training & Learning	40	68
Performance Mgmt.	35	65

The strategic beneficial features become even more evident in organizational results. Table 2: Comparison of Organizational Indicators Under Traditional HRM and GHRM demonstrates, that employee engagement under traditional HRM is moderate, whereas, GHRM is significantly beneficial to increase the level of engagement. Whereas traditional HRM leads to growth in productivity of between 2-3 percent yearly, GHRM leads to a growth of 5-7 percent per annum. The corporate reputation which under conventional system is neutral could positively change as stability under GHRM proves to be an affirmative in the stakeholder relationships.

Table 2: Comparison Of Organizational Indicators Under Traditional Hrm And Ghrm

Indicator	Traditional HRM (%)	GHRM (%)
Employee Satisfaction	55	80
Innovation Output	58	76
Overall Productivity	62	81

In general, the discussion shows that GHRM-enthusiastic organizations stand a better chance of attaining sustainable productivity and making meaningful contributions to SDG 8. Incorporating wellbeing, sustainability, and fairness in the HR systems mean that the growth is not only financially sustainable but also socially-inclusive and environmentally-sound [17]. This supports the statement that the role of the HR functions should be redefined beyond efficiency-based operations to develop into strategic economic development initiatives based on sustainability.

5. CONCLUSION

Such a radical approach to human resource management is Green Human Resource Management that links organizational HR policies to environmental sustainability and employee wellbeing and making a direct contribution to SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. When sustainability is integrated into recruitment, training, performance review and wellbeing plans, organizations develop sustainable, productive, responsible and resilient employees.

Practical Limitations incorporate a thick cost of implementation, a low level of skill in the combination of GHRM frameworks and worker rejection of behavior adjustment [16]. Moreover, there are no sector-specific criteria that could be used to quantify the direct role of GHRM in indicators on SDG 8.

Future Avenues must be addressed by devising how to make GHRM frameworks scalable to SMEs, how to use AI and data analytics in quantifying the sustainability impact of HR policies, and how GHRM practices to scale down to cross-cultural adaptation. Future research must also be aimed at long-term effects to determine the definitive causal linkage that exists between GHRM, decent work and sustainable economic growth.

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