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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF GREEN HRM: A STUDY OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, AND GREEN BEHAVIOR IN THE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract:
Increasing concerns about climate change, diminishing natural resources, and the broader need for environmental stewardship are motivating organizations to implement robust environmental management systems and sustainability practices. This shift reflects a growing corporate commitment to environmental responsibility, driven by evolving environmental, ethical, legal, and social expectations across today's business landscape. Further, quantitative and qualitative research approach was employed with a sample of 250 faculty and staff drawn from higher educational institution across the Nation. The data was composed throughusing structured questionnaire, and statistical tests including one-sample t-test, one-way ANOVA, multiple regression, and Pearson's correlation were applied. Regression analysis confirmed that green training and recruitment are the strongest predictors of institutional sustainability performance, and on the other hand green performance appraisal along with compensation shows positive contribution GHRM Practices. The correlation analysis revealed a strong and positive association between organizational engagement and the implementation of green initiatives. The findings indicate that faculty and staff demonstrate a high level of awareness regarding Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices. Furthermore, the study concludes that educational institutions can strengthen climate-change awareness and foster sustainable behaviours by integrating gamified features and incentive-based programs. Such initiatives may include rewards for participating in environmentally responsible activities, such as tree planting, reducing energy consumption, and adopting eco-friendly practices.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Educational Institutions, Sustainable Environment and Sustainable Development

INTRODUCTION:

Globally, sustainability is reshaping the responsibilities of professionals across educational institutions, government bodies, and the private sector. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) therefore demands coordinated and integrated action across these domains. India has made consistent progress in the global sustainability landscape, reflected in the growing adoption of eco-friendly values, practices, and behaviours among stakeholders and employees. Within this context, educational institutions in India are rapidly aligning with sustainability trends as part of their ethical, social, and institutional responsibilities. As a vital component of the state's higher education framework, the implementation of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices aims not only to optimize resource conservation but also to embed green values and environmental consciousness in students. Educational institutions, due to their significant consumption of energy, water, and paper, are key stakeholders in the global green movement. Through the integration of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), HR functions—such as recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement—serve as a strategic bridge between institutional objectives and environmental responsibility. Green training initiatives enhance faculty and staff awareness regarding waste reduction, energy efficiency, and

sustainable resource utilization, while green recruitment ensures the selection of candidates who value and support sustainability. Performance management systems increasingly link employee achievements with environmental targets, and incentive or recognition programs encourage active participation in green initiatives.

Government policies and state-level sustainability mandates have further encouraged institutions to embed environmental stewardship into their vision and mission statements. This movement is driven not only by regulatory compliance but also by a broader ethical obligation to future generations. Students, who are increasingly conscious of environmental concerns, expect institutions to demonstrate leadership in sustainability. By adopting GHRM practices, colleges and universities can strengthen their institutional reputation and attract socially responsible students, faculty, and staff improves morale, retention, and satisfaction. Moreover, GHRM supports cost-effective operations by promoting energy conservation, waste reduction, and resource efficiency. The adoption of digital tools, e-learning platforms, and paperless administrative processes demonstrates the practical application of GHRM principles in the educational sector. Faculty and non-teaching staff play a critical role in modelling and disseminating environmental values, thereby aligning personal commitment with institutional sustainability goals.

Since the hub of educational institution with a large number of universities, engineering colleges, and professional institutions, the state has taken a unique platform to implement GHRM practices. This study aims to explore how GHRM is being implemented, the challenges institutions face during this transition, and the extent to which HR policies align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Additionally, anticipated results would offer insightful information to educators, administrators, and legislators, while highlighting the ultimate aim of creating a green educational ecosystem that nurtures responsible citizens. Therefore, GHRM in educational institutions emerged not only as a necessity but also as a catalyst for sustainable transformation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

According to Dumont et al. (2017), "green behavior" is "an aggregate of a wide range of behaviors incorporating employees' performance of both in-role (such as adhering to the organization's environmental policies and HRM green initiatives) and extra-role (such as evincing discretionary effort and going the extra mile) activities. The GHRM, has a pivotal role in the process of integrating environmental management with HR practices. Renwick et al. (2013), described the awarenessonSustainable factors into human resources procedures including recruiting, training, performance appraisals, and employee involvement.Scholars have noted that GHRM enhances organizational sustainability while promoting employee awareness and participation in eco-friendly initiatives (Jackson, Renwick, Jabbour, & Muller-Camen, 2011). According to Jabbour and Santos (2008), HR procedures may play a significant role in integrating environmental management into businesses, particularly when upper management is on board. In the context of educational institutions HR functions are equally relevant as faculty, administrators, and non-teaching staff certainly contributes to the dissemination of green values among students. Further Green training and development programs, according to Mandip (2012), give staff members the know-how to adopt ecologically friendly procedures. According to Zoogah (2011), organizations that incorporate green HR strategies in recruitment tend to attract employees who share similar environmental values, leading to a better cultural fit and long-term sustainability. In the educational sector, green recruitment ensures hiring staff and faculty committed to sustainability. Similarly, Tang et al. (2018) found that sustainable performance evaluation systems encourage workforcesaligning their efforts in achieving organizational environmental goals.Studies conducted in India have shown that the adoption of GHRM is gradually gaining momentum across industries. Mathapati (2013) emphasized that while manufacturing sectors have pioneered GHRM practices, educational institutions are slowly recognizing its importance in fostering sustainable learning environments. Mishra (2017) examined the role of GHRM in Indian universities and found that incorporating green policies enhanced institutional reputation, reduced operational costs, and increased student satisfaction. In their thorough analysis of GHRM practices, Ren et al. (2018) came to the conclusion that digital learning platforms, paperless administration, and green training are essential in educational settings to reduce resource consumption. In the same vein, Longoni et al. (2016) suggested that organizations implementing GHRM achieve not only environmental benefits but also improved employee morale and productivity. To emphasis more precisely on sustainability in higher education has been supported by government initiatives promoting green campus development. Studies by Sharma and Gupta (2019) indicated that colleges in the region implementing green HR approach motivating individuals to contribute to environmental sustainability, as energy conservation and waste management to encourage eco-conscious habits. These features would help raise awareness and foster a culture of sustainability, empowering individual to make more environmentally responsible choices in their daily lives. Further, Garg (2015) noted that students tend to be more engaged when their institutions visibly practice environmental sustainability, underscoring the indirect benefits of GHRM.The role of leadership has also been highlighted in literature as a key enabler of GHRM. According to Dumont, Shen, and Deng (2017), leaders who champion green initiatives motivate employees to adopt environmentally responsible behavior. Principals and administrators have the power to encourage teachers and staff in educational institutions to incorporate green practices into administration and instruction. Another important dimension of GHRM is employee engagement.Opatha and Arulrajah (2014) GHRM is collection of strategies, policies, practices, and frameworks that increase workforces' awareness on environmental issues for the benefit of individuals, the society at large. Further Arulrajah, et.al (2015) outlined that, dedicated staff

members are essential to achieveeco-conscious business operations. Similarly, Guerci et al. (2016) discovered that green HR systems help employees develop a long-term ecological consciousness. Another element that has been shown to be helpful in GHRM implementation is digitalization. Singh et al. (2020) claim that e-learning platforms, online exams, and paperless administration greatly lower university carbon footprints. Further, institutions are undergoing a digital transformation in accordance with national education policies; such methods are becoming more and more pertinent. A number of academics have identified difficulties with GHRM implementation. For instance, Yong et al. (2020) stressed that effective adoption is frequently hampered by a lack of knowledge, insufficient training, and financial limitations. The adoption of green HR systems in Indian educational institutions may be hampered by traditional administrative procedures and opposition to change.

Overall, the literature suggests that while GHRM has been widely explored within the industrial sector, further research is required to fully understand its applicability and impact within the educational sector, particularly in the Indian context. The adoption of green HR practices—encompassing recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement—not only advances institutional sustainability efforts but also enhances the reputation of educational institutions as influential social role models.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study investigated GHRM practices in higher educational institutions through a quantitative research approach supported by a descriptive and analytical design. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 250 respondents from the overall population, comprising faculty and staff from government, private, and aided institutions. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale. For data analysis, statistical techniques such as the one-sample t-test, one-way ANOVA with post-hoc analysis, multiple regression, and Pearson's correlation were utilized. This methodological framework ensured the reliability, validity, and representativeness of the findings across different institution types.

Objectives of the study:

1. To examine the factors that contributes to employee awareness of GHRM initiatives.
2. To assess the specific GHRM strategies implemented within educational institutions.
3. To evaluate how GHRM practices enhance staff attitudes, behaviours, and participation in environmental sustainability initiatives.

Data analysis:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a significant level of awareness of GHRM practices among employees

Test: One-sample t-test (test value = 3, the neutral midpoint of a 5-point Likert scale).

Table 1: One-Sample t-test for Awareness of GHRM Practices

Awareness of GHRM Practices	N	Mean	SD	Test Value	t	df	Sig. (p)	Mean Difference	95% CI (Lower–Upper)
Awareness Score	250	3.65	0.72	3.00	14.25	249	0.000***	0.65	0.56 – 0.74

As shown in the table above, that the P value is < 0.05, indicating that the faculty and staff demonstrate a good level of responsiveness of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) initiatives, supporting Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Educational institutions differ significantly in the extent to which they adopt GHRM practices.

Test: One-way ANOVA

Table 2: One-way ANOVA for Adoption of GHRM Practices by Institution Type

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.(P)
Between Groups	12.85	2	6.43	9.72	0.000***
Within Groups	161.25	247	0.65		
Total	174.10	249			

A statistically significant difference was found between the groups ($F(2, 247) = 9.72$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that the extent to which GHRM practices are adopted varies significantly based on the type of institution. Since the overall ANOVA result is significant, post-hoc comparisons were conducted to identify which specific groups differed from one another.

In order to determine the differences, Tukey HSD is used.

Post-hoc (Tukey HSD):

(I) Institution Type	(J) Institution Type	Mean Difference (I–J)	Std. Error	Sig. (p)	95% CI (Lower–Upper)
Government	Private	-0.45*	0.11	0.001***	-0.71 – -0.19

Government	Aided	-0.32*	0.13	0.020*	-0.60 – -0.04
Private	Aided	0.13	0.12	0.450 ns	-0.14 – 0.40

Government institutions adopt significantly fewer GHRM practices compared to both Private ($p = 0.001$) and Aided institutions ($p = 0.020$). However, no significant difference was observed between Private and Aided institutions ($p = 0.450$).
These results support **Hypothesis 2**, confirming that adoption of GHRM practices differs significantly among types of educational institutions.
Hypothesis 3 (H3):
GHRM Practices enhance overall institutional performance with respect to sustainability outcomes.
Test: Multiple Linear Regression.

Table 3: Regression of GHRM Practices on Institutional Sustainability Outcomes

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	Sig. (p)
Constant	1.12	0.25	–	4.48	0.000***
Green Recruitment	0.28	0.07	0.24	4.00	0.000***
Green Training	0.35	0.08	0.29	4.38	0.000***
Green Performance Appraisal	0.15	0.06	0.14	2.50	0.013*
Green Compensation	0.21	0.09	0.17	2.33	0.021*

Green Training ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.001$) emerged as the strongest predictor, indicating that institutions investing in sustainability-oriented training see the greatest improvement in sustainability outcomes.**Green Recruitment ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < 0.001$)** had a positive contribution, suggesting that recruiting employees with environmental values enhances institutional sustainability.**Green Performance Appraisal ($\beta = 0.14$, $p = 0.013$)** contributed positively, showing that integrating environmental criteria into appraisal systems improves performance.**Green Compensation ($\beta = 0.17$, $p = 0.021$)** also significantly influenced outcomes, though to a lesser extent, implying that providing eco-linked incentives motivates sustainable performance. The above findings support **Hypothesis 3**, implementing green human resources management practices hassignificantly positiveinfluence on institutional pursuance in overall sustainable development.
Hypothesis 4 (H4):Implementation of GHRM practices positively influences faculty and staff participation in environmental sustainability initiatives.
Test: Pearson Correlation.

Table 4: Correlation between GHRM Practices and Participation in Sustainability Initiatives

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2
1. GHRM Implementation Score	3.58	0.68	1.00	
2. Participation in Sustainability Initiatives	3.77	0.71	0.62***	1.00

It is inferred from the above table that a substantial positive connection exists ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$), shows higher implementation of GHRM practices is associated with greater faculty/staff participation.

Findings:
The findings reveal that faculty and staff in educational institutions possess a strong awareness of GHRM practices. The extent of adoption, however, varies significantly by institution type, with private and aided institutions demonstrating higher levels of implementation compared to government institutions. Overall, GHRM practices make a substantial contribution to institutional sustainability performance, with green training and green recruitment identified as the most influential predictors. Furthermore, the effective implementation of GHRM initiatives enhances faculty and staff participation in environmental activities, thereby strengthening and sustaining a culture of environmental responsibility within educational institutions.
Suggestions:
Institutions should conduct regular awareness workshops, seminars, and training programs to enhance faculty and staff understanding of the significance of Green HRM practices. Given that government institutions were found to lag behind, state-level education boards and regulatory bodies should develop policies and provide incentives to encourage the integration of GHRM initiatives. Priority must be given to structured training programs, and recruitment strategies should incorporate clear green criteria, as green training and green recruitment demonstrated the strongest positive impact on sustainability outcomes. To promote motivation and a sense of ownership, institutions should also recognize and reward faculty and staff who make substantial contributions to sustainability efforts. Furthermore, GHRM guidelines can be embedded into institutional accreditation systems by bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education. Finally,

developing an institutional Green HRM Index would enable continuous monitoring of participation, adoption, and awareness over time.

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CONCLUSION:

The study concludes that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is both a strategic HR approach and a vital driver of sustainable development within the education sector. As environmental challenges continue to escalate globally, educational institutions are increasingly expected to demonstrate responsible environmental practices and instil sustainable values among students. GHRM offers an effective framework for embedding eco-friendly principles into recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and employee engagement processes. The findings indicate that GHRM practices—particularly green recruitment and green training—significantly enhance institutional sustainability performance. By attracting environmentally conscious candidates and providing staff with relevant sustainability training, institutions can build a workforce that actively contributes to environmental initiatives and models responsible behaviour on campus. These practices help strengthen a culture of sustainability while improving resource efficiency and reducing environmental impact.

Differences in adoption levels across institutions were also observed, with private and aided institutions implementing GHRM practices more extensively than government institutions. This highlights the need for stronger policy support, capacity building, and leadership commitment within public institutions. Regulatory bodies and accreditation agencies can further promote sustainability by integrating GHRM guidelines into institutional assessment frameworks.

Overall, the successful implementation of GHRM depends on institutional commitment, supportive policies, and active staff participation. When effectively adopted, GHRM enables educational institutions to enhance academic excellence, environmental responsibility, and long-term organizational resilience.

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