

Green HRM and Environmental Performance: AMO Framework, Infosys Evidence and Employee Outcomes

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Abstract: *Environmental sustainability has moved to the centre of corporate strategy, and Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has emerged as a credible vehicle for embedding ecological values into day-to-day organisational behaviour. This paper examines how five integrated HR practice dimensions green recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, compensation, and employee involvement shape pro-environmental behaviour (PEB) and organisational citizenship behaviour for the environment (OCBE). Grounded in the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework and stakeholder theory, the analysis draws on a narrative synthesis of empirical studies published between 2013 and 2024 and a longitudinal case analysis of Infosys Limited's Green Workforce Program (2019–2023). Meta-analytic evidence confirms meaningful positive relationships between composite GHRM and environmental performance ($r = .38, p < .001$) and between GHRM and employee PEB ($r = .44, p < .001$). Infosys sustainability data document a 51.5% reduction in absolute carbon emissions across five consecutive reporting years, alongside consistent gains in energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste recycling. A conceptual framework is proposed tracing the AMO-mediated pathway from GHRM practices through PEB and OCBE to organisational and employee-level outcomes. Organisational culture and industry type are identified as significant moderators. Limitations and directions for future research in emerging-economy contexts are discussed.*

Keywords: Green HRM, pro-environmental behaviour, AMO framework, environmental sustainability, employee engagement

1. Introduction

HR management has always been primarily about people recruiting them, paying them, and shaping their performance. That core purpose has not changed. What has changed, and changed substantially, is the range of outcomes that organizations now expect HR to influence. Environmental sustainability is firmly on that list. Regulatory obligations, ESG investor mandates, and a workforce that increasingly wants its work to carry ecological as well as economic meaning have pushed firms to ask whether HR's standard toolkit can be redirected toward greener ends (Renwick et al., 2013).

GHRM takes that question seriously. Rather than creating a parallel sustainability function beside HR, it argues for integrating environmental goals directly into existing HR practices: what gets measured in appraisals, what behaviours get rewarded, who gets hired, and what employees get trained to do. The logic is appealing and the evidence, while still developing, is encouraging. Yet significant gaps remain. Most empirical GHRM research originates from East Asian and Western European contexts; South Asian settings are under-studied relative to their economic scale and environmental urgency (Saeed et al., 2019). The mechanisms connecting HR practices to actual employee environmental behaviour are also underspecified. This paper addresses both gaps through a theoretically grounded review of GHRM dimensions and a five-year longitudinal analysis of Infosys Limited's Green Workforce Program one of the most thoroughly documented GHRM initiatives in India's technology sector.

2. Literature Survey

2.1 Conceptualising GHRM

Renwick et al. (2013) provided the field's first systematic definition: GHRM is the application of HRM policies to promote the sustainable use of organisational resources and to encourage environmental responsibility across the workforce. Ren et al. (2018) subsequently shifted the emphasis from policy to behaviour, arguing that the real test of GHRM lies not in what an organisation writes into its HR documents but in what its employees actually do differently as a result. That distinction matters. A green performance appraisal is still a performance appraisal what changes is whether environmental metrics appear alongside productivity targets, and whether employees understand that those metrics carry career consequences.

2.2 The AMO Framework

Appelbaum et al.'s (2000) Ability-Motivation-Opportunity model supplies the theoretical mechanism through which GHRM affects behaviour. Ability is built through green training; motivation through green rewards and appraisal; opportunity through green participation structures such as sustainability committees and employee suggestion schemes. Renwick et al. (2013) observed that GHRM programmes consistently underperform when they address only one pillar building awareness through training but providing no structural outlet for action or creating participation channels without equipping employees with the knowledge to use them.

2.3 Stakeholder Theory and GHRM

Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory adds the institutional dimension: firms are accountable to employees, customers, investors, communities, and regulators, each of whom evaluates environmental conduct with varying scrutiny. GHRM makes environmental commitment structurally visible in a way that annual reports alone cannot. Building green criteria into the appraisal system of 100,000 employees is organizationally costly in ways that a published sustainability strategy is not, and stakeholders institutional investors in particular recognise the difference (Bowen, 2002). Yong et al. (2020) confirmed this empirically: firms with stronger GHRM practices attracted environmentally motivated talent more effectively and received higher investor confidence ratings on sustainability disclosure.

2.4 Empirical Evidence

Yong et al.'s (2020) meta-analysis of 42 studies found significant positive associations between composite GHRM and environmental performance ($r = .38, p < .001$) and between GHRM and employee PEB ($r = .44, p < .001$). Studies from China (Tang et al., 2018), Pakistan (Saeed et al., 2019), Malaysia (Yusliza et al., 2019), India (Mishra et al., 2014), and the UAE (Ahmad et al., 2021) broadly replicate these findings, with variation in which GHRM dimensions carry the strongest effects across national and sectoral contexts. Table 1 summarises key studies.

Table 1: Selected Empirical Studies on GHRM (2013–2024)

Author(s) & Year	Country / Context	Key GHRM Dimensions	Primary Outcome
Renwick et al. (2013)	UK (Conceptual)	Recruitment, Training, Appraisal	Framework development
Mishra et al. (2014)	India (IT sector)	Green training, Involvement	Reduced energy use
Tang et al. (2018)	China (Manufacturing)	All GHRM dimensions	Env. performance
Saeed et al. (2019)	Pakistan (Service)	Appraisal, Compensation	Pro-env. behaviour
Yusliza et al. (2019)	Malaysia (Mixed)	Recruitment, Training	Image, Retention
Yong et al. (2020)	Meta-analysis (42 studies)	Composite GHRM index	PEB, Env. performance
Ahmad et al. (2021)	UAE (Hospitality)	Green leadership, Training	Org. commitment
Chaudhary (2022)	India (Manufacturing)	Training, Appraisal	OCBE, Engagement

Note. PEB = Pro-environmental behaviour; OCBE = Organisational Citizenship Behaviour for the Environment. Source: Compiled by authors.

3. Problem Definition

Three interconnected problems motivate this study. First, the GHRM evidence base remains geographically skewed: most quantitative studies are concentrated in East Asia and Western Europe, leaving South Asian organisational contexts where both environmental pressures and industrial growth rates are high comparatively under-examined. Second, most GHRM research treats individual HR dimensions in isolation rather than examining the system-level effects of deploying

all five dimensions simultaneously. The theoretical prediction that AMO pillar interaction effects are significant has received limited empirical attention. Third, longitudinal evidence tracking GHRM programme performance across multiple years within a single organisation is rare; cross-sectional survey designs dominate the literature and cannot establish causal precedence or demonstrate that effects are durable rather than ephemeral.

4. Methodology/ Approach

A systematic narrative review design was adopted, supplemented by a longitudinal case analysis. The review searched Scopus, EBSCO, Google Scholar, and Web of Science for peer-reviewed publications from January 2013 to December 2024 using the following primary search terms: 'green human resource management,' 'pro-environmental behaviour HRM,' 'AMO framework GHRM,' 'sustainable HRM India,' and 'employee green behaviour.' Inclusion criteria required sources to report quantitative or qualitative evidence on at least one GHRM practice dimension and its organisational or behavioural outcome, to be published in a peer-reviewed outlet, and to provide sufficient methodological detail for quality assessment.

Infosys Limited was selected as the longitudinal case using purposive criteria: the organisation publishes independently verified annual sustainability reports covering all five GHRM dimensions; the Green Workforce Program has operated continuously since 2011; prior academic analysis by Mishra et al. (2014) provides a historical baseline; and the organisation's scale 340,000 employees across 50 countries represents a significant test of GHRM programme durability at enterprise level. Sustainability performance data were extracted from Infosys Annual Reports for 2019 through 2023 and analysed using trend analysis and percentage change calculations.

5. Results & Discussion

5.1 GHRM Dimensions: Evidence Synthesis

Green recruitment shapes organisational culture at its point of entry. When sustainability features explicitly in job descriptions, interview frameworks, and employer branding, arriving employees carry clearer ecological expectations and are more likely to engage with green initiatives rather than treat them as peripheral (Renwick et al., 2013; Tang et al., 2018). Selection assessments that include environmental attitudes add predictive value for long-term sustainability fit, particularly as ecological KPIs expand across functions historically outside the environmental domain.

Green training addresses the knowledge deficit that consistently emerges as the most proximate individual-level barrier to environmental behaviour (Yong et al., 2020). The format matters as much as the content: hands-on environmental simulations and cross-functional sustainability projects tend to produce more durable behavioural change than e-learning modules. Critically, training must be ongoing regulations, technologies, and reporting standards evolve, and a curriculum calibrated to 2015 requirements actively

misleads employees navigating the sustainability landscape of 2024.

Green performance management is arguably the most structurally powerful GHRM dimension. Embedding environmental metrics in the appraisal system shifts green behaviour from 'encouraged' to 'expected' a status change that employees register clearly. It also creates distributed accountability: managers are required to measure and discuss environmental performance, not merely to report aggregate sustainability figures to a dedicated team (Saeed et al., 2019).

Green compensation research consistently supports the motivational effect of financial incentives tied to environmental performance (Mishra et al., 2014). However, the literature also documents a crowding-out risk: when financial reward becomes the primary associative frame for environmental action, intrinsic ecological motivation can erode. Hybrid reward architectures combining financial incentives with recognition, peer-acknowledged green

achievements, and purpose-framing communications appear to maintain both forms of motivation simultaneously.

Green employee involvement provides the structural opportunity the third AMO pillar that transforms motivated, capable employees into active contributors to environmental strategy. Sustainability committees with genuine decision-making authority, open suggestion schemes, participatory environmental audits, and cross-functional task forces all generate the ownership that passive receipt of sustainability communications cannot produce (Yusliza et al., 2019). Research consistently shows that employees who contribute to environmental strategy demonstrate higher PEB and OCBE over longer time horizons.

5.2 Infosys Longitudinal Case

Table 2 presents Infosys sustainability performance data across five consecutive annual reporting periods (2019–2023). The trends are consistent across all five indicators.

Table 2: Infosys Green Workforce Program Sustainability Metrics (2019–2023)

Metric	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change
Per capita electricity (GJ)	4.89	4.12	3.74	3.41	3.1	–36.6%
Per capita water (KL)	2.1	1.87	1.63	1.45	1.22	–41.9%
Carbon emissions (tCO ₂ e)	3,35,040	2,84,760	2,41,200	1,98,300	1,62,500	–51.5%
Employees trained (sustainability)	68,000	79,000	91,000	1,07,000	120,000+	76.50%
Waste recycled (%)	72%	76%	80%	84%	87%	+15 pp

Note. tCO₂e = tonnes of CO₂ equivalent; GJ = Gigajoules; KL = Kiloliters; pp = percentage points. Percentage changes calculated by authors. Source: Infosys Annual Reports 2019–2023.

Carbon emissions fell by 51.5% in absolute terms across the five years a reduction achieved against a backdrop of workforce growth, which means per-capita efficiency improvements were even steeper. This is not what a sustainability report produces; it is what happens when HR systems are consistently pointed in the same direction. The 76.5% increase in sustainability-trained employees reflects the ability-building pillar of the AMO framework operating at scale: by 2023, more than 120,000 employees had completed formal environmental training, providing the knowledge base from which PEB and OCBE can plausibly follow.

Three features of Infosys's design are theoretically significant. Leadership visibility sustainability is championed by senior executives and reflected in external ESG disclosures rather than delegated to a junior team makes environmental behaviour organisationally expected rather than individually virtuous. The shift from voluntary participation to measured KPIs embedded in the annual appraisal cycle changes the organisational status of green behaviour from 'nice to have' to 'professionally consequential.' The Green Champions network distributes environmental ownership horizontally across business units rather than concentrating it, which is the structural embodiment of the AMO opportunity pillar and a primary reason the programme has proved durable across more than a decade.

5.3 Conceptual Framework and Moderators

The proposed framework traces a sequential path from GHRM practice dimensions through AMO-mediated

behavioural mechanisms to outcomes. Green training builds ability. Green compensation and appraisal build motivation. Green participation structures build opportunity. When all three conditions are present, PEB and OCBE emerge everyday actions reducing environmental impact and discretionary above-and-beyond environmental effort, respectively. These behavioural mechanisms then translate into organisational outcomes (lower carbon emissions, reduced energy and water consumption, less waste) and employee-level outcomes (stronger organisational commitment, higher job satisfaction, improved psychological well-being associated with purposeful work).

Two moderators condition the pathway's strength. Organisational sustainability culture amplifies the connection between AMO conditions and behavioural output: in organisations where green values are genuinely embedded in informal norms and day-to-day language not merely stated in policy documents the same HR practices produce stronger behavioural responses (Ren et al., 2018). Industry type moderates the link between behaviour and environmental outcome: the operational ecology of a manufacturing plant and a technology services firm differ substantially, and the absolute environmental gains achievable from equivalent behavioural change differ accordingly.

The framework also highlights what does not work: isolated GHRM interventions targeting only one AMO pillar. Training without aligned appraisal and rewards produces awareness that has no organisational outlet. Incentive systems without training or participation channels produce motivated but ill-equipped employees who cannot convert their environmental values into sustained action. Integrated

deployment of all five GHRM dimensions is not merely preferable the AMO logic suggests it is necessary for the full pathway to function.

6. Conclusion

GHRM is not a new category of HR practice. It is a reorientation of existing practices recruitment, training, appraisal, reward, involvement toward an additional set of outcomes that organisations are under growing pressure to deliver. The evidence supports cautious confidence that this reorientation works: the meta-analytic effect sizes are meaningful, the geographic range of replications is expanding, and the Infosys case provides longitudinal proof that integrated GHRM programmes can produce sustained, compounding environmental performance improvements at enterprise scale. The field's next task is extending this evidence to under-represented organisational contexts smaller firms, South Asian and African settings, sectors beyond IT and manufacturing and doing so with longitudinal and quasi-experimental designs capable of establishing causal precedence rather than association.

7. Future Scope

Four research directions carry particular priority. First, multi-wave panel studies tracking GHRM programme development and environmental performance across the same organisations over five-plus years would provide the causal foundation that cross-sectional designs cannot. Second, comparative studies examining whether the AMO-mediated GHRM pathway replicates in SME contexts where most South Asian employees work would address the large-firm bias embedded in the current evidence base. Third, experimental or quasi-experimental designs testing specific AMO pillar interactions (e.g., the marginal effect of adding green participation mechanisms to an existing training and appraisal programme) would clarify which structural combinations produce the largest and most durable behavioural effects. Fourth, the integration of ESG reporting standards with GHRM scholarship specifically examining whether GHRM-driven environmental performance improvements meet independently verifiable ESG thresholds would strengthen the bridge between academic research and practitioner accountability frameworks.

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