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CONTENTS

Title	Page No
An Empirical Study on the Effectiveness of Digital Marketing Channels on B2b Purchase Intentions in HR Consulting. <i>Naveen M</i> IFMR – Graduate School Of Business, Krea University, Sri City, India. <i>Dr. Nidhi Srivastava</i> Assistant Professor, Measi Institute Of Management, Chennai.	1-09
From the Marketing Perspective to the Satisfaction-Managerial Perspective on the Marketing Mix In a Chain Diagnostic Lab <i>Ashish Kumar Sahdev</i> <i>Syed Hameedur Rehman Zaini</i>	10-17
Occupational Health and Safety of women at workplace: Ideas from past literature <i>Mr. Swapnil B. Ide</i> PhD Scholar, Department of Social Work University of Delhi, New Delhi, India. <i>Dr. Seema Rani</i> Professor Aditi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi, New Delhi India. <i>Dr. T.V.G.Sarma</i> I/C Principle, D.K. Shinde School of Social Work, CSIBER, Kolhapur, Maharashtra, India.	18-28
The Impact of Instagram on Business Growth: A Comparative Study of Unorganized Entrepreneurs across Leading Social Media Platforms <i>Shobin Mathew</i> Research Scholar, Dept of Journalism and Science Communication, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India <i>Dr. S. Jenefa</i> Professor and Head, Dept of Journalism and Science Communication, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India	29-37
Sustainability Practices in Indian Oil and Gas EPC Firms: Evaluating Environmental, Social, and Economic Indicators <i>Vikrant Huddar</i> Ph.D. Research Scholar, Dr. V. N. Bedekar Institute of Management Studies <i>Dr. Nitin Joshi</i> Director, Dr. V. N. Bedekar Institute of Management Studies	38-50
Customer Satisfaction of Multimedia Marketing Channels In Personal Care Products <i>Arathy J Nair</i> Postgraduate Student, Baselius College Kottayam, Kerala, India <i>Dr. Resmi Annie Thomas</i> Assistant Professor, Postgraduate Department of Commerce, Baselius College Kottayam, Kerala, India	51-58
Marketing Strategies and SME Firm Performance During Uncertainty- A Conceptual Framework <i>Ombir Yadav</i> Department of Management Studies, DCRUST, Murthal, Sonipat, Haryana, India <i>Dr. S. N. Mahapatra</i> Department of Management Studies, DCRUST, Murthal, Sonipat, Haryana, India	59-67

Title	Page No
Evaluation of Post-Merger Performance of Select BSE- Listed Indian Companies – A Systematic Study Using Data Envelopment Analysis <i>Subhajit Bhadra</i> Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Management & Marketing, West Bengal State University, Barasat, India <i>Dr. Ashoke Mondal</i> Assistant Professor, Department of Management & Marketing, West Bengal State University, Barasat, India	68-78
Evolving Trends: The Impact of Information Technology on Everyday Library Usage <i>Mrs. Anuradha A. Kumbhar</i> B.Sc., PGDCA, MCA, MLIS, UGC NET-SET (LIS), Librarian, CNCVCW, CSIBER Trust, Kolhapur, India	79-83
Green HRM and Organisational Sustainability- A Conceptual Framework for Strategic Fit <i>Sukriti Das</i> Research Scholar, Maniram Dewan School of Management, Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University, Assam, India <i>Nripendra Narayan Sarma</i> Professor, Maniram Dewan School of Management, Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University, Assam, India	84-96
A Study on Effectiveness of Employee Welfare Measures With Reference To Synergy Green Industries Limited: A Review <i>Adv. Sharvari Avinash Kumbhar</i> BSL, LLB, B.Com., LLM, MSW pursuing <i>Dr. D. N. Valvi</i> DLL & LW, MSW, PHD, Project Guide, Associate Professor, D. K. Shinde School of Social Work, CSIBER Trust, Kolhapur, India	97-105
Impact of State Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Act/Policy on Investment – A State Level Analysis in India <i>Dr. Chandra Kant Parmar</i> Internal Audit Officer, Finance Department, Government of West Bengal, India <i>Dr. Partha Pratim Ghosh</i> Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata, India	106-118
Product Diversification Patterns In India-Asean Trade Post-Aifta <i>Saurav Kalita</i> PhD. Scholar, Department of Economics, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh, India <i>Lijum Nochi</i> Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh, India	119-131

Green HRM and Organisational Sustainability- A Conceptual Framework for Strategic Fit

Sukriti Das

Research Scholar, Maniram Dewan School of
Management, Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open
University, Assam, India

Nripendra Narayan Sarma

Professor, Maniram Dewan School of
Management, Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open
University, Assam, India

Abstract

Purpose– Green human resource management (HRM) is attracting much attention from practitioners and scholars worldwide. The present study offers a thorough literature review to fill a gap in having a conceptual framework of the strategic fit of Green HRM and organizational sustainability. This paper's goals are to:

- To understand the concept of Green HRM from various perspectives, methodologies, and contexts.
- Establish the key areas of concern for green HRM.
- Recognise the relationship between organisational sustainability and green HRM.
- Outline a strategic fit approach.

Design/methodology/approach– The study employs a methodical approach to literature review. Eight Green HRM focal areas drawn from the body of existing literature have been utilised to divide up the articles that were selected.

Findings– Over the previous 12 years, there has been an enormous spike in research having a special focus on Green HRM. Fifty articles in all underwent review. Most of these studies used quantitative research techniques and were conducted in underdeveloped nations. However, gaps were identified regarding having a conceptual framework of Green HRM and organizational sustainability in terms of a strategic fit.

Limitation of The Paper– This paper's subject is restricted to examining scholarly works based on an online search in peer-reviewed credible publications using the terms Green Human Resource, Green Recruitment, Green Performance Management, Green Compensation and Reward, and Green Training and Development. During the review of the paper, the researcher has excluded other academic materials like books and conference papers.

Originality/value– The study gives a structural overview of publications between 2010 and early 2023. To understand the paradoxes of sustainability and its strategic fit approach, the researchers have considered articles published before 2010. This review delivers an improved comprehension of the status of recent research, trends, and possible future directions in the area of green human resource management.

Keywords: Green human resource management, green training and development, green recruitment.

Introduction

Organisations are incorporating pro-environmental behaviours and activities at greater rates in response to growing global environmental concerns thus helping these organisations become more viable and sustainable. Green management practices strengthen employee awareness of environmental issues and open avenues for their overall growth as professionals. Green human resource management refers to selecting suitable workers with a proper blend of expertise in sustainable development and awareness of topics like having a sustainable world and making optimum use of limited resources. Performance appraisal, personal development, and selection are some of the areas where green HRM practices are developed and put into practice. Transforming HR procedures to embrace green initiatives whenever feasible and turning them into a routine that aligns with strategic policies is necessary. Blended green initiatives are part of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and human resources practices. A significant number of organisations should take the lead in implementing green initiatives in their strategic policy-making and HR functional departments. Global corporations are more willing to adopt green initiatives throughout their organisations than create new workspaces.

Therefore, by first looking at the direct impacts of GHRM on organisation sustainability and then looking into the indirect mechanism through which GHRM can influence sustainability, this research seeks to fill in the gaps in

the literature. In this regard, the present study offers a thorough literature review to fill a gap in having a conceptual framework of strategic fit of Green HRM and Organizational Sustainability. This paper's objectives are to:

- To understand the concept of Green HRM from various perspectives, methodologies, and contexts.
- Establish the key areas of concern for green HRM.
- Recognise the relationship between organisational sustainability and green HRM.
- Outline a strategic fit approach.

Green HRM has been the primary emphasis of this study, which is based on an evaluation of the literature. Fifty articles in all were reviewed. Almost all of these studies used quantitative research techniques and took place in underdeveloped countries. However, gaps were identified regarding having a conceptual framework of Green HRM and organizational sustainability. The findings of such literature help in identifying opportunities for comprehending organisational complexity and developing proactive and beneficial techniques for managing tensions to advance the sustainability of the company and its HRM systems. The researchers presented the key features of the paradox perspective, related it with HRM theories, and discussed how it can guide future research on tensions in HRM from a novel paradox perspective.

Green HRM incorporates ecological sustainability standards with performance management, training and development, recruiting and selection, and reward systems for organisations (Renwick, 2008). Green HR initiatives enhance work efficiency, cut operating costs, and improve employee engagement as well as retention. By minimising carbon footprints, these benefits contribute to the creation of organisational sustainability and competitive advantages (Geetu, 2014). It has the power to satisfy the needs of prospective customers while considering the needs of future generations. A company's approach that generates value in line with the long-term preservation, maintenance, and enhancement of the financial, environmental, and social capital is referred to as sustainable growth. A study was conducted to investigate the link between HR factors and the perceived ecological performance of employees in different business organisations. The outcomes of the research suggested that companies carry out energy audits, enforce paperless processes, recycle, and encourage their employees to make contributions to greener practices and organisational sustainability (Kozica, 2012). An organisation with an eco-aware workforce tends to make more inspired decisions, have a tighter budget, and have higher employee retention (Paallavi, 2016). One of the most pressing social concerns nowadays is environmental conservation (Hahn, 2014). The conventional HRM functions have been replaced by online HRM activities due to digitalization and e-human resource management, which has made the corporate world faster and more efficient. In addition to expecting the best and quickest return on investment, businesses engaging in green initiatives and corporate social responsibility (CSR) also promote other advantages like reduced production costs, enhanced productivity, and higher profitability (Roy & Khastagir, 2016). Higher GHRM practice levels have been linked to increased profitability (Obeidat, 2018), financial performance of the enterprises (Perramon, 2014; Miroshnychenko, 2017), and efficiency. These findings strengthen the economic pillar of sustainability. However, it has been determined from the literature that rewards, performance, job description, and green selection were not found to be important factors. According to Opata and Arulrajah (2014), the term "green HRM" refers to any HRM activity that minimises carbon emissions. Examples of such practices encompass the creation and analysis of green jobs, green HR approach, green hiring and selection, onboarding, training, growth, green appraisal of performance, green compensation, and employee relations. According to Chaudhary (2018), an organization's ability to successfully carry out GHRM depends on how well its people incorporate their environmental competencies with social requirements, organisational objectives, and ecological considerations.

The idea of GHRM has a major impact on HRM processes and procedures related to employee behaviour, organisational operations, green staffing, and strategic management. HR planning, job analysis, and work design are the first steps towards implementing GHRM. Employee relations and strategic HRM are the subsequent steps in the HRM components. The biggest hurdle for HR professionals is having an in-depth comprehension of GHRM along with how to use it in the real world for transforming their companies into green organisations.

Enterprises eventually perform better ecologically as a result of this possible endeavour. This study is undertaken to explore the principles, requirements, advantages, procedures, and difficulties that HR professionals and management encounter while implementing GHRM within an organisation.

Definitional Perspectives of Green HRM

To put organisational practices into context, it is important to comprehend the range of definitions and indicative descriptions related to green human resource management. Table 1 displays a few typical definitions of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) that were found in the literature review.

Table:1

Kozica & Kaiser, 2012	They observed that flexible HRM depends on several frameworks and follows various views, including managerial and nonmanagerial perspectives, in their paper, 'A Sustainability Perspective on Flexible HRM: How to Cope with Paradoxes of Contingent Work'.
Renwick,2013	According to the study, environmental administration benefits from green human resource management (GHRM).
Opatha, 2014	Green HRM focuses on organization sustainability by successfully developing and implementing all HR activities.
Masri&Jaaron, 2017	From their study, it was found that Green Human Resources Management (GHRM) addresses environment-related issues.
Nejati et al. ,2017	With the help of green HRM, organisations can hire experienced, dedicated, and environmentally mindful workers who can help them reduce their carbon footprint by making good use of existing assets like video conferencing, job sharing, telecommunications tools, and less paper printing.
Zaid et al., 2018	Green hiring (GH), green training and engagement (GTI), and green performance management and compensation (GPC) are three aspects of the GHRM bundle that jointly impact the performance of manufacturing organisations.
Tang, 2018	Several environmental policies and practices, including green performance management, green hiring and selection, green training, green compensation and benefits, and green involvement, contribute to the concept of "greening human resources."
Wikhamn,2019	GHRM refers to "the adoption of HRM strategies and practices that enable the achievement of financial, social, and sustainable development objectives with an impact inside and outside the organisation."
Ansari, Farrukh & Raza, 2021	Organizations can utilize green HR practices to motivate staff to adopt environmentally beneficial habits.
Fernández,2021	There needs to be more research to aid the effective implementation of various environmental policies. Leadership style has been identified as a critical aspect in creating environmental policies. This research focuses on understanding how organizations might adopt various environmental postures, which will assist managers in developing a strategy that better meets their environmental objectives. Organizations can adopt green HRM practices to their environmental strategic goals to effectively implement green-growth plans.
Ogiemwonyi & Harun, 2021	They found in their study that young green consumers exhibit great concern for the environment.
AlHosani & Rashid, 2022	Managers and other staff members may be encouraged to embrace sustainable construction via the Green Reward and Compensation Schemes' incentives and non-financial recognitions. This could stimulate the groups to take proactive steps in favour of the environment.
Shaha Faisal, 2023	A vast range of definitions, variables, and instruments are available for measuring GHRM.

Source: Literature Review

As the indicative definitions imply, GHRM involves a variety of organizational practices and strategies for which a wide range of approaches are available.

Organizational HR Practices

The organization's leadership sustainability and strategic management are the other dimensions. Green HR is an approach for integrating eco-friendly concepts into HR practices that increase employee engagement, promote cost-effective leadership, and boost organisational sustainability. The primary objectives of training and

development should include HRM knowledge, experience, abilities, attitudes, behaviour, and practices (Shaban, 2019). The theoretical framework of GHRM comprises all the activities and associated with improving, creating, putting into practice, and repairing systems to raise employees' awareness of the environment and become more environmentally conscious in their working methods (Mehta and Chugan, 2015). The goal of GHRM is to change workers' behaviours, attitudes, and performance so that they can become more appropriate from an environmental standpoint. Deshwal (2015) stated that the goal of GHRM is to foster the path of resource optimisation for sustainability.

GHRM aims to use as little paper as possible and promote the adoption of Low Carbon Technology (LCT). It concerns comprehensive organizational processes comprising employee behaviour, leadership, and organizational sustainability. GHRM primarily focuses on converting regular employees into green-oriented behavioural employees. This aims at ensuring the organization's sustainability by implementing environmentally friendly policies and practices. This entails putting into practice the HR departments' hiring, selection, green training, and development processes (Ford, 2012). According to Pham et al.'s (2019) research, using green HRM practices boosts both economic sustainability and encouraging wellness. From a green perspective, the organisational HR practices can be summed up as Figure 1 suggests.

HR practices connected to Green perspective:

Figure: 1



Source: Literature Review and Author's Analysis

GHRM refers to all operations and practices that facilitate improving, designing, implementing, and correcting systems to grow employees up to a green and environment-friendly working style approach (Mehta and Chugan, 2015). GHRM policy supports the efficient use of resources to achieve long-term sustainability (Deshwal, 2015). Sub-functional specificity can be seen as follows.

Green HR Planning: Green HR planning focuses on recruiting employees who have experience in the field of environment (Renwick et al, 2013).

Green Recruitment and selection: All organizations should have a sustainable recruitment strategy as part of their efforts to minimize their carbon footprint. Organizations should choose individuals with prior expertise and knowledge of green practices during hiring. Organizations must seek out people with new viewpoints and ideas (Renwick, 2013).

Green Training and Development: It includes information, activities, and skills needed to teach staff members how to minimize waste, use organizational resources wisely, utilize Low Carbon Technology for energy usage, and minimize those aspects that affect the environment. The HR training and development plan should highlight reduced environmental risks and ecological scarcity, which ought to be created with all levels of employees in mind. The literature research revealed that environmental training is closely linked to the integration of green management and activities in an organization.

Green Performance Management System (GPMS): Green Performance management system enhances environmental performance (Renwick, 2013).

Green Pay and Reward: Green abilities should be integrated into compensation plans. Changes should be undertaken to employee wage structures to reward them for acquiring green skills and fulfilling responsibilities (Deshwal, 2015). From the literature, it has been identified all companies must include both financial and non-financial recognition for employees (Renwick, 2013).

Green Involvement: Green involvement is an important element in an organisation to improve environmental performance by minimizing wastage (Renwick, Redman & Maguire, 2013). From the literature review, it was found that there are four aspects for evaluating green involvement (GI).

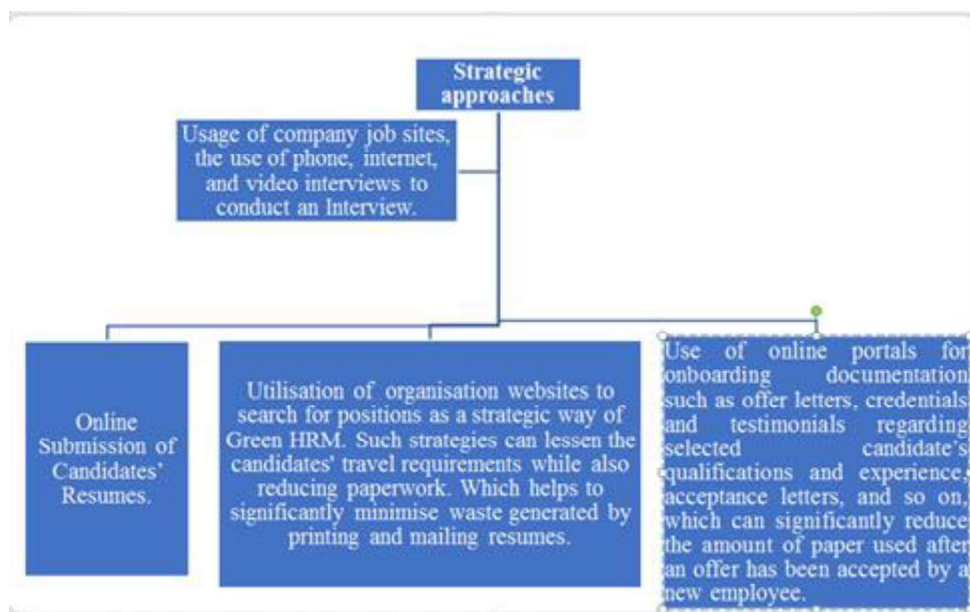
- Implementation of Green practices.
- A clear green vision.
- Multiple communication channels.
- Green Learning Environment.

Green Organizational Culture: GHRM embraces more than just hiring, developing, and keeping environmentally conscious workers. As it fosters an extensive green organisational culture, it is far more comprehensive. Employees start to show good conduct and become self-concerned about the company's green goals once an environmental concern has become deeply ingrained in organisational culture. The top management has to give environmental concerns a top priority in their objectives if they seek to create a green company culture. Regularly providing feedback to employees related to their environmental performance is vital, and it is crucial to address instances of inadequate efficiency (Renwick, 2016). To increase participation, motivation, and involvement, managers should provide employees with the autonomy to explore new ideas and take fresh approaches to improvement (Daily, 2001).

Green Job Design and Analysis: Organizations that care about the environment must create new job positions dedicated to dealing with the organization's environmental issues. Job descriptions must include various job aspects and responsibilities connected to the environment, whereas specifications must include the job's social and technical requirements (Redman & Maguire, 2013).

Examples of the strategic approaches adopted by the organizations to implement Green HRM as outlined in extant literature can be conceptualized as indicated in Figure 2

Figure: 2



Source: Author's interpretation from literature review

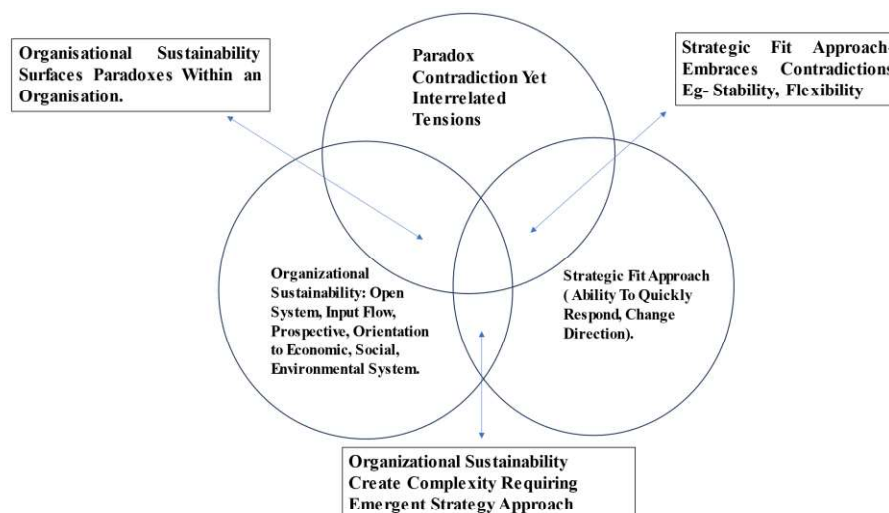
The paradoxes of sustainability in organizations

The sustainability paradox deals with how the internal dynamics of sustainability play out or how individuals inside organizations understand and put sustainability into practice (Crowther, 2008). The word "paradox" has been defined in various ways in management literature. 'A paradox comprises two opposed or contradictory statements (Poole, 1989). According to Lewis 2000, organizational stakeholders' perceptions of conflicts may be connected to how widespread paradoxes are. According to the paradox theory, if organizations can manage the opposing poles of each contradiction, ignoring one side of a dilemma perpetuates a vicious cycle because doing so makes the other side necessary again (Lewis, 2000). When organizational players attempt to choose between the two poles, this limits the creative force buried in the conflict (Sundaramurthy, 2003). On the other hand, it is claimed that by seeing them as possible sources of creativity and knowledge, generating positive solutions may aid organizational members in managing those conflicts (Kolk and Perego, 2014). A paradox framework can also be used to better comprehend environmental sustainability in general, which includes the economic, social, and ecological aspects of organizational sustainability. Environmental sustainability and the general concept of organizational sustainability—which includes the economic, social, and ecological aspects, can be understood better by using a paradox framework. Researchers have observed that businesses pursuing environmental policies must contend with paradoxical tensions, such as:

- (i) the existence of divergent viewpoints within the organizations regarding the degree to which extent environmental sustainability should be incorporated into business processes; ii) organizational members' propensity to address environmental issues may be limited by corporate practices or the organization's culture. iii) managing organizational conflicts, and decision-making in the face of great ambiguity, and iv) organizational sustainability becomes more complex without knowledge (Margolis, Elfenbein, & Walsh, 2010).

Based on the above findings, a framework of paradoxical tensions is presented in Figure 3.

Figure No. 3 Paradoxical Tensions



Source: Literature Review and Author's Analysis

Applying Paradox Theory to Green HRM Research and Practice

Organizations can explore the nature of tensions, rising complexity, and changing organizational environment through paradox theory (Ehnert, 2014). Diverse demands from internal and external stakeholders have been made to jointly accomplish several objectives, such as profit maximisation, long-term organisational viability, and social legitimacy, and to be evaluated according to various criteria, such as economic, ecological, and social (Ehnert, 2014). An expanding population, evolving labour markets, a lack of skill, growing rivalry, and accelerated work are the causes of these challenges. Due to the "contradictory elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time" that Organisational Tensions possess, they have evolved into paradoxes (Smith, 2011). A paradox is defined as "elements, or dualities, that are oppositional to one another yet are also synergistic and interrelated within a larger system" (Lewis, 2011). Tensions arise when a paradox's two opposing poles are in contrast because its logical elements will become inconsistent or even ludicrous (Lewis and Smith, 2011).

The following are the three HRM paradoxes identified from the review of the literature:

The first paradox is that several stakeholders, both internal and external, have presented conflicting demands to concurrently accomplish numerous goals. This dilemma relates to the economic rationality of human resource utilisation without affecting the continuous growth of the HR base. An actual illustration of this contradiction is when personnel is used effectively and economically to maximize the organizational financial return while also protecting the health and well-being of the workers.

The second contradiction is the efficiency-responsibility paradox, which involves being socially responsible and achieving efficiency while also renewing the HR base. Effective use of Human Resources and care for workers' health encourages employees of an organization to participate in CSR activities even outside of hours of operation.

The third paradox, known as the "present-future paradox," is associated with examining the conditions, values, and demands of workforce development both now and in the future. One illustration is the use of flexible employment arrangements (part-time, short-term contracts) to minimize expenses and maximize financial performance while concurrently investing in the advancement of future human resources.

After developing an understanding of organizational green HR practices and paradoxical tensions, an attempt has been made to see the relationship of GHRM and sustainability in terms of a strategic fit.

Ehnert (2014) explores the conflicts that organisations encounter in a dynamic and complicated setting by utilising the paradox theory. Due to the ageing population, a wide range of internal and external stakeholders have established divergent demands to simultaneously achieve multiple goals — profit maximisation, long-term organisational viability, and social legitimacy — and be evaluated along different (e.g., economic, ecological, social) dimensions (Ehnert, 2014). From the literature, it has been identified that GHRM promises potential benefits for both organizations and employees. The practice of Green HRM improves not only organizational performance but also financial performance and contributes to employee well-being within an organization (Lanoie 2008; Crotty and Rodgers 2012). Numerous studies have been done connecting sustainability to various HR issues, such as the detrimental effects of downsizing and talent management (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005). The long-term viability of human resources has grown in importance for all organisations. (Pfeffer, 2010).

Sustainability and GHRM – Strategic Fit

A new word in human resource management, sustainable HRM, responds to a desire for organizations that report on their sustainability operations to show more outstanding commitment (Ehnert, 2016). From the literature review, it has been identified that various human resource tasks are practiced within an organization to promote organizational sustainability. Green behaviour of employees such as: Environmental Orientation, Green participation in Decision making, Green Innovation, Green Empowerment, can be effectively carried out with the aid of green competency-building practices and green motivation, which improves organizational sustainability.

This indicates a strong relationship between GHRM and organisational sustainability as outlined in Figure 4.

The concept of "sustainability and HRM strategic fit" refers to the compatibility of an organization's HRM plans with its sustainability objectives. Supporting the organization's sustainability goals entails incorporating environmental, social, and ethical factors into HR practices. Here's a closer look at how to establish strategic alignment between HRM and sustainability:

Recruitment and Selection: It emphasizes the Inclusion of sustainability values and selection criteria in the hiring process. People who understand the company's commitment to sustainability and who have the knowledge and attitude to support ecologically and socially responsible practices.

Training & Development: Organisations must offer staff training and development opportunities that inform them of sustainability initiatives, practices, and aspirations. It contributes to developing a workforce that is informed about environmental concerns and capable of implementing sustainable practices.

Performance Management: Performance evaluation and feedback systems should align with sustainability goals. It calls for employing targets for sustainability performance and recognizing staff for their support of green initiatives.

Compensation & Rewards: Creating compensation and incentive schemes that honour and encourage sustainability-related actions is important. This might involve bonuses or other rewards connected to reaching sustainability goals.

Employee Engagement: It means participation in decision-making and environmental initiatives with staff. Employee engagement increases motivation to support the organization's sustainability objectives.

Workplace Policies: Create and disseminate HR policies that help the environment, such as supporting remote work to cut down on commutes, promoting waste reduction, and putting energy-saving measures in place can be instrumental.

Diversity & Inclusion: Encourage an inclusive, varied staff that represents the company's dedication to social responsibility and helps in alignment. Adopt varied viewpoints to improve innovation and problem-solving about sustainability-related issues.

Organisations should think about the following actions to ensure a strategic fit between sustainability and HRM strategies:

Assessment: From the literature it has been found that there are areas for improvement and gaps in organizations' present HRM and sustainability initiatives.

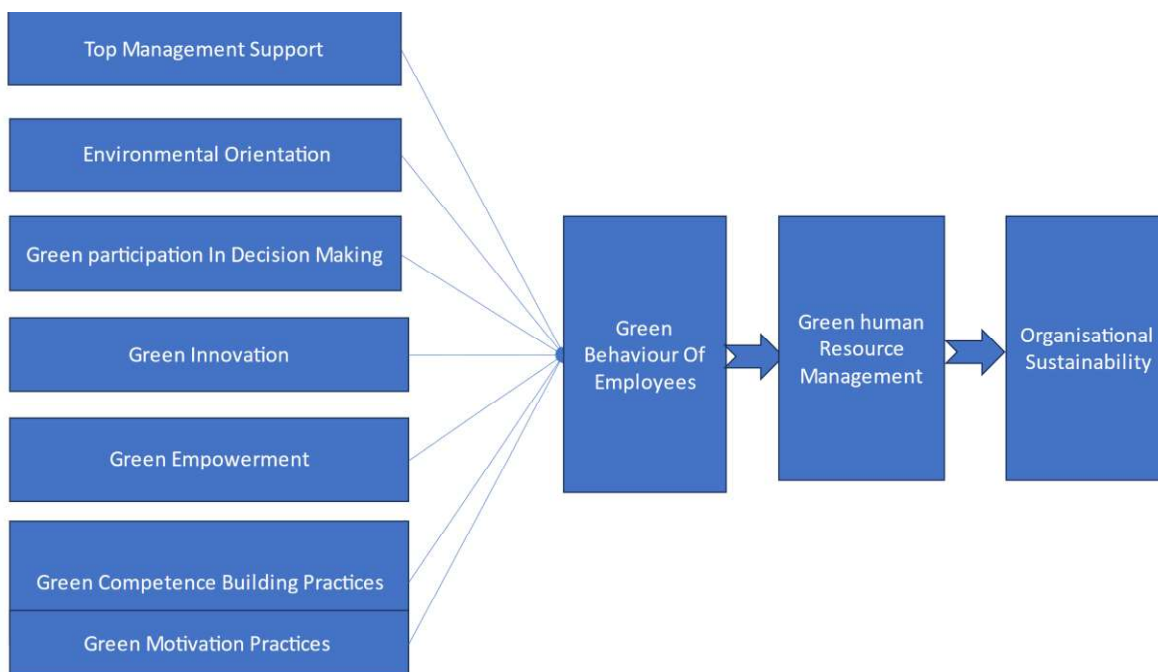
Integration: Integrating sustainability concerns into the current HRM procedures, guidelines, and practices.

Collaboration: Encourage cooperation between the sustainability and HR departments to guarantee alignment and successful implementation.

Measurement: Establish metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) to gauge the success of sustainability-focused HRM efforts and assess their effects.

Continuous Improvement: Reviewing and updating sustainability-focused HRM plans is essential to make the organisations sustainable.

Figure 4 GHRM and Organizational Sustainability



Source: Literature Review and Author's Analysis

By cutting down on environmental waste and redesigning HR products, methods, and processes, green HR primarily focuses on preserving and safeguarding natural resources and promoting organisational and environmental sustainability. As a result, efficiency improves, and costs are decreased. Among the results were online job interviews, job sharing, teleconferences, recycling, online training, and the creation of ecologically friendly workplaces. As society becomes more environmentally aware, corporations are finally integrating green initiatives into their regular working settings (Renwick, 2013). Enterprises can create green HR initiatives to promote the sustainable use of resources inside the organisation with the help of environmentally friendly HR initiatives. These procedures lead to greater efficiency, lower costs, and happier workers, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure: 5



Source: Literature Review and Author's analysis

Sustainability is one of the most urgent issues facing everyone right now (Olawumi,2018). The workplace green behaviour of employees acts as a key element in the context of social resilience. Green workplace environments can guarantee employee happiness and well-being by promoting a safe and healthy work environment. To that extent, organizational sustainability needs to be integrated with environmental sustainability, as indicated in the Conceptual Framework presented in Figure 6. This framework captures the gap in extant literature and contributes to the void in integration.

Figure 6



Source: By Literature Review and Author's analysis

Conclusions and Implications

A review of the literature indicates the associations between employee empowerment and clear HR policies, strategic management, top management, leadership, and leaders' conduct, as well as environmental awareness raising, teamwork, and enabling. The study indicates that, despite the numerous obstacles that HR professionals encounter when pursuing new situations, they still need to keep the environment foremost when developing HR strategies (analysis, formulation, and implementation) and HR policies that correlate with environmental management. This study attempts to help academics, researchers, and scholars in determining the GHRM topics that require further attention for investigation and analysis. Consequently, future research ought to be proactive about looking into and testing GHRM, and other aspects of GHRM practices in multiple industries.

The current study offers an original perspective on HRM tensions. It creates opportunities for comprehending their complexity and developing proactive and beneficial techniques for managing tensions to advance the sustainability of the company and its HRM systems. The researchers presented the key features of the paradox perspective, related it with HRM theories, and discussed how it can guide future research on tensions in HRM from a novel paradox perspective.

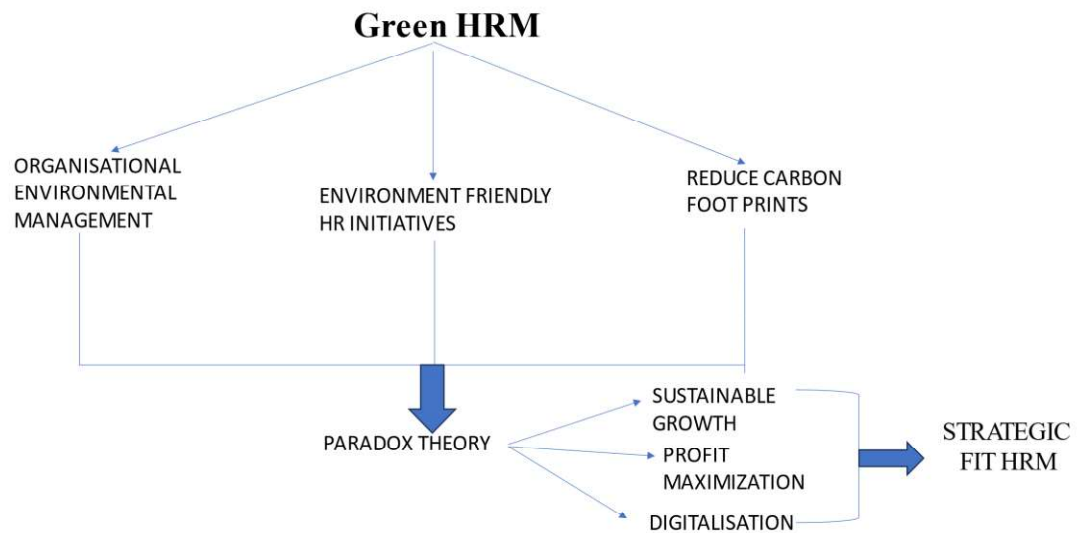


Figure 7 (conclusive Framework)

Source: Author's analysis

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