

# Impact of Green Human Resource Management Practices on Environmental Performance: The Mediating Role of Green Creativity

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**Abstract**—This research intends to evaluate how GHRM (Green Human Resource Management) influences Environmental Performance in the service Sector through a green Creativity mediator. A structured questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from the employees of the service sector and SEM was used to analyse the collected data. The research indicates that GHRM practices positively correlate with increased creativity and thus, increased Environmental Performance. Green Creativity is identified as a partial mediator within the GHRM - Environmental Performance pathway. Companies should create Green HR Policies that inspire employees to think Creatively to achieve a Sustainable business. Future programs may involve long-term data collection and studies coming into play with other mediators from various Industries.

**Index Terms**—Environmental Strategy, Green Innovation, Organizational Performance, Pro-environmental Behaviour, Service Sector, Sustainability.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The service sector creates many jobs and generates a great deal of value for national income, which makes it one of the most valuable sectors of the economy (Mousa and Othman, 2020; Piwowar-Sulej, 2021; Shahzad et al., 2025). However, the rapid growth of the service sector has created additional pressures on the environment due to the large amounts of energy used to run service industries (such as hospitality, health care, financial services, education, and information technology) as well as due to the depletion of natural resources, environmental degradation caused by the generation of waste products, and the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere

(Zhao and Zhou, 2021; Molina-Azorin et al., 2021; Dwumah et al., 2025). As such, service organizations will increasingly need to become environmentally sustainable because it is now a strategic imperative instead of optional (Renwick et al., 2013; Lee and Ahn, 2024).

To address the increasing environmental demands for sustainable practices by regulators, customers, and other stakeholders, organizations are recognizing the need to incorporate sustainability into their internal management systems (He et al. 2021; Aggarwal & Agarwala, 2023; Garg & Arora, 2025). One of these systems that has been identified as an important organizational mechanism for aligning human resource policies with environmental objectives is Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) (Jabbour & Santos, 2008; Renwick et al., 2013; Tang et al., 2018). GHRM includes the recruitment and selection of environmentally conscious employees, green training and development, green performance evaluation, and remuneration and reward programs that will motivate employees to act pro-environmentally (Jabbour et al., 2010; Mousa & Othman, 2020; Naz et al., 2023). Previous empirical research supports the notion that the use of GHRM positively affects the organizational environmental performance, green behaviour, and sustainability outcomes (Amjad et al., 2021; Zhao & Zhou, 2021; Shahzad et al., 2025). Environmental performance, in this sense, refers to an organization's capability to reduce emissions, to minimize waste, to conserve resources, and to comply with environmental regulations (Tang et al., 2018; Irani et al., 2022; Cesário et al., 2025). Although this body of literature

has made some advances, recent published reviews have indicated that additional research is needed to understand how the internal behavioural and cognitive processes through which GHRM translates into improved environmental performance have not been fully explored, particularly in the service organisation sector (Molina-Azorín et al., 2021; Naz et al., 2023; Dwumah et al., 2025).

As an answer, researchers have turned their focus toward employee-level constructs that serve as micro-foundations of organisation sustainability (Jia et al., 2018, Munawar et al., 2022, Gazi et al., 2025). A construct that falls into this category is green creativity which Amabile (1996) defined as creating novel and useful ideas pertaining to the development of new environmentally friendly products, eco-innovation, and sustainable ways to do business (Jia et al., 2018, Khan et al. 2025). Green creativity empowers employees to create innovative ideas for addressing environmental issues, which, in turn, enhances an organization's environmental performance (Zhao, & Zhou, 2021; Lee & Ahn, 2024; Garg & Arora, 2025). While the recent literature indicates a positive association between GHRM and Organisation Green Creativity (Jia et al., 2018, Darvishmotevali, & Altinay, 2022, Gazi et al., 2025) there is still a lack of empirical research on whether green creativity serves as a mediating factor between GHRM and environmental performance. Therefore, a gap in the literature exists, with the findings remaining limited, fragmented, and contextualised (Munawar et al., 2022, Naz et al., 2023, Dwumah et al., 2025). Furthermore, the service sector differs substantially from the manufacturing sector with respect to the labour-intensity, customer interaction, and the use of knowledge-based processes, thereby necessitating a sector-based examination (Irani et al., 2022, Cesário et al., 2025).

The study will investigate how Green Human Resource Management practices influence a business's environmental performance through the intermediary of green creativity in the service sector. This work will utilize existing knowledge of Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory to increase Managerial Theoretical Knowledge and provide insight to Managers who are seeking to attain a sustainable competitive advantage.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The Resource-Based View (RBV) is a strong theory for explaining how companies use their own resources and capabilities to create a sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984). According to the theory of RBV, resources that have value, are rare, cannot be imitated, and cannot be substituted for other things will allow companies to outperform competitors over time (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). Recently, RBV has also been used by scholars to answer questions in sustainability and to show that resources and capabilities with an environmental focus also represent strategic assets that improve the long-term performance of an organization (Hart, 1995; Russo & Fouts, 1997; Molina-Azorín et al, 2021).

Within the RBV framework, Human Resources are critical because employees have tacit knowledge, skills, and behavioral capabilities that are difficult for competitors to duplicate (Jabbour & Santos, 2008; Renwick et al., 2013; Tang et al., 2018). The Green Human Resource Management Practices create new green human capital and develop environmentally appropriate competencies and values, and responsibilities to increase the environmental consciousness and behavior of employees and to enhance organizational performance (Jabbour, 2010; Mousa & Othman, 2020; Piwowar-Sulej, 2021). By using green recruitment and selection processes, organizations can improve the quality of the employee selection process by attracting candidates who have a high degree of environmental consciousness and using green training and development methods to improve environmental skills and knowledge, and by using green performance appraisal and reward systems to encourage pro-environmental behaviors of their employees (Renwick et al., 2013; Amjad et al., 2021; Shahzad et al., 2025).

Looking through a resource-based view (RBV) lens, it is possible to see how these types of HR practices (aka “green HRM,” or “GHRM”) allow for the formation of valuable, inimitable, intangible resources within the organisation (Barney, 1991; Hart, 1995; Jabbour et al., 2010). Research has shown that organisations that have implemented GHRM practices have a superior capability and ability to create an organisation that can

achieve higher levels of environmental performance and sustainability (Zhao & Zhou, 2021; Naz et al., 2023; Cesário et al., 2025). RBV scholars agree that just having the resources available is not enough to facilitate the achievement of performance, and they also believe that those resources must be utilised through employee behaviour and action to arrive at an organisation's performance level (Peteraf, 1993; Teece et al., 1997; Dwumah & et al., 2025).

An example of this capability could be regarded as "Green Creativity," which describes the employees' ability to create innovative ideas that help solve environmental issues and promote eco-efficient practices (Amabile, 1996; Jia et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2025). By developing an environment that encourages green creativity, organisations can turn their investment in Human Resources into measurable environmental benefits, including reduced emissions, improved waste management and eco-innovative service development (Zhao & Zhou, 2021; Lee & Ahn, 2024; Garg & Arora, 2025). Therefore, it is reasonable to consider RBV as a theoretical framework for understanding the relationships between GHRM practices, green creativity, and environmental performance in the service sector.

### III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 Green Human Resource Management and Green Creativity

GHRM practices are being seen as a key factor in creating innovative and creative employees for an organisation to successfully keep up with and adapt to the challenges posed by the environment (Renwick et al., 2013; Tang et al., 2018; Piwowar-Sulej, 2021). Green recruitment and selection methods provide organisations with talent that has pro-environmental values, has an understanding of the ecological place within our society, and is creative in solving problems. As a result of this, organisations are providing fertile soil for their employee's green idea generation and creativity (Jabbour et al., 2010; Ahmed et al., 2021; Lee & Ahn, 2024). Green training and development of employees by organisations develops employees' knowledge and competencies for the environmental domain, both of which are necessary precursors for creative solutions to tasks that are related to

sustainability (Amabile, 1996; Jia et al., 2018; Munawar et al., 2022).

Evaluating the effectiveness of an organisation's employees' efforts to generate creative ideas for improving the environmental availability of resources can be measured by the use of environmentally focused performance management and reward systems (Mousa & Othman, 2020; Amjad et al., 2021; Shahzad et al., 2025). Studies have consistently shown the influence of GHRM practices upon the degree of green creativity and green innovation within the service and hospitality industries through creating the conditions for an organisational culture that is positive for employees to practice and promote environmental initiatives (Jia et al., 2018; Darvishmotevali & Altinay, 2022; Gazi et al., 2025). Through GHRM, employees can improve their performance by creating new solutions that lower the impact on our environment and increase eco-efficiency through the recombination of current knowledge to form new alternatives. (Teece et al., 1997; Khan et al., 2025).

Based on the Resource Based View of the Firm (Barney, 1991; Jabbour et al., 2010; Dwumah et al., 2025), green creativity is an intangible asset that an organization has developed through systematic investments within its Human Resource Management (HRM) system and that cannot be easily copied or imitated by their competitors. Therefore GHRM (Green HRM) should be able to help organizations create green creativity among their employees by effectively implementing these GHRM practices.

H1: Green Human Resource Management practices have a significant positive effect on green creativity.

#### 3.2 Green Creativity and Environmental Performance

Environmental performance describes one way an organization has minimized its negative impact on the environment, including emissions, efficient use of resources, effective waste management, defined by the extent to which they abide by environmental regulations (Tang et al, 2018; Zhao & Zhou 2021; Cesário et al, 2025). Additionally, many academics now believe that while formal environmental management systems are important to attain high levels of environmental performance, it also requires employees to drive innovation and develop creative solutions (Hart, 1995; Russo & Fouts, 1997; Molina-Azorín et al., 2021).

Moreover, green creativity, which is an employee's ability to create and implement new eco-friendly ideas, processes and services, can enhance the overall environmental performance of the organization through the continued creation of eco-innovation (Amabile, 1996; Jia et al., 2018; Munawar et al., 2022). Research has shown that organizations that demonstrate a high degree of green creativity tend to have better overall environmental performance because of an ongoing effort to create eco-innovations and develop proactive environmental practices (Zhao & Zhou, 2021; Irani et al., 2022; Garg & Arora, 2025). For organizations within the service sector, in particular, organizations with a high level of employee discretion who interact with customers directly benefit from having employees with a high degree of green creativity that allow them to turn their environmental intentions into measurable outcomes (Lee & Ahn, 2024; Cesário et al., 2025).

Green Creativity can be classified as an organizational capability that creates value and gives firms the ability to utilize their human capital for the purpose of leveraging competitive advantage through sustainability (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Teece et al., 1997). Therefore, firms and organizations that develop and support Green Creativity are expected to achieve superior performances in regard to their environmental performance.

H2: Green creativity has a significant positive effect on environmental performance.

### 3.3 Mediating Role of Green Creativity in the GHRM–Environmental Performance Relationship

Research that has been done in the past has shown that there is a direct effect of practices associated with GHRM on an organization's environmental performance. However, many recent researchers argue that in fact this relationship has an indirect component which will be realized through the capabilities and behaviours of employees (Jabbour et al. 2010; Tang et al. 2018; Naz et al. 2023). The resource-based view (RBV) of human resources (HR) systems suggests that HR systems enable organizations to improve their overall performance by developing the internal capabilities of the company, which then mediate the effect of HR on overall organizational performance (Barney 1991; Wright et al. 2001; Dwumah et al. 2025).

Green creativity acts as a crucial mediating mechanism, converting the GHRM practices into actions that will generate environmental outcomes (Jia et al. 2018; Munawar et al. 2022; Gazi et al. 2025). The practices of GHRM provide the resources, incentives, and support necessary to help create the environmental actions, while the green creativity of employees enables the employees to convert the provided resources into practices that increase an organization's environmental performance (Amjad et al. 2021; Zhao & Zhou 2021; Lee & Ahn 2024). More and more empirical research supports that green creativity and other related constructs partially mediate the sustainability field (Naz et al. 2023; Garg & Arora 2025; Dwumah et al. 2025).

Therefore, consistent with both the RBV and the empirical evidence already obtained, green creativity is expected to mediate the relationship between GHRM practices and environmental performance.

H3: Green creativity mediates the relationship between Green Human Resource Management practices and environmental performance.

## IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research was designed as a quantitative, cross-sectional study, employing a survey method to collect data from service sector workers over six months via a standardized questionnaire developed using validated scales (Jabbour et al. 2010; Jia et al. 2018) and distributed to both managerial and non-managerial workers, using a five-point Likert scale for measuring responses. Structural Equation Modelling using the AMOS software package was used to assess the reliability, validity, and proposed associations between variables.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The sample demonstrates adequate diversity in terms of gender, age, educational qualification, and work experience, ensuring the representativeness of service-sector employees.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	58.0
	Female	42.0
Age (Years)	Below 25	22.0
	26–35	34.0
	36–45	29.0
	Above 45	15.0
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate	39.0
	Postgraduate	61.0
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	12.0
	1–5 years	31.0
	6–10 years	37.0
	More than 10 years	20.0

5.2 Reliability and Validity Assessment

Reliability and validity of the measurement scales were assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Cronbach’s alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were employed to examine internal consistency and convergent validity.

Table 2. Reliability and Convergent Validity Statistics

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach’s $\alpha$	CR	AVE
Green Recruitment & Selection (GRS)	5	0.944	0.946	0.653
Green Training & Development (GTD)	4	0.934	0.938	0.660
Green Performance Management & Appraisal (GPMA)	5	0.935	0.939	0.664
Green Compensation & Rewards (GCR)	4	0.931	0.935	0.651
Green Creativity (GC)	6	0.936	0.940	0.668
Environmental Performance (EP)	6	0.944	0.947	0.652

All Cronbach’s alpha and CR values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, and AVE values were above 0.50, confirming adequate reliability and convergent validity.

5.3 Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was conducted to test the hypothesized relationships among the constructs. The model demonstrated satisfactory goodness-of-fit indices, indicating an acceptable fit between the proposed model and the observed data.

Table 3. Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Recommended Value	Obtained Value
$\chi^2/df$	< 3.00	2.31
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.056
SRMR	< 0.08	0.041
CFI	> 0.90	0.95
TLI	> 0.90	0.94

Table 4. Structural Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Structural Path	$\beta$	p-value	Result
H1	GHRM → Green Creativity	0.499	< 0.001	Supported
H2	Green Creativity → Environmental Performance	0.419	< 0.001	Supported
H3	GHRM → Environmental Performance	0.213	< 0.01	Supported

The results indicate that GHRM practices exert a strong positive influence on green creativity, which subsequently enhances environmental performance.

5.4 Mediation Analysis

The mediating effect of green creativity was examined using the bootstrapping method with 1,000 resamples.

Table 5. Mediation Analysis Results

Relationship	Direct Effect (β)	Indirect Effect (β)	p-value	Mediation Type
GHRM → GC → EP	0.213	0.209	< 0.001	Partial Mediation

The results confirm that green creativity partially mediates the relationship between GHRM practices and environmental performance.

## VI. DISCUSSION & THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The empirical results of this study provide significant evidence that GHRM practices have a sizeable positive impact on both GCR and consequently on an organisation's environmental outcomes. From an RBV perspective, GHRM practices are considered to be 'strategic investments' in human capital that develop, create and foster 'rare and inimitable capabilities' of a human resource thus assisting organisations to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage driven by sustainability as suggested by (Barney, 1991; Hart, 1995; Jabbour et al., 2010).

The large influence of GHRM on GCR signifies the necessity for organisations to align their human resource (HR) systems with their environmental objectives so as to stimulate innovative behaviour of employees. This message continues to be salient in previous literature indicating that a climate created by green training, performance appraisals and rewards fosters employees to provide suggestions for novel and innovative eco-friendly solutions (Amjad et al., 2021; Darvishmotevali & Altinay, 2022).

Furthermore, the strong influence of GCR on the environmental performance of service organisations reinforces that creativity is the micro-foundation for sustainability of service organisations in this study. This result also supports previous research linking employee creativity to eco-innovation and environmental efficiency (Zhao & Zhou, 2021; Munawar et al., 2022; Garg & Arora, 2025). Additionally, the partial mediation results indicate that GHRM contributes both directly (as evidenced by the overall positive relationship to EPP) and indirectly (mediated by GCR) to environmental performance, with the mediation pathway being the stronger pathway emphasising the importance of creativity as it relates to the micro-foundations of sustainability.

Overall, the results advance sustainability research by demonstrating how GHRM-driven human capabilities contribute to environmental performance, thereby extending RBV into the green management domain.

The findings confirm that GHRM significantly enhances green creativity, which in turn improves environmental performance, consistent with prior studies (Tang et al., 2018; Naz et al., 2023). The mediation results align with RBV-based explanations (Jabbour et al., 2010; Dwumah et al., 2025).

This study extends RBV by identifying green creativity as a critical mediating capability linking GHRM and environmental performance (Barney, 1991; Jia et al., 2018; Lee & Ahn, 2024).

## VII. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Managers should integrate creativity-enhancing green HR policies, such as green training and incentive systems, to foster employee-driven sustainability outcomes (Renwick et al., 2013; Shahzad et al., 2025). The cross-sectional design limits causal inference. Future studies should employ longitudinal designs and explore additional mediators.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

This research provides insight into the effect of green HRM (GHRM) on environmental performance in the service sector and how it creates a pathway through green creativity for improving environmental performance. The Resource-Based View of GHRM reinforces the importance of a company's ability to develop employee creativity in order to achieve positive outcomes related to sustainability. The results of the study confirm that employee creativity is essential for maximizing the return on GHRM investments and that the performance levels associated with these human resources can translate into many benefits. This research goes beyond the traditional RBV of service management by focusing on the need for companies to invest in developing their employees' creative and green skills. The findings from this study are valuable for both researchers and practitioners who want to utilize HRM systems as a means of achieving long-term environmental performance.

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