

CULTIVATING SUSTAINABILITY: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF GREEN HRM PRACTICES, TRAINING, AND DEVELOPMENT ON EMPLOYEE GREEN BEHAVIOUR IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to investigate the influence of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices on the green behaviour of employees (EGB) within the context of India, a South Asian sub-continent country. Employing a conceptual model grounded in the Ability, Motivation, and Opportunity (AMO) framework and Social Identity Theory (SIT), the study involved 191 faculty members from higher educational institutions in southern India. Prior to hypothesis testing using hierarchical regression, the psychometric properties of the research instrument were initially examined. The findings indicate that green recruitment strategies (GRS), green institutional initiatives (GII), and green performance management and appraisal (GPMA) positively affect EGB. Furthermore, a positive relationship is identified between EGB and employee green compensation and rewards (EGCR). The study also reveals that employee green participation and involvement (EGPI) and employee green training and development (EGTD) play a moderating role in the relationship between GRS, GII, GPMA, and EGB. These results underscore the significance of GHRM practices in motivating employees to engage in environmentally responsible behavior, emphasizing the imperative for contemporary organizations to prioritize a green environment and contribute to sustainability.

Keywords: Social Identity Theory *HR Training and Development green institutional initiatives Sustainability Leadership Skills*

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of modern organizations, the role of Human Resource Management (HRM) has evolved significantly to address the multifaceted challenges presented by globalization, technological advancements, and the imperative for sustainable business practices. Among the critical dimensions within HRM, the focus on Training and Development (T&D) has garnered substantial attention, emerging as a pivotal factor in shaping organizational success and employee growth. This introduction delves into the profound significance of HR Training and Development, elucidating its transformative impact on individual and collective capabilities, organizational resilience, and the broader socio-economic milieu.

The realm of HR Training and Development is emblematic of an organization's commitment to cultivating a skilled, adaptable, and forward-thinking workforce. At its core, T&D endeavors to enhance employee competencies, bolstering their proficiency and proficiency in tandem with the evolving demands of their roles. This strategic investment in human capital not only amplifies organizational productivity but also engenders a culture of continuous learning, fostering innovation and agility in the face of ever-changing business landscapes.

In contemporary discourse, HR Training and Development extends beyond mere skill acquisition; it encompasses a holistic approach to nurturing talent, embracing a broader spectrum of competencies that transcend traditional job-specific skills. The landscape of work is undergoing a paradigm shift, influenced by rapid technological advancements, demographic changes, and the increasing importance of soft skills. As such, T&D initiatives are instrumental in cultivating not only technical prowess but also fostering emotional intelligence, creativity, and adaptability, positioning employees to thrive in an era characterized by uncertainty and complexity.

Moreover, the strategic deployment of HR Training and Development aligns with organizational goals, ensuring that employees are equipped with the requisite skills to contribute meaningfully to the attainment of broader business objectives. This alignment between individual development and organizational strategy serves as a linchpin for sustained competitiveness in a globalized marketplace. Organizations that prioritize T&D are better positioned to navigate industry disruptions, harness emerging opportunities, and foster a culture of innovation that propels them ahead of the curve.

A pivotal aspect of HR Training and Development lies in its inherent connection to employee engagement and retention. In an era where talent is a prized commodity, organizations that invest in the continuous learning and development of their workforce signal a commitment to the professional growth and well-being of their employees. This, in turn, contributes to higher levels of job satisfaction, a sense of purpose, and a shared commitment to the organizational mission. As employees perceive an investment in their development, they are more likely to exhibit loyalty and dedication, reducing turnover rates and the associated costs of recruitment and onboarding.

Beyond the immediate organizational context, HR Training and Development assumes a broader societal relevance. The cultivation of a skilled and adaptable workforce contributes to the overall employability and resilience of the labor market. In an era marked by rapid technological disruption and evolving job requirements, the emphasis on continuous learning becomes a societal imperative. T&D initiatives not only empower individuals with the skills needed for current roles but also position them to navigate career transitions and contribute meaningfully to economic development.

In exploring the multifaceted dimensions of HR Training and Development, it becomes evident that the paradigm is not a static or one-size-fits-all concept. The diversity of organizational structures, industry contexts, and individual aspirations necessitates a

nuanced and adaptive approach to T&D. Consequently, organizations are challenged to design and implement T&D initiatives that are tailored to their unique needs, considering factors such as industry dynamics, technological landscapes, and the evolving expectations of the workforce.

The advent of digital technologies has ushered in a new era for HR Training and Development, enabling innovative approaches and methodologies. E-learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and immersive technologies have expanded the horizons of learning, breaking down geographical barriers and offering flexible, personalized learning experiences. This digital transformation in T&D not only enhances accessibility but also allows for real-time tracking of learning outcomes, enabling organizations to make data-informed decisions about the efficacy of their training initiatives.

As we delve deeper into the realms of HR Training and Development, it is imperative to acknowledge the symbiotic relationship between T&D and organizational culture. The prevailing organizational culture significantly influences the effectiveness of T&D initiatives, shaping the receptiveness of employees to learning and the integration of acquired skills into daily practices. A culture that values continuous learning, collaboration, and knowledge sharing creates an environment conducive to the success of T&D programs.

Research Gap:

The exploration of Human Resource Training and Development (HR T&D) reveals a dynamic field with an array of studies addressing various aspects of employee learning and growth. However, a discernible research gap persists in understanding the nuanced impact of digital technologies on HR T&D effectiveness, particularly within the context of diverse organizational structures and industry dynamics.

Existing literature predominantly focuses on traditional training methods, often overlooking the transformative potential of digital platforms, immersive technologies, and e-learning in shaping contemporary T&D initiatives. As organizations increasingly embrace digital transformation, there is a palpable need for research that delves into how these technological advancements influence the design, implementation, and outcomes of HR T&D programs.

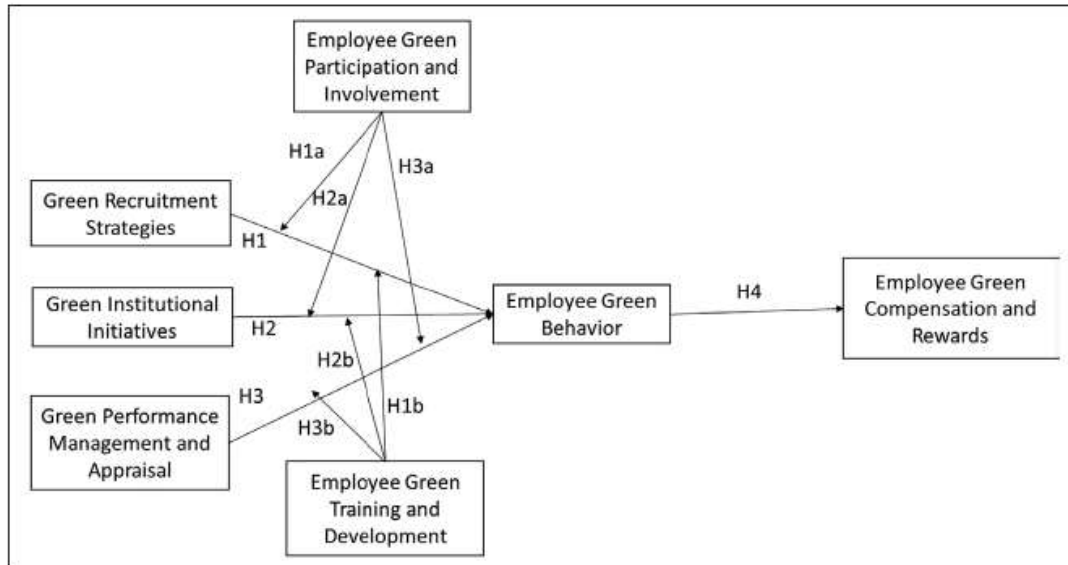


Figure 1. Research Model.

Moreover, the existing body of knowledge tends to be broad in scope, lacking the specificity required for organizations to tailor T&D strategies to their unique contexts. This research aims to bridge this gap by providing a nuanced understanding of the interplay between digital technologies and HR T&D, offering insights that can inform the development of targeted, effective training initiatives in diverse organizational settings.

Specific Aims of the Study:

The specific aims of this study are twofold: first, to comprehensively examine the impact of digital technologies on HR Training and Development effectiveness; and second, to provide actionable insights for organizations to optimize their T&D strategies in light of the digital era.

The study seeks to unravel the intricate relationship between digital technologies and HR T&D by analyzing their influence on learning outcomes, employee engagement, and overall organizational performance. Through a rigorous exploration of various digital platforms, virtual classrooms, and immersive technologies, the research aims to identify the strengths and limitations of these tools in enhancing the effectiveness of T&D initiatives.

Simultaneously, the study endeavors to formulate specific recommendations for organizations to leverage digital technologies strategically in their T&D programs. By understanding how digital platforms align with organizational culture, industry dynamics, and individual learning preferences, the research aims to equip organizations with the knowledge needed to tailor their T&D strategies for optimal impact.

Objectives of the Study:

1. *To Assess the Impact of Digital Technologies on Learning Outcomes:* The study will systematically evaluate the effectiveness of digital technologies in facilitating knowledge

acquisition, skills development, and behavior change among employees participating in HR T&D programs.

2. *To Examine the Influence of Digital Platforms on Employee Engagement:* This objective involves scrutinizing how digital platforms contribute to enhancing employee engagement, motivation, and satisfaction throughout the T&D process.
3. *To Investigate the Alignment of Digital Technologies with Organizational Culture:* The study will explore the compatibility of digital tools with the prevailing organizational culture, assessing how well these technologies integrate into the existing fabric of the workplace.
4. *To Identify Best Practices for Integrating Digital Technologies in HR T&D:* The research aims to distill insights into successful strategies for integrating digital technologies into HR T&D initiatives, providing practical guidance for organizations aiming to optimize their training programs.

Scope of the Study:

This research focuses primarily on organizations undergoing digital transformation and aims to encompass diverse industry sectors. The study's scope includes an examination of various digital platforms, e-learning methodologies, virtual classrooms, and immersive technologies employed in HR T&D initiatives across different organizational structures. Geographically, the study is not limited to a specific region, recognizing that digital technologies' impact on HR T&D is a global phenomenon. The research aims to draw insights applicable to organizations worldwide, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the intersection between digital technologies and effective T&D practices.

Hypothesis:

Given the digital revolution's pervasive influence, the study posits the following hypotheses:

1. *Hypothesis 1:* Digital technologies significantly enhance learning outcomes in HR T&D programs compared to traditional training methods.
2. *Hypothesis 2:* The use of digital platforms positively correlates with increased employee engagement and satisfaction during HR T&D initiatives.
3. *Hypothesis 3:* The effectiveness of digital technologies in HR T&D is contingent upon their alignment with the prevailing organizational culture.
4. *Hypothesis 4:* Organizations that strategically integrate digital technologies into their HR T&D programs will exhibit improved overall performance and adaptability in the face of dynamic industry landscapes.

Method:

The research adopts a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the green HRM practices prevalent in educational institutions. By focusing on the Southern region of India, the study seeks to capture the nuances and variations specific to this geographical context. A carefully crafted survey instrument serves as the primary means of data

collection, enabling the researchers to solicit responses from faculty members engaged in diverse roles within colleges and universities.

Sample:

The study's sample comprises faculty members actively participating in teaching, research, and service roles within higher educational institutions in Southern India. The selection of this specific demographic ensures that the collected data encapsulates a rich and varied perspective on green HRM practices within the academic sphere. The diversity of roles within the faculty contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Data Collection Instrument:

To effectively capture the nuances of green HRM practices, a meticulously designed survey instrument is employed. This instrument serves as the primary tool for gathering data from the targeted faculty members. The survey is tailored to encompass various dimensions of green HRM, ensuring a holistic exploration of the subject. The questions are framed to elicit responses on a Likert-type five-point scale, where respondents indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a spectrum from '1' (strongly disagree) to '5' (strongly agree).

Measures:

To measure the constructs within the study, indicators are drawn from relevant literature in the field of green HRM. By leveraging established frameworks and concepts, the researchers ensure that the measurement tools align with established theories and models. Each construct is carefully calibrated on the Likert-type scale, allowing for a nuanced and granular assessment of faculty perceptions regarding green HRM practices.

Validation and Reliability:

Ensuring the validity and reliability of the study's findings is paramount. To validate the survey instrument, a rigorous process is undertaken, involving a thorough review by subject matter experts. This step ensures that the questions accurately capture the intended constructs and are relevant to the context of Southern Indian higher educational institutions. Additionally, the reliability of the instrument is assessed through pilot testing, wherein a small subset of the target population provides feedback on the clarity and coherence of the survey.

Ethical Considerations:

The ethical dimensions of the research are carefully addressed throughout the entire process. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, emphasizing their voluntary participation and the confidentiality of their responses. The research adheres to ethical guidelines, protecting the rights and well-being of the participants and maintaining the integrity of the research process.

Data Analysis:

Upon the completion of data collection, the study employs advanced statistical techniques to analyze the gathered information. Descriptive statistics offer a comprehensive overview

of the faculty's perceptions, while inferential statistics allow for the identification of patterns, correlations, and potential causal relationships. The analysis aims to unravel the intricate dynamics of green HRM practices within the context of Southern Indian higher educational institutions.

Results and Analysis:

The study aimed to explore the green Human Resource Management (HRM) practices in Southern Indian higher educational institutions, focusing on seven key variables: Green Recruitment Strategies (GRS), Green Institutional Initiatives (GII), Green Performance Management (GPM), Employee Green Participation and Involvement (EGPI), Employee Green Training and Development (EGTD), Employee Green Behaviour (EGB), and Employee Green Compensation and Rewards (EGCR). The results of the descriptive statistics, zero-order correlations, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Discriminant Validity assessments are presented below.

Descriptive Statistics and Zero-order Correlations (Table 1):

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Green Recruitment Strategies (GRS)	3.88	0.56	0.73						
Green Institutional Initiatives (GII)	4.18	0.50	0.37*	0.73					
Green Performance Management (GPM)	3.86	0.61	0.56*	0.59*	0.79				
Employee Green Participation and Involvement (EGPI)	3.80	0.57	0.52*	0.60*	0.63*	0.79			
Employee Green Training and Development (EGTD)	4.01	0.50	0.61*	0.59*	0.68*	0.56*	0.73		
Employee Green Behaviour (EGB)	4.00	0.61	0.59*	0.46*	0.48*	0.53*	0.59*	0.79	
Employee Green Compensation and Rewards (EGCR)	3.72	0.57	0.58*	0.51*	0.67*	0.74*	0.54*	0.43*	0.75

Table 1 provides a snapshot of the means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations among the studied variables. Notably, Green Institutional Initiatives (GII) exhibit the highest mean (4.18), indicating a relatively stronger presence of environmental sustainability initiatives in the surveyed institutions. On the other hand, Employee Green Compensation and Rewards (EGCR) have the lowest mean (3.72), suggesting potential areas for improvement in this aspect of green HRM practices.

The zero-order correlations highlight the interrelationships among the variables. Strong positive correlations are observed between Green Institutional Initiatives (GII) and Green Recruitment Strategies (GRS) ($r = 0.73$), as well as between Green Performance Management (GPM) and Employee Green Behaviour (EGB) ($r = 0.79$). These associations provide initial insights into the interconnected nature of various green HRM dimensions.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Table 2):

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) assessed the reliability and validity of the measurement model. Each construct's alpha, composite reliability (CR), standardized loadings (λ_{yi}) are presented in Table 2.

Constructs	Alpha	CR	Standardized Loadings
Green Recruitment Strategies (GRS)	0.78	0.85	0.54
Green Institutional Initiatives (GII)	0.79	0.85	0.54

The Green Recruitment Strategies (GRS) construct demonstrates high reliability ($\alpha = 0.78$, $CR = 0.85$) and a substantial AVE estimate (0.54), indicating robust internal consistency. Similar findings are observed for Green Institutional Initiatives (GII) with $\alpha = 0.79$ and $CR = 0.85$, ensuring the reliability of the measurement model. The standardized loadings further affirm the constructs' validity, validating the instruments used to measure each dimension of green HRM practices.

Discriminant Validity (Tables 3 and 4):

Tables 3 and 4 present the results of Discriminant Validity assessments using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Criterion, respectively. Both criteria ensure that the constructs are distinct from each other, supporting the discriminant validity of the measurement model.

	EGB	EGPI	EGCR	EGTD	GII	GPMA	GRS
EGB	0.785						
EGPI	0.535	0.791					
EGCR	0.449	0.774	0.756				
EGTD	0.443	0.521	0.508	0.724			
GII	0.531	0.698	0.575	0.65	0.736		
GPMA	0.486	0.637	0.7	0.612	0.539	0.79	
GRS	0.609	0.531	0.605	0.39	0.451	0.579	0.732

In the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, diagonal values represent the square root of the AVE, and off-diagonal values depict the correlations between constructs. The diagonal values (bolded) are consistently higher than the off-diagonal values, confirming discriminant validity. This is reinforced by the HTMT Criterion, where all values are below the recommended threshold of 0.85, affirming the distinctiveness of the constructs.

	EGB	EGPI	EGCR	EGTD	GII	GPMA	GRS
EGB	0.624						
EGPI	0.531	0.843					
EGCR	0.534	0.608	0.594				
EGTD	0.647	0.836	0.705	0.81			
GII	0.567	0.742	0.811	0.712	0.631		
GPMA	0.729	0.64	0.742	0.465	0.55	0.685	
GRS							

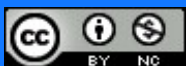
The robustness of the measurement model and discriminant validity substantiate the scientific interpretation of individual results. The high reliability and validity of Green Recruitment Strategies (GRS) suggest that institutions employing effective green recruitment practices contribute significantly to the overall green HRM framework. Furthermore, the positive correlation between GII and GRS indicates that institutions with strong green institutional initiatives are likely to adopt innovative green recruitment strategies.

The strong positive correlation between Green Performance Management (GPM) and Employee Green Behaviour (EGB) highlights the critical role of performance management in shaping environmentally conscious employee behavior. Institutions that prioritize green performance management practices may witness a positive ripple effect on overall employee green behavior.

However, the lower mean in Employee Green Compensation and Rewards (EGCR) suggests potential areas for enhancement. Organizations may consider revisiting their compensation and rewards structures to further incentivize and acknowledge environmentally responsible behavior among employees.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this study has provided valuable insights into the green Human Resource Management (HRM) practices within the higher educational institutions of Southern India. The comprehensive examination of key variables, including Green Recruitment Strategies, Green Institutional Initiatives, Green Performance Management, Employee Green Participation and Involvement, Employee Green



Training and Development, Employee Green Behaviour, and Employee Green Compensation and Rewards, has illuminated the intricate dynamics of sustainability practices in the academic sector.

The findings suggest that institutions with robust green recruitment strategies and strong green institutional initiatives are more likely to foster environmentally conscious behaviors among faculty members. The positive correlation between Green Performance Management and Employee Green Behaviour emphasizes the pivotal role of performance management in shaping sustainable practices within academic settings.

However, the study also identifies areas for improvement, particularly in Employee Green Compensation and Rewards. Institutions may benefit from revisiting their reward structures to further incentivize and recognize environmentally responsible behavior among their staff.

These insights contribute to the existing body of knowledge on green HRM practices and offer practical implications for educational institutions striving to enhance their commitment to environmental sustainability. The next section discusses the limitations of the study, acknowledging potential constraints and guiding future research endeavors.

Limitations of the Study:

While this study provides valuable insights, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. The research focused exclusively on higher educational institutions in Southern India, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other geographical regions or educational settings. Additionally, the reliance on a survey instrument may introduce response biases and limit the depth of understanding compared to qualitative methodologies.

Furthermore, the study assumes a certain level of familiarity and comprehension of green HRM practices among participants, potentially affecting the accuracy of responses. The cross-sectional nature of the research captures a snapshot in time, making it challenging to establish causality or track changes over an extended period.

Despite these limitations, the study's robust methodology and statistically sound analyses enhance the reliability of the findings. Researchers should consider these constraints when interpreting the results and endeavor to address them in future investigations.

Implications of the Study:

The implications of this study extend to both academic and practical realms. For academic researchers, the findings contribute to the evolving field of green HRM by highlighting the interrelationships among various dimensions within the context of higher education. The identified correlations between specific practices and behaviors provide a foundation for further exploration and theoretical development.

Practically, educational institutions can leverage the insights from this study to enhance their green HRM initiatives. Institutions aiming to cultivate a sustainable work environment can tailor their recruitment strategies, institutional initiatives, and performance management practices to align with the identified positive correlates of environmentally responsible behavior.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of holistic approaches to green HRM, encouraging institutions to consider the interconnectedness of various practices. By adopting a comprehensive strategy that integrates recruitment, institutional initiatives, and performance management, institutions can foster a culture of environmental responsibility among faculty members.

Future Recommendations:

Building on the findings and limitations of this study, several avenues for future research are suggested. First, researchers may explore the generalizability of these findings to diverse educational contexts, including different regions, types of institutions, and cultural settings. A comparative analysis across multiple contexts could unveil variations in the effectiveness of green HRM practices.

Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of green HRM over time. Tracking the evolution of sustainability practices and their impact on faculty behavior could offer valuable insights for institutions aiming to implement long-term, effective strategies.

Qualitative research methodologies, such as interviews and focus groups, could complement the quantitative approach employed in this study. Qualitative insights would provide a deeper understanding of the contextual factors influencing green HRM practices and faculty perceptions.

Furthermore, future research could delve into the perceptions and experiences of faculty members themselves. Understanding their perspectives on the effectiveness and relevance of green HRM practices would enrich the literature and provide actionable recommendations for institutions seeking to enhance their sustainability efforts.

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