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## **Green Human Resource Management: The Reality of the Saudi Context and Future Direction**

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### **Abstract**

The environment is one of the critical elements of organisational sustainability. Green human resource management (GHRM) plays a crucial role in achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Since GHRM is a new and growing concept, current research aims to map the concept of GHRM development in Saudi Arabia to show the current development, gap and potential future direction. The current paper reviews the empirical research papers from the Saudi Arabia context and shows the growth and development of GHRM research. The findings show that GHRM research is still in the initial phase with seven empirical research papers with only four theories to contribute to the Saudi context. Initial research of GHRM has been conducted primarily on private sectors, with minimal focus on government sectors in Saudi. The current review contributes to the advancement of GHRM research practices in Saudi Arabia and provides some crucial direction for government, industry and researchers to conduct future research.

**Keywords:** Green Human Resource Management; Saudi Arabia; organisational sustainability; Future directions; sustainable competitive



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## **Evidence for practice**

- The concept of GHRM is relatively new, and more research needs to be done to make it more resourceful for researchers and practitioners.
- Saudi Arabia witnesses little research on the GHRM concept. Researchers provide more focus on private or multinational organisations. It is essential to measure the impact of the GHRM outcome on government organisations.
- It is essential to recognise the impact of GHRM practices at a mixed employment level.
- Most research focuses on the private sector, with a minimum focus on government sectors.

## **Introduction**

Sustainability is currently a global subject; furthermore, firms gradually think more about the outcome of the environment on their competitiveness and long-standing achievement (Khurosani et al., 2021). The recent focal point on environmental concerns is vastly alarming and is taking place in crucial research and media spaces worldwide (Kahia et al., 2021). Considering rapid economic growth, Organisations continue to seek efficient environmental protection and anticipate that the economy will develop rapidly if environmental security is ensured (Rao and Yan 2020). According to the World Bank (2010), climate change is predicted to reverse previously unrealised economic benefits, and developing nations will bear the worst toll, accounting for 75 to 80 percent of the total damage from climate change damage (Hope, 2009).



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In the 21st century, organisations are being employed to conduct their operations in socially and environmentally responsible ways to save the environment while still sustaining their economy (Mwita, 2020). It has been stated that human resources are critical to ensuring environmental sustainability (Tang et al., 2018). Therefore, organisations are promoting and acquiring green initiatives among the employees. Greening human resources research is still evolving from its origin, first mentioned by Wehrmeyer (1996). The concept of "green HRM" has been an emerging field of research in organisational studies (Mwita, 2020).

According to Ahmad (2015), green HRM is the implementation of HRM practices that support the sustainable use of natural resources inside corporate operations and advance the goal of environmentalism, which enhances employees' efficiency. The whole HRM setting is presently being evaluated from the perspective of sustainability. Green Human Resource Management is the most critical component of sustainable practices (Rajiani et al., 2018).

In the Saudi Arabia context, since the establishment of Vision 2030 in the year 2016, Saudi Arabia has taken considerable measures to increase its climate action and environmental preservation. Since its initiation in 2016, Saudi Arabia has significantly worked on achieving Vision 2030 through; launching the Renewable Energy Initiative and investing in recycling companies in 2017; in 2018, launching the National Environment Strategy; in 2019 by joining the International Solar Alliance by establishing the National Environmental Centers, the launch of the Green Riyadh Project and integrating Waste Management and Recycling Activities in Riyadh; in 2020, create the Special Forces for Environmental Security and Environmental Fund; and finally, the 2021



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
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Saudi Arabia has introduced the green initiative, announced the goal to reach Net Zero by 2060 to accelerate the force transition, achieve sustainable goals, and make a new gesture of investment (Saudigreeninitiative.org, n.d; Vision 2030, 2021).

As a result, Saudi Arabia has seen rapid economic development, followed by structural reforms and diversification of the Saudi economy(Kahia et al., 2021). Since the inception of Vision 2030 in 2016, the green initiative has been taken by Saudi Arabia in 2021. Considerably, Saudi Arabia is a very new country entering the green world. This initiation has increased the concern of the government to maintain green policies across the country, including organisations, more explicitly greening human resources. Organisations play a crucial role in sustaining the environment by considering the sustainability policy of triple bottom line, or triple P; people, profit, and the planet. However, GHRM research in the Saudi context is relatively scarce, although the Green HRM has been well recognised in literature across the world (Al-ghazali, 2020).

The primary concern in Green HRM research is that the least developed countries like Bangladesh, India, and others have a rigorous amount of Green HRM research and development, whereas only seven research studies have been found in the Saudi Arabia context. The prior development of green HRM in the Saudi context was not noticeable. More importantly, the government sectors were the most ignorable areas in terms of Green HRM research and development. With this research gap, the present research intends to extend the literature by identifying;

- The notion of GHRM, current development, and GHRM practices in the organisation
- Potential research and industry gap of GHRM in Saudi Arabia



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
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Issue (56) 2022

ISSN: 2616-9185

- Theoretical development of green human resource management in Saudi Arabia
- Future research agenda for researchers and government bodies of Saudi Arabia

### **Green Human Resource Management (GHRM)**

This research section will deliver in-depth information about Green HRM since its inception in 1996. First, the early concept of green HR will be thoroughly discussed; and the latest definition and development of green HRM will be provided. This information will significantly impact basic and advanced green HRM development.

### **Notion of GHRM**

Due to the discussion over sustainable development and business sustainability, green human resource management (GHRM) arose as an academic concept. The GHRM idea, on the other hand, is formed from the fields of green and human resources. Human resource management came into focus in nineteenth-century Europe. During the industrial revolution, Robert Owen (1771–1858) and Charles Babbage (1791–1871) developed a basic notion (Ahmad, 2015).

On the other hand, HRM originated in the United States (US) in the 1950s; however, it did not acquire widespread acceptance until the early 1980s; and it did not receive widespread acceptance in the United Kingdom (UK) until the mid-to-late 1980s. However, the origins of human resource management (HRM) in India may be traced back to the 1920s, when manufacturing workers were concerned about their well-being (R , 2019). Different people have defined the word differently,



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but there is broad agreement on one point: combining HRM with environmental management challenges and supporting ecologically sustainable habits among employees(Mwita, 2020).

Vandermerwe and Oliff (1990) discuss the remarkable expansion of the "green" concept and some of the unavoidable consequences for business as it becomes a fundamental component of consumer demand. The notion of "green" has been debated in terms of marketing, production, and research and development. Another study by Klassen and McLaughlin (1996) discusses how environmental management affects corporate performance. The researcher further added that sustainable environmental management is related to corporate performance. However, it may have emerged in 1996 due to Wehrmeyer's (1996) contribution to a book titled "Greening People: Human Resources and Environmental Management." It has been noted that the theory laid the groundwork for "if a firm is to take an ecologically conscious approach to its activities, the workers are the key to its success or failure."

Environmental management studies started in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as follows: "1900-first air pollution studies; 1902-first water quality standard; 1908-first US drinking water chlorination; 1925-first mathematical model of water pollution; 1948-first federal Clean Water Act; 1970-Earth Day; the 1970s-all the modern environmental laws; the 1980s-hazardous waste laws" (Shahzad 2020). Green HR arose as a result of the "Going Green" idea. Going green involves pursuing practices and knowledge that can lead to more environmentally conscious and environmentally responsible habits and practices that can help conserve the environment and retain its natural resources for future generations (Shifrin, 2015; Shahzad, 2020).



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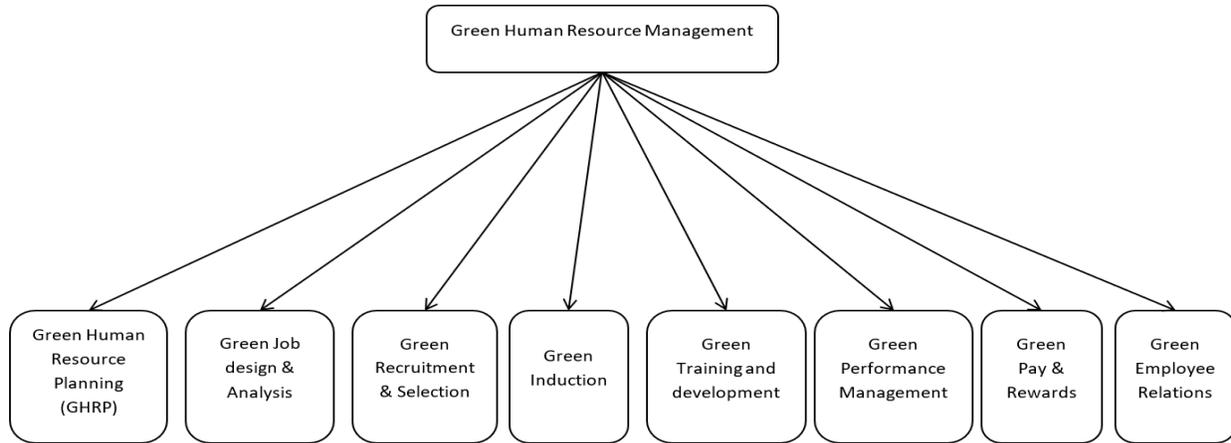
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According to Wee and Quazi (2005), to carry out green activities, individuals need to be motivated, engaged, and ecologically conscious. Further, there is a rising demand for environmental management to be integrated into human resource management strategies (Wee and Quazi, 2005). The strategic HR function can have an impact on supporting a systematic approach to building a culture of sustainable growth (Mwita, 2020). The approach entails adjusting several HR processes such as recruiting, induction, training and development, performance appraisals, and employee remuneration. GHRM entails two critical components; eco-friendly HRM methods and intellectual capital preservation (Yusliza et al., 2019; Kangal, 2019), as employees' behaviour toward organisational changes impacts business performance (Hamid et al., 2020).

### **Current GHRM practices in organisations**

Various factors are required to establish an effective GHRM strategy in the organisation. These include Green Human Resource Planning (GHRP), Green Job Analysis, Green Job Design, Green Hiring and Selection, Green Induction, Green Training and Development, Green Performance Management, Green Pay & Rewards, and Employee Relations in the Environment, as shown in figure 1 (Faisal and Naushad , 2020).



**Figure 1:** Dimension of Green Human Resource Management (Faisal and Naushad, 2020; Mwita, 2020; Yusliza et al., 2019).

### **Green Human Resource Planning (GHRP)**

The Human Resource Planning (HRP) procedure aligns organisations' objectives with employees' needs and demands to satisfy their performance needs (Yusliza et al., 2019). HRP collaborates with the organisation's strategy to ensure that a qualified workforce is available in sufficient numbers. GHRP might be the initial step toward implementing GHRM procedures (Rajiani et al., 2018). Organisations need individuals with specific capabilities for upcoming employment positions to accomplish their green management goals. This requirement is carried out in a coordinated way by GHRP (Saeed et al., 2019). Another critical point is that the GHRP method maintains a balance between staff supply and demand to face the changes in environmental orientations in the future (Azhar & Yang 2015).



## **Green Job Analysis and Design**

Job analysis determines and defines the job duties, responsibilities, and individual personal attributes for a particular organisational role (Renwick et al., 2013). Green Work Analysis indicates a person's technical ability to execute environment-related tasks and the environment-related obligations and tasks of a job role. As a result, it is critical for efficient green recruiting that job descriptions and specifications reflect adequately environmental challenges, expected tasks, duties, and other technical needs (Shoaib et al., 2021).

A green job description describes the role, tasks, and duties of a job that an employee is expected to execute in the context of environmental management (Abuelhassan & Elsayed, 2020). According to Shah (2019), an organisation with environmental and societal duties to conserve the environment, firms now include environmental management responsibility in job descriptions. As a result, in addition to ordinary activities, a green job description emphasises workers' environmental commitment (Paillé and Mejía-morelos, 2014).

Job descriptions include job information, but job specifications highlight human characteristics and essential experience to execute a job efficiently (Faisal and Naushad, 2020). Mapping the requisite level of abilities and qualifications to conduct environment-related tasks is known as "green job specification" (Mwita, 2020). Green job specification ensures that new personnel will be hired based on the job's predefined needs and will be compatible with the organisation's environmental initiatives (Ahmad, 2015).



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
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ISSN: 2616-9185

## **Green Recruitment**

The most crucial aspect of implementing GHRM principles in a business is green recruiting and selection. Many academics have the same viewpoint on green recruitment (Renwick et al., 2013; Ahmad, 2015). According to Shoaib et al. (2021), proactive organisations concerned about the environment build their methods and rules as they demand personnel in accordance with their intended strategy. Environment-friendly organisations initially focus on green recruiting and then enhance their existing personnel by providing environmental training and awareness. For effective green recruiting, job details should emphasise environmental factors and the company's green requirements for potential workers (Renwick et al., 2013). As a result, recruiting advertising must explicitly state the organisation's environmental goal (Wehrmeyer, 1996). Only potentially talented applicants will be drawn to the business and will apply for open positions in this manner (Singh and El-kassar, 2019). Displaying an organisation's achievements on its website, several online portals, and other general populace channels result in "employer branding." Moreover, this cooperative conduct with the environment benefits the company and attracts environmentally conscious jobseekers (Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020).

## **Green Selection**

The organisation must identify the applicant's green consciousness and guarantee that the workers' personalities are appropriately linked with the organisation's environmental aims (Tang et al., 2018). According to Saeed et al., (2019), the current environmental selection process assists organisations in selecting the most environmentally conscious personnel in order to achieve the



company's objectives as outlined in the job role. As a result, the green screening guidelines focus on the individual's knowledge and practice toward the environment to choose the most suited staff (Shah et al., 2019). Companies must investigate applicants' environmental understanding and awareness during interviews and examine them accordingly before making a final decision (Wehrmeyer, 1996).

### **Green Induction (GI)**

According to Wehrmeyer (1996), a green induction programme aims to properly educate new workers on the company's environmental culture. According to Yusliza et al. (2019), training might include general and specialised job inductions. In the first program, employees are taught a basic understanding of the organisation's environmental policy. Some businesses provide job-specific induction programmes for new workers that cover all aspects of a particular job (Rajiani et al., 2018). Many academics believe that an induction programme should make workers aware of their environmental obligations and familiar with business rules and culture (Renwick et al., 2013; Saeed et al., 2019).

### **Green Training and Development (GTD)**

Green training improves employees' abilities, knowledge and develops sustainable behaviour by teaching them about environmental sustainability. According to Abuelhassan and Elsayed (2020), organisations should provide seminars and environmental education workshops to improve the attitudes of their personnel. According to Alkhateeb et al., (2018), the first step toward training manpower is to analyse the environment's training needs. It guarantees that personnel have the



necessary degree of environmental understanding. Following the determination of training requirements, the firm should establish a training programme for its personnel (Tang et al., 2018). According to Abuelhassan and Elsayed (2020), green training is an efficient strategy for achieving environmental organisational objectives since it provides employees with better information about various elements of environmental challenges. It teaches them how to cope with it correctly. A green training programme should not be limited to a specific department; instead, it should provide equitable opportunities for all types of employees to gain skills, knowledge, and environmental consciousness (Karatepe et al., 2020). A well-planned job rotation that may provide personnel with additional exposure is required for the organisation's future demands (Renwick et al., 2013; Renwick et al., 2016).

### **Green Performance Management (GPM)**

Green performance management (GPM) is crucial to executing the GHRM concept (Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020). To guarantee that employees are on a specified track, businesses must assess their environmental performance independently from their standard performance system. Companies often prefer to monitor environmental performance using environmental performance standards, Environment Management Information Systems (EMIS), and environmental audits (Renwick et al., 2013). According to Saifulina et al. (2020), rather than being used just as a reporting system, EMIS should be connected with the employee's performance assessment system for analysing the employee's performance. Researchers such as Saeed et al. (2019) explored the use of green performance indicators in performance assessment systems to identify green criteria like; environment-friendly duties, environmental occurrences, and statements of green policies.



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
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## **The Green Reward System (GRS)**

The green reward system (GRS) is an essential component of the GHRM system since it motivates employees who perform according to the organisation's environmental requirements (Ahmad, 2015). Similarly, the green incentive system is critical to organisational sustainability (Shoaib et al., 2021). This reward may be done in two ways: financially and non-financially. Some organisations provide financial incentives, bonuses, and cash prizes for exemplary environmental performance (Tang et al., 2018). According to Shoaib et al. (2021), several firms assess employee salaries as a result of strong environmental performance. Non-monetary rewards, on the other hand, are given by certain businesses in the form of awards, prizes, adoration, and special recognition. According to Sobaih and Hasanein (2020), this extrinsic compensation motivates employees to perform better.

## **Green Employee Relations (GER)**

Employee relations is the friendly relationship between an employer and an employee. Employee morale rises as a result of hormonal staff interactions, which also boosts employees' work performance, employee contribution, and employee engagement (Ahmad, 2015). According to Alghamdi (2021), unionised labour engagement is critical for maintaining green industrial relations since they play a crucial role in the organisation's green activities. To achieve environmental goals, several businesses provide a variety of incentives, such as collaborative consultation and profit-sharing with trade unions. Employees should be encouraged to contribute to environmental sustainability, and their eco-friendly recommendations should be encouraged



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
Education And Science Publications ( MECSJ )

Issue (56) 2022

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(Abdulghaffar, 2017). GER entails vigorously engaging workers in green schemes, allowing employees to perform work with green ideas, encouraging employees to engage in challenging work, and enhancing employees' contributions to various green topics. Higher authorities also need to assist staff with environmental sustainability challenges (Renwick et al., 2013).

## **Research Method**

The current research aims to systematically review the green human resource management research development in the Saudi Arabia context. A systematic review summarises previously conducted research and provides an answer to developed research questions by identifying, selecting, and appraising research (Dziopa and Ahern, 2011). Systematic literature reviews assess the collective evidence to provide a valid conclusion on specific business issues. A systematic review method is considered effective within the business research field as it provides findings and direction with very minimal bias (Snyder, 2019).

For the systematic review analysis, the most relevant databases have been identified. The research has been conducted using databases including Google scholar, Scencedirect, MDPI, Web of Science, Taylor & Francis, Wiley Online Library, and SpringerLink-Springer. For this research, different approaches were adopted, including reviewing abstracts, using different research terms, manual searches, using "AND" and "OR" (e.g. "Green human resource management" ("GHRM"), "Green HRM" ("Green HR"), "GHRM" "Saudi Arabia" ("AND" "English" "AND" "Arabic").



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
Education And Science Publications ( MECSJ )

Issue (56) 2022

ISSN: 2616-9185

## **Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria**

Many research papers come to the front through the searching process. By using these inclusion and exclusion criteria, the most relevant research paper was selected;

### **Inclusion criteria**

GRHM research papers were selected based on five criteria;

1. Detailed green human resource management research,
2. The link between green human resource management and Saudi Arabia,
3. Peer-reviewed publication only,
4. Empirical research, Conceptual research and Review research in Saudi Arabia context in both English and Arabic language,
5. The published research paper from 2016 to 2021 in the Saudi Arabia context.

### **Exclusion Criteria**

Research that was excluded;

1. Green human resource management research is not in the Saudi Arabia context.
2. Not published in a peer-reviewed journal
3. Research that was focused on green human resource management or Green HRM
4. A research paper that has not a clear methodology
5. Research papers were published before 2016 and after 2021



The search strategy to generate research papers for this research identified 109 research papers that included the term "Saudi Arabia". After reducing duplicates of a research paper, the total number was 105. However, applying all these inclusion/exclusion criteria, only twelve papers were selected to systematically review the reality of green human resource management research in Saudi Arabia, which included all the keyword maps.

### **Green HRM and Saudi Arabia**

For any country, new development brings new opportunities for all. In 2021, Saudi Arabia initiated a green policy all over the country. The green initiative brings the country and organisations opportunities to green their workplace, people, and business policies. Since 2016, Saudi Arabia has produced around seven research articles on GHRM, published in peer-reviewed journals. This number is minimal compared with the other neighbouring countries. Table 1 shows the brief of all the articles that have been published since 2016.

**Table 1:** Green HRM articles in the Saudi Arabia context

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Industry</b>
Alharbi, (2020)	Empirical evidence on the impact of green human resource management practices and organisation's sustainability	Healthcare services and manufacturing organisations
Singh and El-kassar, (2019)	Role of big data analytics in developing sustainable capabilities	General industry
Alkhateeb et al., (2018)	Green Human Resource Management, Financial Markets and Pollution Nexus in Saudi Arabia	Financial sector
Faisal and Naushad (2020)	An overview of green HRM practices among SMEs in Saudi Arabia	SME
Elshaer et al. (2021)	The Effect of Green Human Resource Management on Environmental Performance in	Small Tourism Enterprises



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	Small Tourism Enterprises: Mediating Role of Pro-Environmental Behaviors	
Al-ghazali, (2020)	Green human resource management and employees' green creativity: The roles of green behavioural intention and individual green values	General Industries
Abdulghaffar, (2017)	Green Workplace Behaviour in Saudi Arabia: The Case of EnviroCo	Government Agency

This research paper will be a whistleblower for the Saudi Arabian government and researchers to focus more on developing the GHRM area. Another critical point is that the green initiative in business brings more opportunities for the country and business sustainability. This section will delve more profoundly into the development of green HRM in the Saudi Arabian context. Key findings from these research articles will be discussed to identify more new information and future scopes for both bodies, government and researchers.

One of the earliest research on GHRM in the Saudi Arabia context was published by Abdulghaffar (2017), which focused on senior managers and lower-level employees at EnviroCo, a government agency. The result shows the senior managers' low involvement in GHRM practices like employee training, environmental awareness, and employee involvement. As the research has been done on a single government agency, a large sample size in government organisations is needed to be used for future research for generalisation. Along with this limitation, employees' engagement and involvement in the green behaviour of the organisation is a mission point as well.

The researcher proves the positive relationship between GHRM practices and organisations' sustainability (Alharbi, 2020). The research findings show that the service sector and manufacturing sector of Saudi Arabia are aware of natural resources and promote GHRM, namely "Green Recruitment and Selection; Green Environmental Training; Green Performance Evaluation



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
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Issue (56) 2022

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and Green Rewards” in the organisation. However, the study has some limitations as it has not explained the organisation's details, the sample size was 122, and the generalisation is missing.

Singh and El-kassar's (2019) research on Saudi Arabia's general industry and the result shows that the combination of “green supply chain management”, “green human resource management practices”, and “big data management” can improve organisations' long-term capabilities, resulting in superior long-term performance. Green training enhances the employee’s green performance.

According to Alkhateeb et al. (2018), the financial sector of Saudi Arabia needs to motivate employees, provide training, apply a green recruitment system, green performance evaluation, and lastly, apply a green work system to save the environment. Research recommendations were provided based on the exploration carried out using ARDL cointegration in the time series of 1971–2016.

Gaining and maintaining a sustainable competitive advantage, GHRM is crucial. Recent research by Faisal and Naushad (2020) has identified that the facility administration in Saudi SMEs is the least worried about "green HR acquisition" but somewhat alarmed about "green HR orientation, training, and development" and is interested in "retaining highly competent employees in green HR practices". However, the generalisation is still missing as the findings are based on a single industry in Saudi Arabia.

Recent research by Elshaer et al. (2021) in the small hotel industry/service industry/hospitality sector with 560 sample size shows a similar result shown by Sobaih and Hasanein (2020). The GHRM is positively related to employees' green, eco-friendly, or pro-environmental behaviours.



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
Education And Science Publications ( MECSJ )

Issue (56) 2022

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On the other hand, GHRM has no impact on environmental performance. However, employee pro-environmental behaviour positively mediates the GHRM and environmental performance.

According to Al-ghazali (2020) latest research based on 437 respondents from the general industry and green, HRM has been demonstrated to increase employees' green innovation. Research also reveals that the influence of green HRM practices in the Saudi setting is limited. More specifically, industry/sector-specific research is needed to understand in-depth the very new concept of GHRM.

### **Theoretical contribution**

Table 2 is significant because it shows the range of theories that have been recognised and classified in the literature. Theories are given separately in this research to determine how they have added to current literature in the context of Saudi Arabia.

**Table 2:** Theories used in Green HRM in the Saudi Arabia context

No.	Reference	Theory	Contribution
01	Alharbi (2020)	Resource-based view	Green human resource management methods contribute significantly to organisational sustainability. GHRM provides firms with a competitive edge to achieve long-term performance.



02	Singh and El-kassar (2019)	Dynamic capabilities theory	There are considerable disparities in the impact of green innovation on organisations' financial and environmental performance between those with high and low green HR training for workers. According to research, the correlation between green innovation practices and economic and environmental performance was more robust in organisations where an employee got advanced green HR training.
03	Elshaer et al. (2021)	Resource-based view theory	The study adds to the few studies on GHRM, pro-environmental employee behaviour, and environmental performance in small enterprises. The study found that GHRM has a positive and substantial impact on pro-environmental conduct and that pro-environmental behaviour has a positive and significant impact on the environmental performance of small tourism businesses.
04	Al-Ghazali (2020)	Theory of planned behaviour (TPB);	Employees' green behavioural intention has a substantial beneficial influence on their green behaviour. Individual green values bolstered the links between Green HRM, green behavioural intention, and green inventiveness.

As the research has a narrow framework, four research papers were generated among the seven articles developed under the theoretical boundaries. The majority of publications in our study utilised a single theory to frame their arguments, with only one paper using two theories to form the theoretical framework of their findings. All of these papers were published between 2016 and



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
Education And Science Publications ( MECSJ )

Issue (56) 2022

ISSN: 2616-9185

2021. It is advised that future studies should use at least one theory to explain their findings in the context of green human resource management sectors in Saudi Arabia.

This section will delve more profoundly into the theoretical development of the GHRM in the context of Saudi Arabia; the findings, in general, show that resource-based view perspectives (Alharbi, 2020; Elshaer et al., 2021), dynamic capabilities (Singh and El-kassar, 2019), the theory of planned behaviour, and supply-value-fit theories (Al-ghazali, 2020), dominate the framework in explaining green human resource management research and development in the context of Saudi Arabia. However, most of the publications published in the previous several years have used resource-based perspective theory to illustrate the importance of green HRM in this expanding industry.

These findings show that future studies might benefit from incorporating multi-level and cross theoretical perspectives to broaden this body of study. It is possible to say that there has been an increase in the usage of theoretical perspectives that connect and integrate micro viewpoints with macro-level studies. This conclusion correlates to current demands in GHRM research for the use of multi-level theoretical foundations.



## **Findings and Discussion**

Human resources are the most crucial element for organisations' sustainability. At the moment, greening the business has focused on surviving in the long run (Ottaway, 2021). Modernised human resource managers have been tasked with embedding the Green HR concept into the business purpose statement and HR policy (Saifulina et al., 2020). Through this review research, three major points have been identified. It can be discussed as GHRM research and development in different industries in Saudi Arabia and the theoretical development of green HRM in the Saudi Arabian context.

Firstly, GHRM is a new concept derived from green and HRM policies (Wehrmeyer, 1996) that complies with all the HRM practices in the Green concept; Green Human Resource Planning (GHRP), Green Job Design and Analysis, Green Recruitment and Selection, Green Induction, Green Training and development, Green Performance Management, Green Pay and Rewards, Green Employee Relations (Faisal and Naushad, 2020). The primary objective of GHRM is to ensure organisational performance through environmental sustainability (Saifulina et al., 2020). To achieve environmental performance, communicating the company's desire to be green throughout recruiting and taking environmental values into account during the employment selection process will likely increase employee green knowledge and comprehension (Faisal and Naushad, 2020). Another critical point is that incorporating employees into the execution of green policies and providing green instruction will likely improve employees' knowledge, abilities, and



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
Education And Science Publications ( MECSJ )

Issue (56) 2022

ISSN: 2616-9185

competencies while also increasing their psychological engagement in green objectives (Renwick et al., 2016; Chaudhary, 2019).

Secondly, GHRM research from the Saudi context has published seven research papers from 2016 to December 2021. Whereas six pieces of research have focused on the GHRM context in different industries or sectors like; the service sector (Alharbi, 2020), manufacturing sector (Alharbi, 2020), the financial sector (Alkhateeb et al., 2018), SME/small lodging enterprises/small hotel industry/service industry/hospitality, general sector/general industry (Faisal and Naushad, 2020; Elshaer et al., 2021; Al-ghazali, 2020; Singh and El-kassar, 2019), and only one research have done on a government agency (Abdulghaffar, 2017).

Researchers have identified that SMEs are the least concerned about overall GHRM practices as most organisations are willing to adopt low-cost initiatives for environmental protection (Faisal and Naushad, 2020). A similar scenario can be said for the financial industry in Saudi Arabia, according to Alkhateeb et al., (2018). Another research from the general industry by Singh and El-kassar, (2019) entails that more focus on green HRM practices impacted employee's environmental outcomes. Through the implementation of GHRM practices, according to Al-Ghazali (2020), employees become more creative and perform better towards achieving green outcomes through the implementation of GHRM practices. On the other hand, Elshaer et al. (2021) describe how GHRM cannot enhance the environment without employees' involvement in the environmental outcome.



Another critical point is that most of the research focused on the employee perspective, whereas only two research papers (Faisal and Naushad, 2020; Alharbi, 2020) focused on organisational level and only one research focused on mixed employment level research (Abdulghaffar, 2017). It can be said that green human resource management research in government sectors is lacking. According to Abdulghaffar (2017), senior managers from government agencies are least involved in GHRM practices (like green training), which lowers the employee's ability, awareness, and involvement in environmental performance. The government of Saudi Arabia is the key player in sustaining the development of green policies across the country. So, research in this area is mandatory to justify their self-development in achieving the green concept in their workplaces. Government monitoring on greening the workplaces and people should be taken to align the green initiative with Saudi Vision 2030.

Finally, the key findings relate to the theories that have been used to conceptualise the research of GHRM in the Saudi Arabian context. The most commonly used theory is the resource-based view (RBV) theory, which has been connected with green human resource management studies in Saudi Arabia. RBV theory has contributed to green human resource management research to sustain business performance and environmental performance by enhancing employees' pro-environmental behaviour (Elshaer et al., 2021; Alharbi, 2020). On the other hand, dynamic capabilities theory shows the linkage of green innovation practices with economic and environmental performance while employees get advanced green HR training (Singh and El-kassar, 2019). Similarly, the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) and supply-value-fit (SVF) theory show that an individual's green values support the links between Green HRM in the company of



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Issue (56) 2022

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green behavioural intention and green creativity (Al-ghazali, 2020). Among the seven research papers on GHRM in Saudi Arabia, only four articles used theories to conceptualise their discussion on green HRM. Although there have been mixed findings from the different industries in Saudi Arabia regarding GHRM development, theoretically, the relationships partially or entirely connect green HRM with organisational sustainability.

## **Conclusion and future direction**

A general review of current research shows that GHRM has evolved towards environmental sustainability. Several pieces of research have shown the environmental research from the 20<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century (Al-ghazali, 2020). In comparison with prior research, current research shows a significant improvement over green performance. Compared with the origin, when businesses were driven forward to acquire environment-friendly business approaches, currently, businesses are achieving environmental sustainability to be sustainable performers. Researchers can successfully capture and show all the readers the current green situation (Alkhateeb et al., 2018).

On the other hand, GHRM research is still in the initial phase in the Saudi Arabia context, as in 2021, it just announced the green initiation by Vision 2030 (Vision 2030, 2021). Considering the research papers from Google scholar, Sciondirect, MDPI, and Wiley, very little research has been found from the perspective of the GHRM of Saudi Arabia. Considering this fact, it is a scope for researchers to perform GHRM research in Saudi Arabian context. In addition, there is very limited attention given to government organisations. In comparison with private or multinational sectors, government organisations need more focus on GHRM research as employees from this



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Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
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industry are more intrinsically motivated to perform the job. So, government bodies need to develop solid green policies in their workplaces. Another essential aspect of greening the workplace is going paperless to support green policy. Therefore, the government can focus on these aspects to adopt a more progressive green policy in government workplaces as well as promote them to other industries.

The impact of GHRM practices (Fig.1) on employees' behaviour and employees' non-green behaviours is another scope to measure in the future. Further research might add a paperless work environment in the GHRM research area. From Fig. 1, there are eight dimensions regarding GHRM practices, and future research might empirically identify the impact of each of the criteria in enhancing the employee's green work outcome. Additionally, GHRM research with one or two theories will be suggested, as multiple theories have been tested from other countries' perspectives. Therefore, the use of multi-level theoretical foundations is highly suggested.

To conclude, it can be said that GHRM is a growing concept for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Currently, a significant impact of GHRM is noticeable in business functions. Considering Saudi Arabia, GHRM has grown rapidly since its first research outcome in 2017 by Abdulghaffar (2017) until 2021.



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