

# Green Human Resource Management Models: Review and Proposal

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## Abstract

*The objective of this study is to review the existing research models of green human resource management (Green HRM) and then conclude the paper with a comprehensive research model for future study. This methodological aspect of this study is qualitative and accordingly the study is carried out based on the archival method. The key components of the existing research models were identified and discussed. The study is supposed to contribute to the existing field of research as this is the first kind of research in this field. Research gaps and policy implications are identified.*

**Keywords:** *Green human resource management, GHRM, research models, green management.*

## Introduction

Businesses are often coerced by industrial or federal regulations to employ clean technologies or environmentally-friendly production processes to create 'green' products (Özen & Küskü 2009). To become a green business an organization should carry out and produce not only green processes and products, but also green human resources (HR) practices. However, while there are an increasing number of green technology adoptions green HR initiatives are rare (Millard 2011).

Business organizations are under increasing pressure to implement green initiatives, which are an important aspect of corporate social responsibility (Jabbour & Santos, 2008). Therefore, effective engagement in green initiatives has

become an organizational obligation and an important source of organizational competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

Effectively managing a firm's human resources (HR) plays an important role in the successful implementation of organizational strategies through developing positive employee workplace attitudes and behaviors (Guest, 2011). It has been suggested in the literature that organizations should adopt effective green human resource management (green HRM) to promote and elicit employee green behavior with the aim of achieving organizational green goals (Jackson and Seo, 2010).

In the past two decades, a worldwide consensus has emerged around the need for proactive environmental management (González-Benito and González-Benito, 2006). Building upon this green concept numerous literatures on Green marketing (Peattie, 1992), Green accounting (Bebbington, 2001; Owen, 1992), Green retailing (Kee-hung et al., 2010), and Green management in general (McDonagh & Prothero, 1997) have impregnated the field of management. Moreover, the active participation of corporate sector in adoption of environment management strategies (Boiral, 2002; González-Benito & González-Benito, 2006), made way for green management prospective.

Though a substantial extent of existing literature deals with the topic of Green HRM, there is still ambiguity associated with the effective implementation of green HR management policies in organizations round the globe to attain absolute green corporate culture (Ahmad, 2015). Again, although there are a number of research models

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of green HRM available, the extensive and concrete research model is still absent in this field. This study aims at reviewing the existing research models and literature of green HRM and then proposes a comprehensive research model for future study. Thus the study is carried out in five steps. First, relevant models and literature were collected. Second, the collected models and literature were scrutinized based on the objectives of the study. Third, the securitized models were reviewed. Fourth, we proposed a comprehensive a research model based on the analysis of existing research models and literature. Finally, research gaps were identified.

### Objectives

The main objective of this study is to review the existing research models of green human resource management and then propose a comprehensive research model for future study. However, the study also analyzes the existing literature of green human resource management and sets the fields for future research by identifying the research gaps.

### Rationale of the Study

There is a growing and strong debate among the HR practitioners regarding the term 'Green HRM'. Organizations are now placing importance on the integration of environmental sustainability into their HR strategies.

Accordingly a growing number of studies are being conducted to justify the viability as well as the applicability of Green HRM. This study attempts to analyze the existing models of Green HRM. Thus this study is supposed to contribute to the field of Green HRM literature. First, the study will help the HR professionals in adopting and implementing Green HR strategies. Second, it will help the unions and employees to adopt Green HRM policies and practices that help safeguard and enhance worker health and well-being. Third, the study is supposed to open the doors of future research as a comprehensive research model is presented in the paper. Fourth, it will help the academics by revealing additional data to the existing literature. Finally, this study will help the HR professionals in adopting and implementing a suitable Green HRM model.

### Methodology

This study aims at reviewing the existing models of Green HRM. Thus this is a qualitative research

based on the extensive analysis of existing models and literature of Green HRM. Literature review is adopted as it enables to structure research and to build a reliable knowledge base in this field (Tranfield et al., 2003). In order to achieve the stated review objective, a systematic review of literature was conducted by using an archival method. This paper employs a methodology to review the articles cited in the databases like Sage, Taylor and Francis Online, Springerlink, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library, and Emerald. The other sources of data include books, journals, e-papers and websites. Contemporary research papers were given priority in analyzing the existing literatures. Research papers and models were delimited from the review if they did not have a focus on environmental management as it pertains to management, employees, work organisations, and the wider social arena. A systematic review of collected literature was done in detail.

### Literature Review

The Green HRM literature is largely a western one and, given the importance of Asian economic development for environmental management, this is an important gap for future studies to reduce (Renwick, Redman, & Maguire, 2013, p. 3). Fayyazia et al. (2015) said that there is a requirement for the amalgamation of environmental management in Human Resource Management (HRM) because it is essentially or very important rather than just desirable. Successful environmental management in an organization needs special efforts of human resource management (Rothenberg, 2003).

Similarly Jabbour and Santos (2008) also stated that effective environmental performance results need human resource practices that support the whole execution and preservation of environmental management systems in the organisations. The extant literature in the HR field on the topic of sustainability suggests that more and more HR executives are keen to modulate their corporation as such to become exclusive environmental champions.

Opatha & Arulrajah, (2014) idewnified some studies that focus on the linkage between HRM functions and environmental management. See table 1.

A great extent of empirical research highlights the impact of environment management practices on performance of the organization using different parameters (Iraldo, Testa, & Frey, 2009; Yang et al., 2010). Literature has given importance to

**Table 1: Research Linking Specific HRM Functions and Environmental Management**

Author	Specific HRM function	Finding
Wehrmeyer (1996)	Recruitment	Recruitment practices can support effective environment management by ensuring that new recruits understand an organization's environmental culture and share its environmental values.
Stringer (2009)	Recruitment	Graduates and other job applicants pay attention to the environmental management practices and performance of companies and use such information when deciding where to apply.
Phillips (2007)	Recruitment	Increasingly, firms are beginning to recognize that gaining a reputation as a Green employer is an effective way to attract new talent.
Ramus (2002)	Training	Environmental training and establishing a culture in which employees feel they are accountable for environmental outcomes were the most salient HRM practices for achieving environmental goals.
Milliman and Clair (1996)	Incentives management	Tying incentive pay to the attainment of environmental goals helps focus managers' attention and invigorate efforts aimed at achieving them.
Ramus (2002)	Incentives management	Recognitions and financial incentives can be effective in motivating employees to generate eco-initiatives.

Source: (Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014)

adoption of environmental practices to identify the human resource management practices (Cherian & Jacob, 2012).

Serafin) Bähler (2010) highlighted the some environmental management models along with the references of supporting studies. See Table 2.

**Table 2: Overview of Environmental Management Models**

Publication, Model	Context	Method	According Type Risk Mitigation	According Type Entrepreneurial
Petulla (1987)	Approaches to EM	Empirical	Crisis /Cost oriented	Enlightened EM
Hofstra et al. (1990)	Stages of completion of EM	Empirical	Inspection, [...] [...],	total integration
UNCTAD (1993)	Management approaches	Empirical (reactive), [...]	Compliance oriented development	Sustainable
Elkington (1994)	Stages of response to environmental problems	Empirical	Ignorance, awakening denial, guilt Reduction, [...]	Integration
Crosbie & Knight (1995)	Strategic option for management	Conceptual	Do nothing, de fensive posture, [...]	Sustainable business
Hart (1997)	Environmental Strategies	Conceptual	Pollution prevention, [...]	Clean Technology
Ehrenfeld (1998)	Environmental Strategies	Conceptual	Business as usual, compliance, [...]	Sustainability
Winn & Angel (2000)	Corporate greening	Empirical	Reactive greening	Proactive greening
Rosen (2001)	Environmental strategy	Conceptual	Compliance driven	Strategic environment management
Van Marrewijk et al. (2004)	Framework for corporate sustainability and responsibility	Conceptual	Compliance driven	Entrepreneurial driven
Dunphy, Griffiths and Benn (2007)	Environmental strategies	Conceptual	Compliance corporation	Sustainable corporation
Pedersen (2010)	Corporate environmental and social strategies	Empirical	Reactive – compliance Driven and risk avoidance	Proactive – make a difference

Source: Bähler, S. (2010)

Various contemporary scholars have augmented the understanding and studies on Green HRM in recent years (Berrone & Gomez-Mejia, 2009; Jabbour, Santos, & Nagano, 2010; Massoud, Daily, & Bishop, 2008; Renwick et al., 2008; Stringer, 2009). Green HRM depends on the unique and identifiable patterns of green decisions and behaviors of HR managers (Jackson et al., 2011). The incorporation of environmental objectives and strategies into the overall strategic development goals of a company helps in arriving at an effective EMS (Haden et al., 2009). There are various researchers who support the HRM practices to be effective for promotion of human capital and results in providing to contributors of organizational performance and competitive advantage (Boselie, Paauwe, & Jansen, 2001).

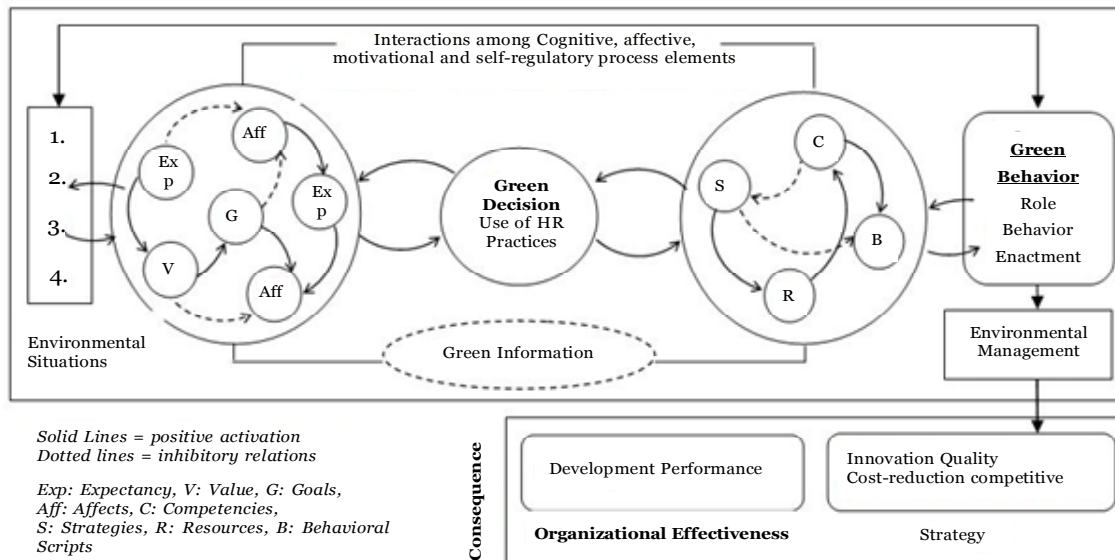
**Contemporary Research Models of Green HRM**

A proposed research model of a research paper is always a subject-matter of interest and further

research. This generally articulates the macro-scenario of the subject. Since green HRM is relatively a new phenomenon in the research field, it is quite logical and interesting to review the existing proposed research models. Although this is a challenging task, we provide an extensive endeavor to conduct this study. In the following sections, we analyze the fifteen selected proposed research models of green HRM with their special features and propositions in short.

**Model 1**

This is the most comprehensive and elaborative research model of Green HRM so far. In this model, Zoogah (2011) stated that green decisions of HR practices are the outcomes of environmental situations and green behavior. These decisions lead to the adoption of suitable business strategies that result in organizational effectiveness. Zoogah (2011) also identified the active and inhibitory relations among the variables.

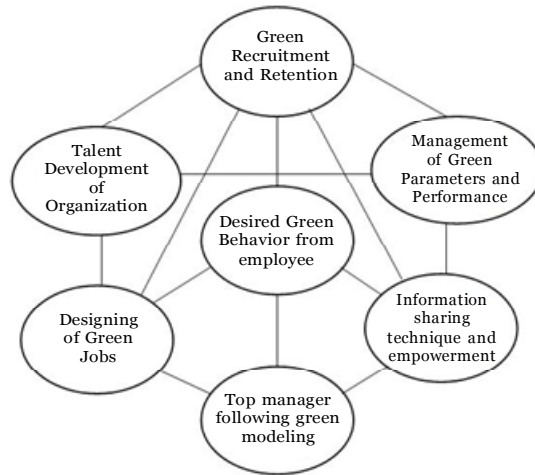


Source: Zoogah, B. D. (2011).

**Model 2**

In the following model, Sharma & Gupta (2015) showed the relations of HRM functions and

employee’s green behavior. The essence of this model is that every function of green HRM has an effect on employee’s green behavior.

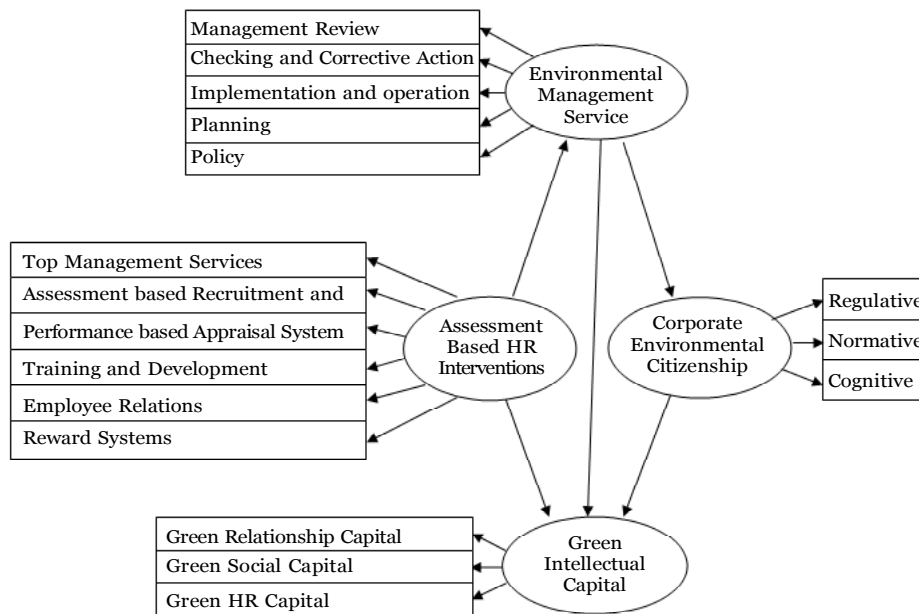


Source: Sharma & Gupta (2015)

**Model 3**

This is another comprehensive model of Green HRM developed by Sudin in 2011. In this model, Sudin (2011) highlighted that environmental management service has an effect on green

intellectual capital. Both the green HR functions and environmental management services lead to corporate environmental citizenship. This environmental citizenship can be classified into three types: regulative, normative and cognitive.

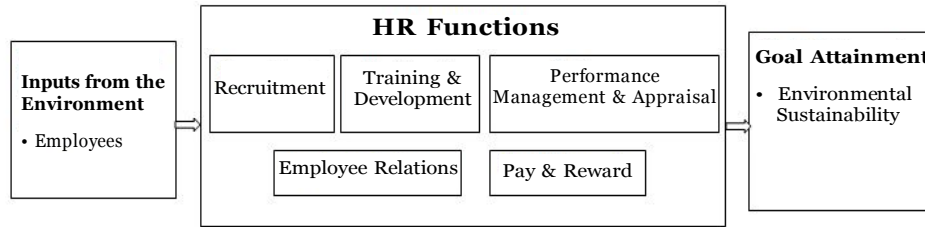


Source: (Sharma & Gupta, 2015)

**Model 4**

In this model, Uddin & Islam (2016) stated that environmental inputs make an employee as a green

employee that helps him/her to carry out the HR functions effectively. This helps a firm attainment the desired goals.

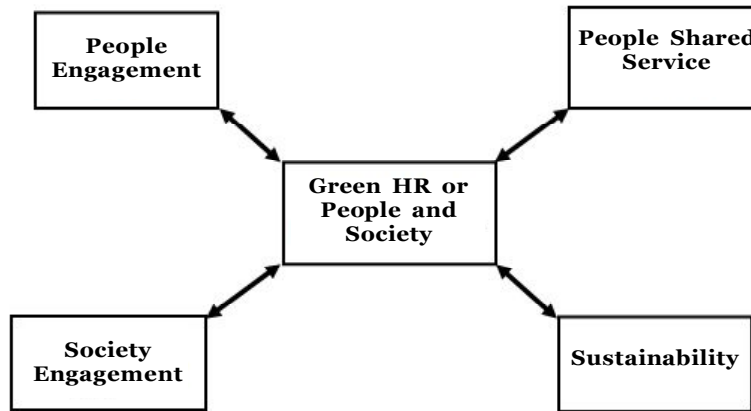


Source: (Uddin & Islam, 2016)

**Model 5**

This model was developed by Mandip in 2012. Here, Mandip (2012) stated that green HR is the

collective result of people engagement as well as society engagement. People’s shared service and sustainability are also critical here. All these actors affect each other.

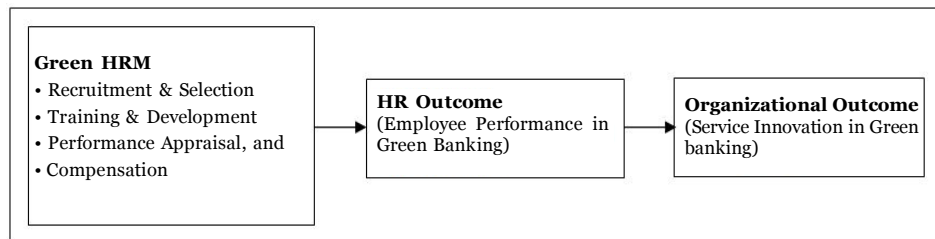


Source: (Mandip, 2012)

**Model 6**

In the following model, Rimi (2016) stated that Green HR functions lead to the green employee performance that ultimately results in service

invocation. Here she wanted to show that there is a relationship between green HRM and organizational outcome.

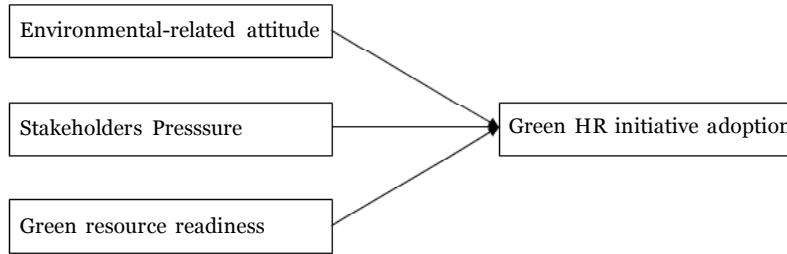


Source: Rimi, N. N. (2016)

**Model 7**

In this model, Sawang and Kivits (2014) highlighted that a green HR initiative adoption policy is affected by three factors. These factors are

environmental-related attitude, stakeholders’ pressure and green resource readiness. So the HR manager should consider these factors in adopting green HR policy.

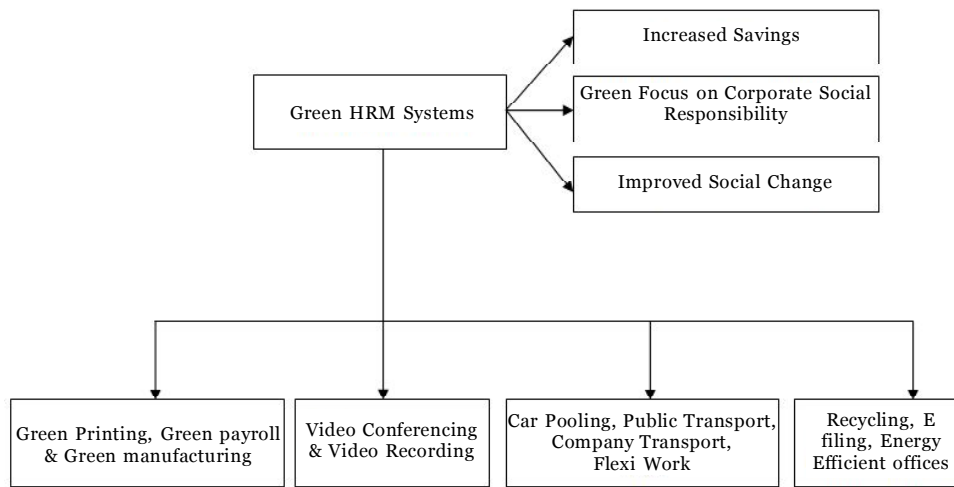


Source: Sawang, S., & Kivits, R.A. (2014)

**Model 8**

Verma (2015) proposed this research model in 2015. According to this model, Green HRM Systems

produce certain positive outcomes like increased savings, special focus on CSR, and improved social change. Verma (2015) also provided some examples of green HRM practices in this model.

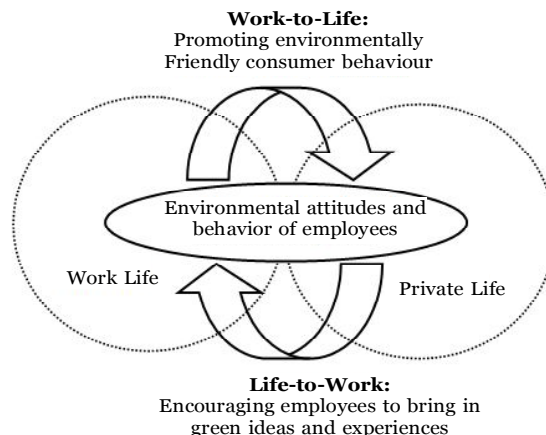


Source: Verma, R. (2015)

**Model 9**

In the following model, Schrader and Muster (2011) stated that employees learn different kinds of behavior not exclusively at the workplace, but also in private life. According to this model, there are

reciprocal interactions between working life and private life occurs what they termed as a “green work-life balance concept”. The concept offers chances not only for the environment, but also for the company and its employees by increasing, for example, work motivation and job retention.

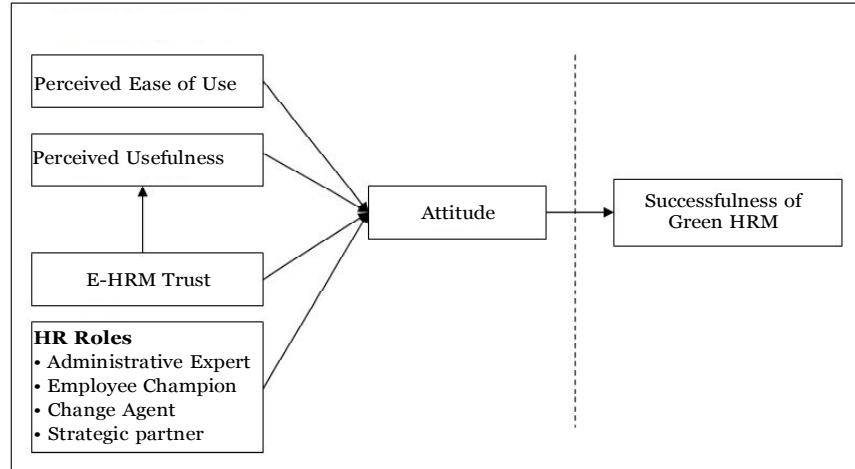


Source: Schrader, U. & Muster, V. (2011)

**Model 10**

Yusoff et al. (2015) worked on the relationship between e-HRM and green HRM. According to this model, there are some assessments of e-HRM.

These assessments along with the HR roles make up the employee attitude towards green HRM which is critical for the successful implementation of green HRM policies.

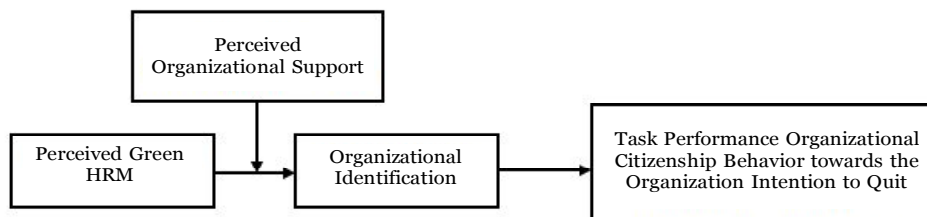


Source: Yusoff et al. (2015)

**Model 11**

In the following model, Shen et al. (2016) showed an inter-relationship between perceived organizational support and perceived green HRM.

Both these organizational support and perceived green HRM constitutes the organizational identification that ultimately contributes to the task performance and organizational citizenship behavior.

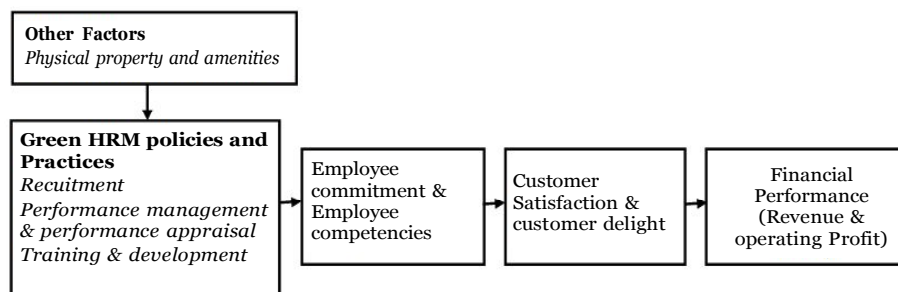


Source: Shen et al. (2016)

**Model 12**

Haynes and Fryer proposed the following model in 2000. This model suggests that green HRM policies and other factors like physical property

determine the employee commitment and employee competence. Employee commitment and employee competence lead to customer satisfaction which ultimately results in increased financial performance.



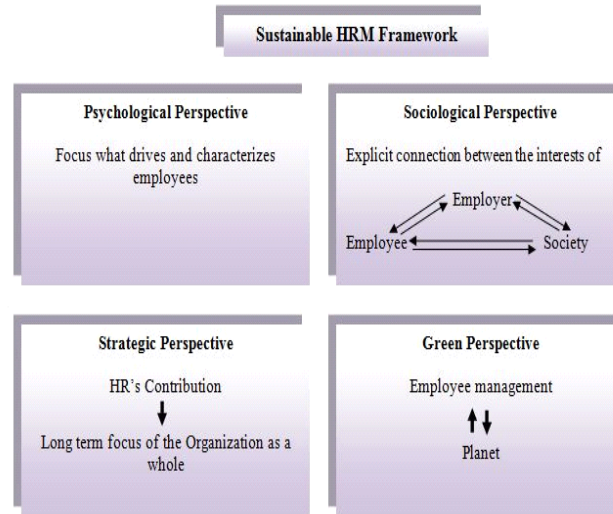
Sources: Haynes, P & Fryer, G. (2000).



**Model 13**

In the following model, De Prins (2011) showed that sustainable HRM framework is composed of four perspectives. These perspectives are psychological perspective, sociological perspective, strategic perspective, and green perspective. De

Prins (2011) argues Sustainable HRM focuses on optimally utilizing and respecting human workforces within the organization, in which an explicit relationship is built between an organization’s strategic policies and its environment.



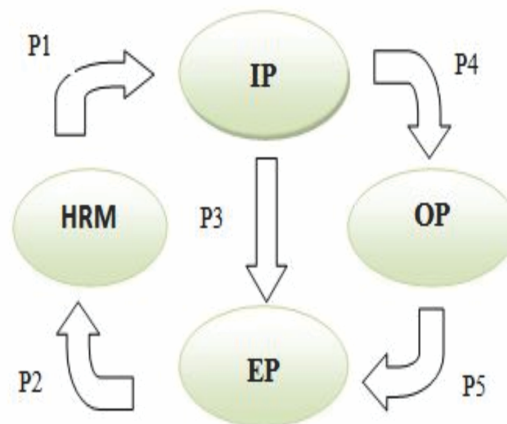
Source: De Prins (2011).

**Model 14**

Wong et al. (2013) proposed the following model by highlighting the relationship among human resource management, organizational performance, environmental performance, and innovation performance. According to Wong et al. (2013),

innovation performance leads to environmental performance which results in the effectiveness of green HRM functions.

Here, OP = Organizational Performance, EP = Environmental Performance, IP = Innovation Performance

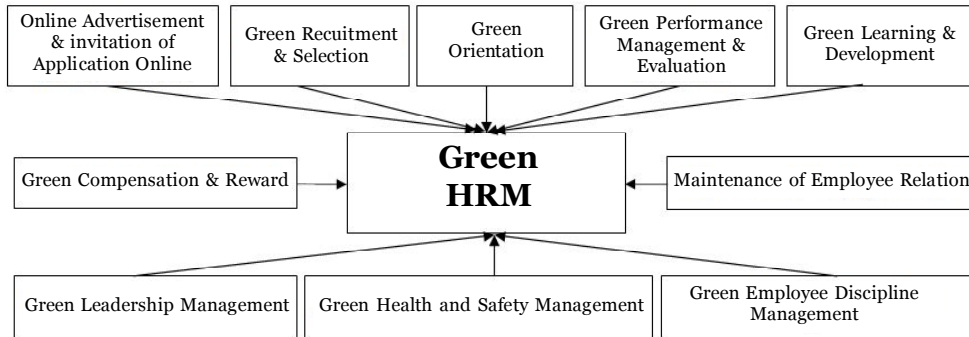


Source: Wong et al. (2013)

**Model 15**

The following model was proposed by Hosain and Rahman in 2016. This model basically highlights the functions of green HRM. In this model, Hosain

and Rahman (2016) identified ten specific wings of green HRM that collectively contribute to the successful adoption and implementation of green HRM policies.



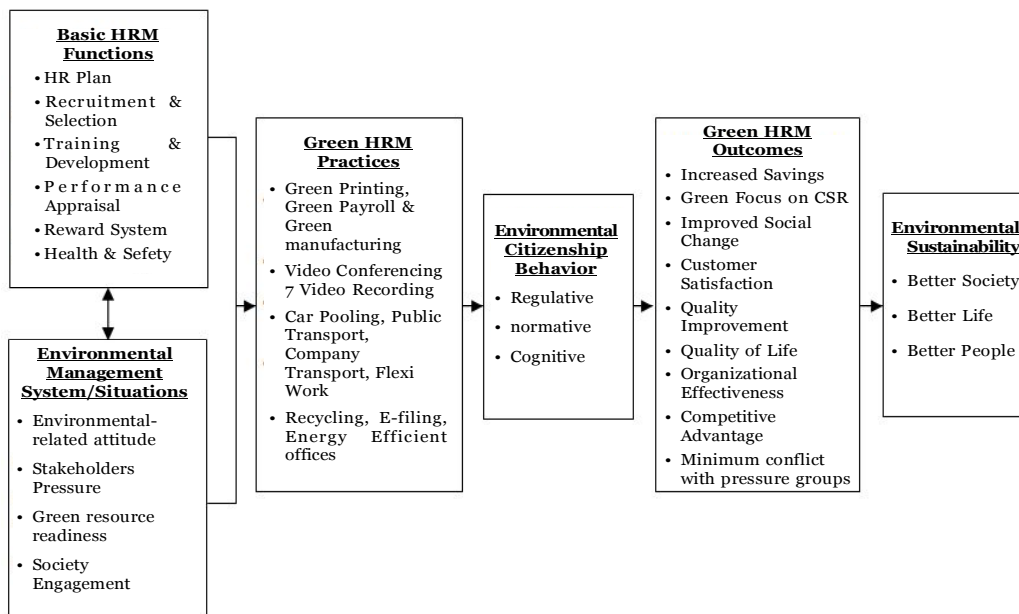
Source: (Hosain & Rahman, 2016)

**Proposed Research Model**

Although the field of green HRM is comparatively new and is at the infant stage, there are a number of models added to the literature. However, there is no comprehensive research model on green HRM still now. Majority of the models deal with the nature of the green HRM. Based on the analysis of the existing research models and literature, we can propose the following comprehensive research model.

In the proposed research model, we highlight that

the basic HRM functions and environmental management are affected by each other in the organizational context. Both the HRM functions and environmental systems constitute the green HRM practices. The level of green HRM practices defines the environmental citizenship behavior. This environmental citizenship behavior is critical for the green HRM outcomes like increased savings, quality of life, customer satisfaction, improved social change, and so on. The final output of these green HRM policies and practices is the environmental sustainability.



Source: Author

## Conclusion

There is an inherent capacity of HRM functions in greening employees and organizational operations. From job design function to employee relations, HRM has gigantic potential in greening organization and its operations. The key challenge in front of HR professionals is to understand the scope and depth of green HRM in transforming their organizations as green entities. This effort ultimately leads to better environmental performance of the organization. Green HRM is new phenomenon in the field of HRM. It creates some new challenges for HR professionals. The study tried to explore the concepts, processes, requirements and challenges of Green HRM identified in the existing models and literature. The study found that Green HR can adopt various green processes and practices in different HR functions like HR planning, acquisition of human capital, their induction, training, performance management, reward management and better industrial relations which will have a bearing on the overall achievement of the organization's goals.

It was found that distinct HR policies, top management commitment, teamwork, empowerment, positive management behavior and transparent merit systems are associated with the successful implementation of Green HR strategies. HR professionals face a number of challenges regarding Green HRM. However it is clear from the study that the HR Professionals must address the environmental needs in crafting HR strategies and implementing the HR policies and practices in alignment with environment management. This study is concluded with a comprehensive research model of green human resource management. Thus this study is supposed to help the researcher to identify the areas of Green HRM that are yet to be researched.

## Research Gap and Scope for Future Study

This study was conducted based on the extensive analysis of existing models and literature of Green HRM. The authors have tried to organize the concepts, process, requirements and challenges of Green HRM in a constructive manner so that it can help the interested readers, researchers and academicians. However Green HRM is an emerging philosophy. Indeed, there are many gaps to be filled in respect of green HRM. Such gaps include an informative guide on the emergent literature, its scope and coverage, and a process model and research agenda in this field.

Theoretical and empirical studies are needed to enhance the body of knowledge of Green HRM. The interested contributors/researchers can do extensive quantitative and/or qualitative research on Green HRM. More importantly, the researchers and academics area highly welcome to do the extensive research and/or validate the research model as proposed in this paper.

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