

Check-in to sustainability: a comparative study of green human resource management practices in emerging and established hotels

Management of
Environmental
Quality: An
International
Journal

1257

Received 30 June 2025
Revised 2 October 2025
Accepted 25 December 2025

Abdul-Razak Suleman and Mehran Nejati

*Centre for People, Place and Planet, the Centre for Sustainability and
Governance Research, School of Business and Law, Edith Cowan University,
Joondalup, Australia*

Janice Redmond

*School of Business and Law, Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia, and
Azadeh Shafaei*

*School of Business and Law, Mental Awareness Respect and Safety,
Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia*

Abstract

Purpose – This study draws on the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) to investigate the drivers, implementation and challenges of Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) practices in Ghana's star-rated hotels. It also examines how these initiatives contribute to achieving relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Design/methodology/approach – A qualitative research approach was adopted, involving in-depth interviews with twelve managerial employees purposively sampled from both emerging (1–2 star) and established (3–5 star) hotels in Ghana. Data were thematically analysed to uncover key patterns.

Findings – The findings reveal that Green HRM adoption across star-rated hotels in Ghana is driven by a mix of external pressures like regulatory compliance and customer expectations; internal motivations, including cost efficiency and leadership commitment; and global imperatives such as certification requirements. Established hotels implement comprehensive, technology-driven strategies, including digital recruitment, structured sustainability training and integrated performance management systems, which contribute directly to achieving SDGs like Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6) and Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12). In contrast, emerging hotels rely on informal, ad-hoc initiatives and external partnerships to manage their HR practices. However, challenges such as employee resistance and communication delays impede the consistent implementation of Green HRM practices across both hotel categories.

Originality/value – This pioneering study empirically explores the antecedents and alignment of Green HRM practices to relevant SDGs in the hospitality industry within a developing economy, thereby providing an exclusively dual perspective on emerging versus established hotels and extending the application of the NRBV framework in a service-oriented industry.

Keywords Green human resource management, Drivers, Adoption, Challenges, Sustainable development goals, Hotels

Paper type Research article

1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of human economic activities continues to compromise the environment and deplete planetary resources (Jabbour, 2015). The hospitality industry exemplifies a critical



© Abdul-Razak Suleman, Mehran Nejati, Janice Redmond and Azadeh Shafaei. Published by Emerald Publishing Limited. This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this licence may be seen at [Link to the terms of the CC BY 4.0 licence](#).

Funding: This research is part of the first author's PhD research project sponsored by the ECU Higher Degree by Research Scholarship under the supervision of the co-authors.

Management of Environmental Quality:
An International Journal
Vol. 37 No. 5, 2026
pp. 1257-1284
Emerald Publishing Limited
e-ISSN: 1758-6119
p-ISSN: 1477-7835
DOI 10.1108/MEQ-06-2025-0463

sustainability paradox: it is an economic powerhouse while also imposing substantial environmental pressures. Globally, the industry represented about 10.4% of GDP and supported roughly 319 million jobs in 2019, with further growth and employment projected through the next decade (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2022). Simultaneously, the industry dominated by the hotel sector is highly resource-intensive, consuming large volumes of energy and water, generating significant waste and accounting for a notable share of global greenhouse gas emissions (Koiwanit and Filimonau, 2025). These tensions are predominantly pronounced in developing contexts: in Africa, and particularly in Ghana, the hotel sector remains a key employer and foreign-exchange earner yet operates amid acute environmental stress, from declining forest reserves (World Bank, 2016) to daily waste generation exceeding 5,000 tonnes (Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality, 2018; Mensah, 2020). With the increasing prominence of social responsibility and sustainability agendas, organisations are compelled to integrate environmental considerations into their core strategies, largely guided by frameworks such as the United Nations' 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals (SDGs) (Chams and García-Blandón, 2019).

Green human resource management (Green HRM) has emerged as a strategic approach for embedding sustainability into organisational practices. Green HRM involves a range of practices, including recruiting and selecting employees with green values, providing green training to boost eco-conscious skills, conducting green performance appraisals and offering rewards that incentivise sustainable behaviours (Aboramadan and Karatepe, 2021). By aligning HRM functions with environmental goals, Green HRM helps foster a resource-efficient and sustainable work environment (Yong *et al.*, 2020). Empirical evidence suggests that effective Green HRM practices can lead to tangible benefits such as waste reduction, cost savings, improved job satisfaction and higher employee retention (Mousa and Othman, 2020; Shafaei and Nejati, 2023). Despite the growing recognition of these practices, the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of Green HRM remain insufficiently defined, particularly in terms of its antecedents and sustainability outcomes (Karatepe *et al.*, 2022). This lacuna motivates our first strand of inquiry: why do organisations pursue Green HRM, particularly *what specific drivers motivate star-rated hotels in Ghana to implement Green HRM practices?*

Second, although Green HRM research is considered evolving, it remains skewed toward manufacturing settings, developed economies and quantitative methods, which obscure contextual nuance (Bahuguna *et al.*, 2023; Suleman *et al.*, 2025). Crucially, comparative studies that contrast organisational types (e.g. emerging versus established hotels) are scarce, yet such comparisons matter because resource endowments, institutional obligations and market positioning plausibly shape how HRM practices are designed and operationalised. Coupled with the under-utilisation of strategic frameworks that integrate environmental constraints into resource logic (e.g. the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV); Hart, 1995), this gap limits our understanding of how HRM translates strategic intent into concrete sustainability outcomes. Accordingly, the study asks: *how do emerging and established hotels implement Green HRM in practice and in what ways do these practices translate into contributions towards the achievement of relevant SDGs?*

Finally, implementation seldom proceeds without friction; prior studies suggest obstacles such as funding shortfalls and operational complexities and weak institutional supports, yet these impediments have not been systematically unpacked, particularly in the hospitality context in developing countries (Karatepe *et al.*, 2022; Tanveer *et al.*, 2024). A detailed, context-sensitive appraisal of barriers is necessary to inform feasible managerial and policy interventions. Thus, our third research question probes: *what constraints inhibit the effective implementation and scaling of Green HRM practices in star-rated hotels in Ghana?*

By structuring inquiry around these three empirically grounded questions, this study delivers three focused contributions. Empirically, it furnishes the first comparative, qualitative account of Green HRM antecedents in emerging versus established star-rated hotels in a developing economy, showing how internal capabilities, external pressures and global imperatives interact differently across hotel types. Theoretically, it extends the NRBV

framework into service contexts by demonstrating how HRM practices, including recruitment, training, performance and rewards, operationalise NRBV's strategic capabilities (pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development) to advance sustainable outcomes. Practically, it translates these insights into concrete design principles and levers (e.g. phased digitalisation, partnership models, KPI-linked incentives and appointment of Green Champions) that managers and policymakers can deploy to embed environmental performance into HRM systems under resource asymmetries and institutional variability. Thus, although automation and standards (e.g. ISO 50001) deliver direct efficiency gains, their effectiveness depends on workforce behaviours and routines; this study examines how Green HRM mechanisms sustain and amplify such gains. Consequently, the paper maps drivers → micro-practices → SDG outcomes and identifies actionable pathways to overcome implementation barriers in resource-constrained hospitality settings. The rest of the paper is as follows: literature review, methodology, findings, discussions, theoretical and practical implications and finally limitations and suggestions for future studies.

2. Literature review

2.1 Theoretical underpinning

This study adopts the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) as its theoretical foundation, an extension of the traditional Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991) that incorporates environmental constraints into the analysis of a firm's internal capabilities. Prior studies (e.g. Sathasivam *et al.*, 2024; Tanveer *et al.*, 2023) have emphasised the strategic role of Green HRM practices as unique resources for achieving competitive advantage, highlighting their ability to enhance employee skills, motivation and overall performance; attributes that are difficult for competitors to imitate. According to NRBV, a sustainable competitive advantage arises not only from resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable but also from a firm's ability to manage these resources effectively in response to environmental challenges (Hart, 1995). This perspective is particularly relevant in the hospitality industry, where operational excellence must be balanced with environmental stewardship.

Central to the NRBV are three overlapping strategic capabilities: pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development, which serve as levers for achieving sustainability (Anaman *et al.*, 2023; Hart, 1995). Pollution prevention emphasises the adoption of technologies and practices that minimise waste, reduce emissions and improve operational efficiency. In the hospitality industry, such practices can be operationalised through Green HRM initiatives that train employees in eco-friendly processes and reward sustainable behaviours. Product stewardship involves integrating feedback from external stakeholders into the design and development of products and services, ensuring that environmental impacts are considered at every stage of the value chain. Sustainable development focuses on the long-term commitment to eco-friendly practices and innovations. A firm's dedication to these strategic capabilities enhances its future performance and competitiveness (Caldera *et al.*, 2018; Graham *et al.*, 2023).

This theoretical framework provides a robust lens to explore the specific drivers motivating star-rated hotels in Ghana to implement Green HRM practices. Also, the framework helps elucidate which specific Green HRM initiatives (e.g. green recruitment, training and rewards) are being implemented and how these initiatives contribute to the achievement of relevant SDGs. By framing these practices as strategic resources, the NRBV underscores their role in advancing pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development. Furthermore, the NRBV is instrumental in understanding the challenges these hotels face in implementing Green HRM practices. The dynamic external environment, coupled with the complexity of aligning human and organisational resources with environmental imperatives, presents obstacles that may include technological, financial and regulatory hurdles (Tanveer *et al.*, 2024).

Consequently, employing the NRBV framework enables this study to comprehensively investigate how star-rated hotels in a developing economy leverage Green HRM practices to

navigate environmental challenges, drive sustainable performance and contribute to broader sustainability objectives. Through this lens, the study aims to reveal the drivers behind Green HRM adoption, the specific initiatives being implemented and the challenges encountered, providing valuable insights into how these strategic practices can facilitate the achievement of SDGs in the hospitality industry.

2.2 Green human resource management

[Opatha and Arulrajah \(2014\)](#) conceptualised Green HRM as the set of organisational policies, procedures and strategies designed to cultivate an environmentally conscious workforce that benefits the firm, society and the natural environment. Similarly, [Yu et al. \(2020\)](#) define Green HRM as aligning HRM functions, thus, recruitment, training, development, compensation and employee interactions with the organisational ecological goals. Through an extensive literature review ([Suleman et al., 2025](#)), five core dimensions of Green HRM emerged, as initially conceptualised and measured by [Tang et al. \(2017\)](#): green recruitment and selection, green training and development, green performance management, green pay and reward and green involvement.

Green recruitment and selection involves integrating environmental criteria into job descriptions, utilising digital recruitment channels, conducting online interviews and assessing candidates on green competencies ([Suleman et al., 2022](#)). Firms with strong ecological images and technological advancements in recruitment attract a pool of qualified, multi-skilled applicants ([Shafaei and Nejati, 2023](#)). *Green training and development* is the process by which organisations equip employees with eco-protection competencies and awareness essential for achieving environmental goals ([Graham et al., 2023](#)). Leveraging digital platforms reduces costs and paper usage while facilitating workshops on critical ecological concerns like waste management and energy conservation. Technological advancements play a crucial role in designing these training programs, ensuring they are responsive to current sustainability needs ([Bahuguna et al., 2023](#)). *Green performance management* integrates environmental targets into performance appraisals. This process involves establishing green goals tailored to each employee's role, developing performance indicators that encompass waste reduction and carbon emission targets and assessing outcomes through periodic evaluations ([Paulet et al., 2021](#)). Firms may also apply dis-benefit schemes to incentivise adherence to green practices, although the practical application varies due to organisational differences ([Yong et al., 2020](#)). *Green pay and reward* systems offer both monetary and non-monetary incentives to motivate sustainable behaviours. By integrating specific environmental goals into remuneration systems, organisations can enhance employee commitment to green practices. Studies have shown that non-financial rewards, such as recognition and green travel benefits, can be particularly effective (e.g. [Renwick et al., 2016](#)). *Green involvement* is defined as the active participation of employees in environmental management decisions. It fosters a culture of responsibility through collaborative initiatives and establishes clear communication channels that support a green learning climate ([Muisyo et al., 2023](#)). Such involvement not only enhances internal accountability but also empowers employees to become eco-intrapreneurs ([Tang et al., 2017](#)).

Hotel settings, however, present distinctive organisational conditions, such as high staff turnover, seasonal labour, shift work and a large cohort of temporary and frontline casual employees that could constrain conventional Green HRM designs ([Karatepe et al., 2022](#); [Tanveer et al., 2024](#)). These specificities mean that one-size-fits-all HRM interventions (e.g. annual workshops) may fail to reach or influence the transient workforce. Consequently, effective Green HRM in hospitality requires socio-technical tailoring: practices must be modular, repetitive and embedded in routine work systems so that sustainability persists despite workforce flux ([Napathorn, 2022](#); [Valencia et al., 2020](#)). Practical adaptations include micro-learning modules for onboarding, brief just-in-shift refreshers, visual prompts and checklists at point-of-service, cross-training to spread green competencies and role-based

SOPs that make pro-environmental tasks part of daily checklists (Bahuguna *et al.*, 2023; Muisyo *et al.*, 2023). Consequently, Green HRM in hospitality demands pragmatic, context-sensitive designs that recognise workforce temporality, institutionalise environmental routines, sustain technical efficiencies and contribute measurably to organisational sustainability aims.

2.3 Green HRM and sustainability

Sustainability in business means meeting present needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet theirs (Tien *et al.*, 2021). In the hospitality industry, this requires reconciling profitability with environmental stewardship and social responsibility, i.e. sustainable firms generate stakeholder value, protect ecosystems and enhance human well-being, thereby advancing SDG objectives (Mahajan *et al.*, 2024). Research shows that targeting specific SDGs like decent work (Goal 8), responsible consumption (Goal 12) and climate action (Goal 13) yields tangible organisational and employee benefits (Suleman *et al.*, 2023). Against this backdrop, Green HRM has gained traction as the vehicle through which hotels embed sustainability into HRM practices, so that employees become active agents of environmental performance (Karatepe *et al.*, 2022; Shafaei *et al.*, 2020).

Importantly, Green HRM operates as part of a socio-technical system. This is because technical investments (automation, energy-management systems, ISO 50001, smart controls) generate measurable efficiencies but do not guarantee persistent improvements unless complemented by people-centred practices (Mills and Paik, 2012; Valencia *et al.*, 2020). Consequently, Green HRM provides that bridge that aligns employee behaviour with infrastructural capabilities through selective hiring, targeted upskilling, KPI-linked appraisals and incentive structures, thereby converting capital-side potential into routine operational gains (Renwick *et al.*, 2013; Suleman *et al.*, 2025). Framed by the NRBV theory, these human capabilities operate alongside physical assets to enable Hart's three strategic responses (pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development), thus embedding environmental foresight into sustained organisational edge (Hart, 1995).

Beyond environmental outcomes, Green HRM also advances social and economic objectives. People-centred policies (flexible work, development opportunities, recognition) strengthen employer branding, retention and community legitimacy, while partnerships and social initiatives (scholarships, outreach) extend organisational impact (Suleman *et al.*, 2022; Tanveer *et al.*, 2023). Economically, combining technical retrofits with disciplined HRM practices reduces utility and waste costs and improves operational efficiency, challenging the notion that sustainability is a cost-only trade-off (Minoja and Romano, 2021). Thus, the integration of Green HRM with technological investment constitutes a practicable, SDG-relevant pathway for hotels to translate sustainability intent into measurable, enduring outcomes (Shafaei *et al.*, 2020; Suleman *et al.*, 2023).

3. Methodology

3.1 Study design, sample and ethics

The study adopted a qualitative research approach and employed an interpretive research design to explore Green HRM practices in Ghana's star-rated hotels, focusing on drivers, challenges and contributions to relevant SDGs. The study sought to understand the meanings, experiences and policies related to green initiatives and environmental sustainability (Creswel, 2009; Suleman *et al.*, 2022). Purposive sampling recruited full-time managerial employees, ensuring a focused investigation (Sathasivam *et al.*, 2024). A semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix 1), informed by literature, allowed participants to express their viewpoints in detail (Tanveer *et al.*, 2024).

After obtaining ethics approval from Edith Cowan University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC no. 2023-04838) and clearance from the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA)

(i.e. the overarching industry regulator), data collection occurred in Greater Accra, Ghana’s capital and business hub. With GTA support, an authorised GTA representative conducted preliminary outreach; 56 hotels indicated interest and were subsequently contacted with an introductory letter and a formal invitation to participate. Of these 56, 14 hotels granted institutional approval to participate. Following management approval, HR managers facilitated participant recruitment and 12 senior managerial staff consented to virtual interviews conducted via Microsoft Teams between August 2024 and January 2025.

Data saturation was initially observed after the 10th interview, confirmed by two additional interviews (Saunders *et al.*, 2018). The final sample of 12 participants is appropriate for exploratory research (Bertaux, 1981; Koiwanit and Filimonau, 2025), consistent with guidelines from Braun and Clarke (2021a) for thematic analysis. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms (P1-P12) were assigned to participants, who were predominantly senior managers overseeing HRM, sustainability and environmental compliance. Table 1 summarises participants’ background information and interview durations.

3.2 Data analysis

Data analysis began immediately after the first interview by cross-checking Microsoft Teams-generated transcripts with recordings to ensure accuracy. Following Clarke and Braun’s (2017) iterative framework for thematic analysis, we familiarised ourselves with the data through multiple readings of the transcripts. Notes were taken to draft initial codes independently by authors, which were refined into final codes or discarded after further review and member cross-checking using the annotation function in NVIVO 12 (Braun and Clarke, 2021b). These codes were then categorised into major themes and sub-themes, such as recruitment and selection, training, performance management, pay and reward systems, involvement and digital initiatives in traditional HRM functions, as guided by the literature (e.g. Tang *et al.*, 2017; Renwick *et al.*, 2013).

To strengthen credibility, we triangulated interview evidence with information from other sources, including hotel websites and CSR/sustainability pages, job adverts, public certification records (e.g. EarthCheck statements), promotional materials and municipal/EPA websites. Information from these sources was imported, coded and linked to interview

Table 1. Summary background information of participants

Pseudonyms	Participants position	Hotel rating	Length of service at hotel	Industry experience	Interview duration
P1	Human Resource Manager	5-Star	1 year 3 months	Over 10 years	62 min
P2	General Manager	2-Star	5 years	5 years	69 min
P3	General Manager	1-Star	5 years	5 years	27 min
P4	Hotel Manager	2-Star	3 years	4 years	39 min
P5	Sustainability and Compliance Manager	4-Star	6 years 9 months	Over 15 years	63 min
P6	General Manager	1-Star	1 year	Over 10 years	75 min
P7	General Manager	2-Star	8 years	Over 19 years	63 min
P8	General Manager	1-Star	3 years	3 years	65 min
P9	Training Manager	5-Star	2 years	Over 22 years	68 min
P10	Human Resource Manager	3-Star	7 years	25 years	34 min
P11	General Manager	2-Star	10 years	10 years	33 min
P12	Hotel Manager	1-Star	7 years	7 years	38 min
Source(s): Field data (2025)					

Moreover, relevant literature quotes were integrated to further triangulate, contextualise and support empirical findings, elucidating how specific green initiatives are embedded in HRM practices, the challenges encountered and their contribution to achieving relevant SDGs (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Finally, “memoing” was employed to connect emerging themes with theoretical frameworks and previous studies, as recommended by Sathasivam *et al.* (2024), thus identifying areas of convergence and divergence with existing research. Together, these steps, including triangulation, independent coding, consensus building and transparent documentation, enhanced the trustworthiness and traceability of our thematic findings (Braun and Clarke, 2021b).

A word cloud from interview transcripts highlights frequently mentioned terms: “waste” (132 times), “SDGs” (105), “Food” (102), “online” (81) and “virtual” (72), alongside “sustainability” (74), “strategy” (66) and “recycling (58)”. The display was limited to 100 words across all interviews; the larger the font size, the more often the word was mentioned. These words represent the most popular combinations, emphasising the thematic focus on technology, waste management and sustainability among participants (see [Figure 1](#)). Consequently, we adopted the stem-branch-leaf approach in the generation of themes and sub-themes. These findings are synthesised and visually presented in a nomological network (see [Figure 2](#)).

The thematic analysis revealed two distinct response streams: one from “emerging” hotels, generally characterised by lower star ratings (1–2 stars) and relatively recent establishment with limited formalisation of green HRM structures and another from “established” hotels, typically 3–5 star-rated with longer operational histories and more structured sustainability and HRM systems. Despite their different operational lifecycles, both groups implement Green HRM practices influenced by external pressures, internal motivations and global imperatives. These drivers play a critical role in shaping how hotels adopt environmentally conscious HRM strategies, reflecting each hotel’s unique context and ambitions. [Table 2](#) summarises the identified drivers, organised into major themes and sub-themes.



Figure 1. Word cloud of interview transcripts. Source: Authors' Own Work (2025)

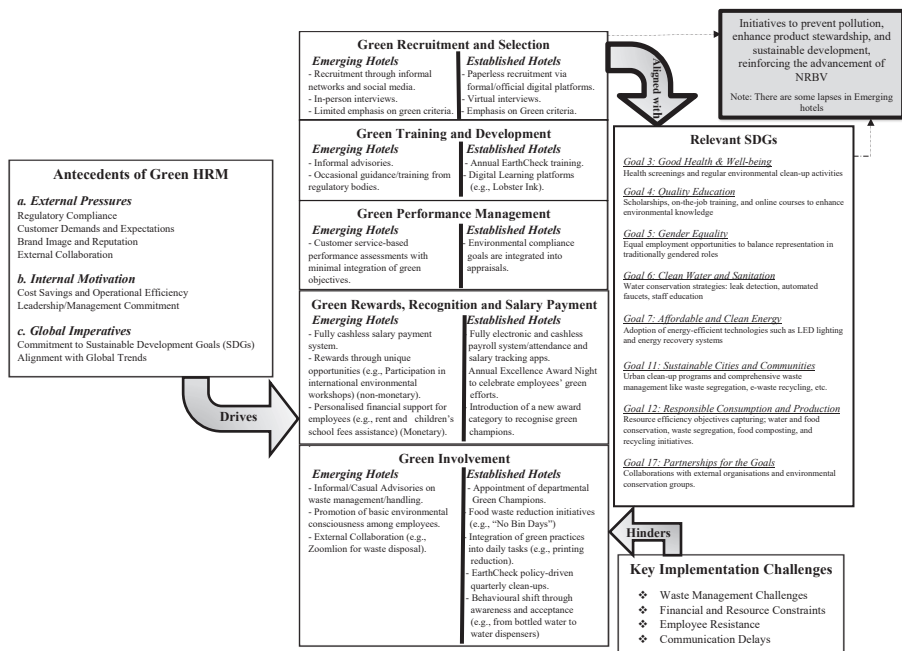


Figure 2. Nomological network of findings. Source: Authors' Own Work (2025)

Table 2. Summary identified drivers of green HRM practices

S/ N	Major themes	Sub-themes	Summary of findings
I	External Pressures	Regulatory Compliance Customer Demands and Expectations Brand Image and Reputation External Collaboration	More dominant among the established hotels due to their responsiveness towards global standards, eco-conscious clientele and robust external collaborations
II	Internal Motivation	Cost Savings and Operational Efficiency Leadership/Management Commitment	Dominant in both emerging and established hotels due to strong leadership commitment to reduce operational costs
III	Global Imperatives	Commitment to Sustainable Development Goals Alignment with Global Trends	More dominant among the established hotels due to their quest for international appeal or relevance through international certifications and alignment with global sustainability trends

Source(s): Field data (2025)

4.1.1 External pressure: compelled by stakeholders' expectations. One of the key drivers of Green HRM that emerged from the data is external pressure. Upon further analysis, four sub-themes emerged from this theme, including regulatory compliance, customer demands/expectations, brand image/reputation and external collaboration. These are discussed and anchored to prior studies in the subsequent paragraphs.

4.1.1.1 Regulatory compliance. Compliance with regulatory requirements of local governmental agencies and international certification institutions was emergent as a critical

driver for the implementation of Green HRM practices in the hotels. This finding underscores how regulatory frameworks shape organisational behaviour in sustainability (Guerci *et al.*, 2016), with emerging hotels responding to national mandates while established hotels go further to align with international benchmarks. For instance, it was evident that meeting the environmental requirements of the national environmental regulatory body (i.e. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)) was crucial for the hotels, particularly the emerging hotels, as a participant noted that:

... I have to seek advice from colleagues, including one who works with the EPA, to guide us on environmental issues and practices to avoid non-compliance ... (P6)

Similarly, the pursuit of certification from internationally recognised environmental bodies (e.g. EarthCheck) underscores the commitment to complying with international standards as a key driver for the implementation of sustainable practices, including Green HRM, particularly among the established hotels. For instance, a participant indicated that a significant commitment to eco-friendly practices is a requirement for them to maintain or move to the next stage of their certification.

... You know, maybe 10 years ago they would recommend that you have a green energy policy but now it's a requirement ... We're also audited, so with Earth Check, for example, they come and audit us. Now we are on silver and we are planning on getting gold which comes with a lot more commitment ... (P9)

4.1.1.2 Customer demands and expectations. Another strong emergent sub-theme was customer demand and expectations. Eco-conscious travellers increasingly expect sustainable operations from the hotels they stay in. This finding seemed unique to the established hotels. As some participants highlighted,

... so people start talking about green, you know, travelers [our guests] started asking questions ... (P5)

... some of our guests work for companies that take carbon footprints and global warming and all of these things into consideration. And they would look for Hotels that also buy into these initiatives as well. (R9)

... Our guests provide feedback through our barcode system, and some have noted the importance of reducing waste and working electronically during their stay. And you can't tell someone that you work at this hotel, we provide luxury services, and your environment is not eco-friendly. So that's one of the motivation points ... (P1)

This feedback loop influences the design and execution of green initiatives, such as linen reuse programs and water-saving systems, as was evident when the participants stated:

... Initially we're all using water bottles or plastic bottles. Every department had one, so you pick one, you drink, you dump the bottle in the dustbin, the bottling water company comes for it, and recycle, but we realise that it's better for us to have less waste and invest in water dispensers. So we've just recently purchased water dispensers for each department and encouraged each employee to get a water bottle ... (P1)

... you know, putting these little stoppers in the tabs. So the guest can't open the tab and have a lot of water gushing out. Then we have the things like linen and towels that is treated and some that can be reused, ... so we have our own sort of recycling water system for the kitchen which is the biggest area when it comes to waste ... (P9)

4.1.1.3 Brand image and reputation. The quest to create and maintain a good reputation or brand image was found to be one of the antecedents of Green HRM practices within the Ghanaian hospitality industry. In line with the literature (e.g. Muisyo *et al.*, 2023), it was

evident from our findings from both hotels that sustainability enhances marketability. For instance, one of the participants from an emerging hotel indicated that:

... So what I can say is that it gives us a lot of referrals ... and I remember about 4 weeks or about 3 weeks ago when the municipal assembly reps came around and did their checks, they said that although this place is a 1-star rated, it looks like a 3-star. Yeah. So, I think when it comes to we being in the books of the government, we are in their books for a good purpose. (P6)

This was also emphasised by the participants at established hotels, as one participant indicated that their green initiatives are driven by their quest to sustain a competitive edge, stating:

... Beyond providing luxury, our green practices attract guests who value sustainability, and this boosts our brand reputation ... Yes, it boosts the brand's image because these policies are not just centered towards Accra, it's a global initiative ... (P1)

4.1.1.4 External collaboration. This was the final sub-theme that emerged under the external pressures theme. Partnerships with external entities like sanitation companies and suppliers further enable the implementation of green practices. As was exemplified by participants from both groups of hotels. For instance, the participants at established hotels explained how their collaboration with external companies and the benefits they get influence their quest to engage in green practices (i.e. waste management).

... there is already a company that we work with and this is called EarthCheck you can Google them, they check us on our environmental policies ... and it stretches from food wastes, plastics ... I mean the bottled water company we work with comes back for the bottles and they pay us because they also go to recycle them ... for housekeeping and laundry, they do with chemicals lot and again Ecolab is in charge of it and everything comes in already fixed, measured, prepacked, so there's zero human error and you just use it as and when ... (P9)

... we have a company that we partner with that comes to take our food waste and put it into compost and fertilizers to help the small and medium scale farmers. (P1)

Likewise, a participant at the emerging hotel noted how they leverage their partnership with the EPA to gain knowledge and implement sustainable practices:

... I have to seek advice from other colleagues of mine, including one who works with the EPA, to guide us on environmental issues and practices ... (P3)

4.1.2 Internal motivation: driving change from within. This was the second major theme generated based on the transcribed data. Prior studies have argued that the strategic green intent of organisations and top management's commitment can trigger them to implement eco-friendly practices (e.g. [Suleman et al., 2025](#)). Internal drivers emerged as pivotal motivators for implementing Green HRM, emphasising operational efficiency and engagement. Based on further analysis, two sub-themes emerged from this theme: cost savings and operational efficiency and leadership or management commitment.

4.1.2.1 Cost savings and operational efficiency. Reducing utility costs and efficiency in operational processes are significant factors that drive the implementation of Green HRM in both hotels. This leads to several initiatives, including automation and waste segregation. Thus, automated systems for energy and water conservation, such as motion-sensor taps and automated electricity systems, are used to reduce utility expenses. For instance, some participants from established hotels stated that:

Our automated systems, like motion-sensor taps and energy-saving LEDs, minimise unnecessary consumption and cut costs ... Also, we segregate because when we add plastics to the general waste it increases the kilograms ... so when you add plastics, it increases the disposal costs (P1)

... Yeah, to promote recycling and waste reduction, and to enhance efficiency across all the departments and that is why the virtual processes come in. (P9)

Similarly, a participant from an emerging hotel emphasised that their quest for the implementation of Green HRM was influenced by the hotel's attempts to reduce costs.

... Yeah, it saves us money. As I said, if you are able to manage waste in general, like water, electricity, how we dispose our refuse, the collection points and all that we make sure that we have an officer in charge of those because if we leave them running we have to pay more and that goes against our coffers. But if we are able to manage them, definitely, it's a plus for us ... for the electricity we have an automated system already. The moment, you are out of the room, it goes off automatically but for the water it's done manually (P6)

4.1.2.2 Leadership or management commitment. Leaders/Managers' commitment to environmental sustainability drives the adoption of Green HRM practices. Thus, the implementation of Green HRM was found to be largely influenced by managers' dedication to incorporating sustainability into operations. This illustrates how personal orientation and initiatives foster the implementation of green initiatives. For instance, a participant from an emerging hotel stated how they initiate contact with the EPA to align their operations with basic environmental standards.

... I have to seek advice from other colleagues of mine, including one who works with the EPA, to guide us on environmental issues and practices ... (P3)

Likewise, a participant at an established hotel emphasised how their commitment and understanding are driving their implementation of Green HRM practices by stating that:

... getting the culture and the mindset to change when we started was the biggest problem, we're not 100% there, but at least we have the commitment and we have the understanding and so they are policing each other ... (P9)

4.1.3 *Global imperatives*. This final major theme emerged as a key driver of Green HRM adoption across both hotel types and comprises two sub-themes: commitment to the SDGs and alignment with global sustainability trends. Hotels translate these imperatives into HR practices by embedding SDG-aligned targets, adopting internationally recognised standards and certifications, and signalling compliance to stakeholders, thereby enhancing legitimacy and market relevance. These findings corroborate prior work showing that the rising prominence of corporate social responsibility and global frameworks, notably the UN 2030 Agenda, compels organisations to integrate environmental considerations into core strategy (Chams and García-Blandón, 2019).

4.1.3.1 Commitment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Both groups of hotels demonstrated alignment with some relevant SDGs as a driver for Green HRM. For instance, some participants explained that their quest to align with relevant SDGs such as SDG 6 – “Clean Water and Sanitation”, 11 – “Sustainable Cities and Communities” and SDG12 – “Responsible Consumption and Production” led to the adoption of water-efficient strategies, including the use of gadgets to reduce wastage.

... Relating to Goal 11 making cities and settlements inclusive, safe, and resilient. We do it through our waste segregation program and we also do e-waste recycling. That's also a project I'm working on, we separate our tonners and cartridges, LED waste bulbs, old appliances ... (P5)

... So you are cautious enough to prompt someone that, hey, you're wasting water and that is not responsible consumption ... (P1)

... So basically you make sure you take what you can eat because there's no bin to dispose of what's leftover ... (P9)

... and then with regards to water for kitchen it has a mini regulator ... So for instance, if you are not standing by it for more than one minute, it goes off by itself ... (P2)

4.1.3.2 Alignment with global trends. The hotels indicated that some of the practices they have implemented are in line with global trends to ensure their international relevance. Some include their association, certification and implementation of recommended initiatives from internationally recognised sustainability-inclined bodies or institutions. However, it is worth noting that this was a distinct driver found with the established hotel, as the participants noted that:

... You know, our EarthCheck Silver Certification is more than a badge; it reflects our continuous improvement in meeting global environmental standards. ... So line with that we have an ISO team which got trained in internal auditing, we set resource efficiency objectives for water conservation, energy conservation, waste management (P9)

... We are trying to better our environment. So we have clean-up exercises that we do quarterly. We call it EarthCheck cleanup, so employees volunteer from each department to come together to clean our environment ... (P1)

4.2 Specific green HRM practices/initiatives and SDGs achievement

4.2.1 Specific green HRM practices/initiatives. Based on the themes identified from the data in line with the literature (e.g. [Tang et al., 2017](#)), a comparative analysis of Green HRM practices in Ghana's emerging and established hotels reveals significant variations in their sustainability approaches. While both categories of hotels implement sustainability-driven HRM practices, established hotels tend to have structured policies that align closely with environmental goals, whereas emerging hotels adopt a more informal approach. The specific Green HRM practices identified in this study are discussed below and summarised in [Table 3](#).

4.2.1.1 Recruitment and selection. Recruitment and selection processes in established hotels integrate environmental considerations by incorporating green requirements into job descriptions and using paperless recruitment systems. Digital platforms such as Pinpoint and LinkedIn are employed for job postings, virtual interviews and document screening. For instance, a participant noted:

... We do our job posting on our job portal called Pinpoint, and once we publish on Pinpoint, it sends a link to LinkedIn ... Screening, interview scheduling, invitations, everything is done in our job portal. Once we finish screening, CVs are shared with department heads, who review them and provide feedback via email. Virtual interviews are conducted ... (P1)

Additionally, certain departments, such as kitchen operations, prioritise hiring candidates with certifications in sustainability, food safety, and waste management.

... For key departments like kitchen, we try to employ people who have some training in sustainability because those courses cover segregation, waste management, and reducing cross-contamination ... (P9)

Conversely, emerging hotels largely depend on informal networks and social media for recruitment, with minimal emphasis on environmental criteria. Some participants disclosed:

We don't advertise ... we largely focus on recommendations, we just call people we know, and they always get us somebody. (P12)

... We mainly use social media like Facebook and Instagram to advertise vacancies but the interviews are in-person ... No, we don't have specific environmental criteria for hiring, though I sometimes bring it up in interviews ... (P6)

Table 3. Summary of specific green HRM practices

HRM practice (main themes)	Emerging hotels (sub-themes)	Established hotels (sub-themes)
Recruitment and Selection	Recruitment through informal networks and social media (e.g. Facebook) In-person interviews, and Limited emphasis on green criteria.	Paperless process recruitment via formal/ official digital platforms (e.g. Pinpoint) Virtual interviews, and Green criteria included.
Training and Development	Informal advisories and occasional guidance/training from regulatory bodies (e.g. National Fire Service and Municipal Assembly)	Annual EarthCheck training; Digital Learning platforms (e.g. GoTo Meeting and Lobster Ink)
Performance Management	Customer service-based performance assessments with minimal integration of green objectives	Environmental compliance goals are integrated into appraisals
Rewards, Recognition, Salary Payments	Fully cashless salary payment system Rewards through unique opportunities (e.g. Participation in international environmental workshops) (<i>non-monetary</i>) Personalised financial support for employees (e.g. rent payments and children's school fees assistance) (<i>Monetary</i>)	Fully electronic and cashless payroll system with facial scanning mechanism for attendance and salary tracking via Sky Bayan app for transparency and accountability Annual Excellence Award Night to celebrate employees' achievements throughout the year and Introduction of a new award category to recognise green champions.
Employee Involvement	Informal Advisories through casual advice on waste management/handling Resource Use Awareness to promote basic environmental consciousness (e.g. water usage) External Collaboration (e.g. Zoomlion for waste disposal)	Appointment of Green Champions from key departments to lead, monitor and promote green initiatives across the organisation in adherence to their environmental commitments Food waste reduction initiatives (e.g. "No Bin Days") Integration of green practices into daily tasks (e.g. prioritisation of document scanning/printing reduction) EarthCheck policy-driven quarterly clean-ups, and Behavioural shift through awareness and acceptance (e.g. from bottled water to water dispensers and reusable water bottles)

Source(s): Field data (2025)

4.2.1.2 Training and development. Employee training and development reflect a substantial difference in Green HRM commitment (Nguyen *et al.*, 2023). Evident from the thematic results, established hotels implement structured training programs, often in collaboration with external organisations such as EarthCheck, focusing on waste management, energy efficiency and eco-friendly operations. These sessions are typically conducted through online platforms like GoTo Meeting and Lobster Ink to reduce paper usage. For instance, a participant stated that:

... We do have EarthCheck trainings every year. Where we create our awareness, and most of our training sessions are virtual. We use GoTo Meeting for global sessions and Lobster Ink for self-learning. We also have in-house training where presentations are projected digitally to avoid printing materials ... (P1)

Emerging hotels, however, rely on informal advisories and occasional guidance, such as the annual fire safety and waste management training by the national regulatory bodies rather than

internally structured training, limiting employee engagement with green initiatives. A participant explained:

... We don't have formal environmental training; we only advise employees. But as I said, whenever the municipal assembly come around, they give us talks about waste management and gas usage and the environment is checked ... (P3)

4.2.1.3 Performance management. Performance evaluation in established hotels incorporates environmental indicators, ensuring that employees' adherence to sustainability policies is assessed. Green targets are part of performance reviews, with incentives linked to sustainability compliance. As highlighted by some participants:

... Our performance evaluation includes an indicator on environmental responsibility and employees are assessed based on their commitment to hotel policies related to sustainability. (P9)

... Performance reviews are done online through our employee portal. Employees who meet green targets receive recognition and, in some cases, financial rewards ... (P1)

In contrast, while regular performance management is carried out at emerging hotels, there is minimal integration of green objectives in their performance evaluations. Quarterly reviews among these hotels largely focus on guest interactions and service delivery, as a participant stated:

... We conduct appraisals every three months based on customer reviews. Employees receive rewards for good customer service, but not necessarily based on sustainability issues ... (P6)

4.2.1.4 Rewards, recognition and salary payments. With rewards and salary administration as an HRM function, it was evident that both emerging and established hotels have implemented some form of mechanism to support green initiatives. Thus, digital payroll systems have been generally implemented to reduce paper waste and green efforts were recognised using structured monetary and non-monetary incentives. For instance, some participants from established hotels explained that:

... For payroll, it's 100% electronic, staff scan their faces for attendance, and payments go directly into their bank accounts. Now we have Sky Bayan app, so they track everything by themselves. That's it, there's no paper involved, no signing in sheets, nothing ... (P9)

We have an end of Annual Excellence Award night where we recognise employees for achievements throughout the year. There will be another award category for the green champions this year ... (P1)

Likewise, a participant from an emerging hotel gave a detailed description:

Salary payments are just bank transfers, here we do cashless ... Recently we celebrated some workers and a couple of them had opportunity to go to Liberia for workshop about environmental something to represent us ... And there was one too, what we did was that we were able to cater for their rents and also one too their child's school fees. So, I think it's a good sign for them. (P6)

4.2.1.5 Employee involvement. Established hotels foster employee participation in sustainability through coordinated initiatives like "green champions", who monitor compliance with environmental policies. Also, green requirements are integrated into employees' job descriptions, and they are encouraged to take ownership of green initiatives, with structured programs such as "No Bin Days", which promote responsible consumption. Some participants indicated that:

It's part of their job descriptions and for some, it's part of their daily checklist ... And, about two months ago, we appointed green champions across departments to oversee our green initiatives. (P9)

... We have clean-up exercises that we do quarterly. We call it EarthCheck cleanup, so employees volunteer from each department come together to clean our environment ... Employees also take part in “No Bin Days”, where waste generation is minimised by ensuring only necessary food portions are taken. (P1)

On the other hand, the emerging hotels’ approach to employee green involvement is primarily informal, relying on casual advisories to encourage responsible waste management. A participant explained:

... We just advise staff to be mindful of wastages. Let’s say that, when they are washing utensils the amount of water they use, hmm. So, we advise that they get a bowl, put the water in there then rinse it in there to minimise the wastage ... We work with ZoomLion (sanitation company), and they take care of our physical wastes. (P6)

4.2.2 Contribution of Green HRM to SDGs. Prior studies (e.g. [Berrone et al., 2023](#)) argue that the corporate sustainability debate is evolving, and organisations need to shift their focus from mere sustainability objectives to actively contributing to the SDGs. This shift challenges organisations to design and implement business systems that address pressing global sustainability issues ([Mahajan et al., 2024](#)). In Ghana’s star-rated hotels, the analysis of Green HRM practices highlights a positive link between these initiatives and the achievement of SDGs. Key themes, including water conservation (SDG 6), responsible consumption (SDG 12), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), as well as sustainable communities (SDG 11), illustrate how these hotels manage resources in line with global sustainability objectives. For instance, water conservation strategies like automated faucets and leak detection directly support SDG 6, while waste segregation and recycling align with SDG 12. Similarly, energy-saving measures, such as LED lighting and energy recovery systems, correspond to SDG 7 by promoting affordable and clean energy. Furthermore, higher levels of employee engagement foster a culture of sustainability that reinforces SDG 11. These interconnections demonstrate that when hotels focus on specific initiatives, they do not only reduce waste and improve efficiency but also contribute substantially to broader sustainability goals, thereby aligning with the achievement of specific SDGs. [Table 4](#) elucidates these initiatives, providing exemplary quotations from participants linked to the relevant SDGs, and proposes concrete, SDG-relevant operational outcomes as the basis for follow-up quantitative measurement protocols (pre/post utility monitoring, waste-diversion audits and partner reports).

Moreover, [Table 5](#) synthesises how specific Green HRM functions translate into tangible sustainability outcomes by linking four analytic layers: (1) the HRM practice (e.g. green recruitment, training, performance management, rewards, employee involvement), (2) the enabling infrastructure (e.g. digital recruitment platforms, e-learning systems, automated water/energy controls, waste-processing partnerships), (3) the behavioural and organisational mechanism through which change occurs (skills development, accountability via KPIs, habit formation, internalisation of green norms) and (4) the expected/observed operational and SDG-related outcomes (e.g. reduced water and energy use, improved waste diversion). Framed by NRBV, the table demonstrates that HRM practices act as strategic capabilities that mobilise physical assets into sustained environmental performance. For example, digital recruitment and virtual interviews reduce paper use and attract eco-aware candidates, while integrated e-learning and EarthCheck training build competencies that enable efficient use of automated systems. Similarly, appliance-level infrastructure, such as kitchen regulators, converts training into measurable water savings and partnerships for food-waste composting operationalise reward and involvement schemes into sustainable outcomes. The mapping table, therefore, clarifies causal chains from HRM → infrastructure → mechanism → outcome and provides empirical exemplars that make visible how Green HRM interventions unlock the environmental value embedded in technical investments.

Table 4. Contribution of green HRM to SDGs

Specific initiatives	Exemplary quotations	Relevant SDG	Proposed concrete SDG-relevant outcomes for quantitative tracking/ Exploits
Health screenings and regular environmental clean-up activities	<i>“... Our hotel has a program over here that we are doing with one of the private hospitals. We go in for free health screening for the employees and the community ...” (P4)</i> <i>“... We are trying to better our environment. So we have this clean-up exercises that we do quarterly. We call it EarthCheck cleanup, so employees volunteer from each department to come together to clean our environment ...” (P1)</i>	SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	Community health and environmental hygiene indicators: number of people screened; volunteer hours; tonnes of litter removed; reduction in local disease/ complaint incidents
Scholarships, on-the-job training, and online courses to enhance environmental knowledge	<i>“... OK, for me in particular that was one of the major things my grandfather was doing ... Yeah. Although he hasn't registered it, but he has some people you know, he pays some school fees for so that they get education, a good education ... Yes, it's part of the hotel's charity works ...” (P3)</i> <i>“... So whiles on the job, what we try to do is because of the online courses that are made available, we try to enroll them to make them more acquainted to their line of work and environmental issues ...” (P2)</i>	SDG 4: Quality Education	Learning and capacity metrics: training hours per employee; % staff completing sustainability modules; competency pass-rates; retention of trained staff
Equal employment opportunities to balance representation in traditionally gendered roles	<i>“... We ensure that because of the kind of field we found ourselves, it is assumable that only the female staffs that are well treated possibly because of their friendliness or how people just see them, I don't know ... So what we try to do is to balance that out by ensuring that the females are not treated with any formal specialty ... Thus, we have them handling the same job as men, so everybody is on the same plane doing the same thing, not for any gender bias or anything ... OK, so for instance, most of the times when you visit other hotels, you'll see that the ratio of the housekeepers with regards to females is higher than the men ... So you see, possibly if they have 10 housekeepers, they might have like 8 females and just 2 males ... But here we don't try to do that ...” (P2)</i>	SDG 5: Gender Equality	Workforce composition and career progression metrics: gender ratios by role; % female in technical/ management posts; pay-gap measures; improved retention (social KPI)

(continued)

Table 4. Continued

Specific initiatives	Exemplary quotations	Relevant SDG	Proposed concrete SDG-relevant outcomes for quantitative tracking/ Exploits
Water conservation strategies: leak detection, automated faucets, staff education	“... We educate staff to report leakages, and we are looking at the irrigation system like I told you ...” (P5) “... So you are cautious enough to prompt someone that, hey, you’re wasting water and that is not responsible consumption, because we made them aware that our utilities are going high and the only way to conserve it is to make sure that we are cutting down on these waste stages ...” (P1) “... and then with regards to water for kitchen it has a mini regulator ... So for instance, if you are not standing by it for more than one minute, it goes off by itself ...” (P2)	SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	Water metrics: m ³ water saved per month; number of leak incidents reported and repaired; % of taps automated; irrigation m ³ reduction; guest linen/cleaning frequency reductions
Adoption of energy-efficient technologies such as LED lighting and energy recovery systems	“... Then for Goal 7 affordable and clean energy, currently we have over 70% of our bulbs being energy efficient LED bulbs. I forgot to mention we have an energy recovery system from our chillers. So, the water that comes from the chillers is warm, so we channel it to the boiler, and it’s preheated, and it reduces our energy consumption instead of dumping it away ...” (P5) “... You know, maybe 10 years ago they would recommend that you have a green energy policy but now it’s a requirement, so you have to have it, and it’s also something that is communicated to our guests ...” (P9) “... for the electricity we have an automated system for that already. The moment, you are out of the room, it goes off automatically ...” (P6)	SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	Energy metrics: kWh saved per month; % of lighting converted to LED; recovered heat energy (kWh) reused; peak demand reduction; % rooms with automated controls
Urban clean-up programs and comprehensive waste management like waste segregation, e-waste recycling, etc	“... Relating to Goal 11 making cities and settlements inclusive, safe, and resilient. We do it through our waste segregation program and we also do e-waste recycling. That’s also a project I’m working on, we separate our tonners and cartridges, LED waste bulbs, old appliances ...” (P5) “... We have clean-up exercises that we do quarterly. We call it EarthCheck cleanup, so employees volunteer from each department come together to clean our environment ...” (P1)	SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	Waste and community metrics: tonnes of waste collected in cleanups; % of waste segregated at source; tonnes of e-waste recycled; neighbourhood participation rates

(continued)

Table 4. Continued

Specific initiatives	Exemplary quotations	Relevant SDG	Proposed concrete SDG-relevant outcomes for quantitative tracking/ Exploits
Resource efficiency objectives capturing; water and food conservation, waste segregation, food composting, and recycling initiatives	“... So line with that we have an ISO team which got trained in internal auditing, we set resource efficiency objectives for water conservation, energy conservation, waste management ...” (P9) “... we have a company that we partner with that comes to take our food waste and put it into compost and fertilizers to help the small and medium scale farmers ...” (P1) “... So you are cautious enough to prompt someone that, hey, you’re wasting water and that is not responsible consumption ...” (P1) “... So basically you make sure you take what you can eat because there’s no bin to dispose of what’s leftover ...” (P9) “... The only thing that we have on that seems to be on that part is recycling of our plastic bottles ...” (P2)	SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	Resource diversion metrics: tonnes of food waste composted per month; % food diverted from landfill; % recyclable materials recovered; reductions in food cost/waste ratio
Collaborations with external organisations and environmental conservation groups	“... We are the corporate sponsors of the Ghana Wildlife Society, so we have branded the billboard on their premises for this endangered bird and on our hotel premises to we have branded the fence wall with conservation information about this bird ...” (P5) “... Our hotel has a program over here that we are doing with one of the private hospitals. We go in for free health screening for the employees and the community ...” (P4) “... People come for the plastic things, and then they’re turning some into bags, they’re doing slippers. They’re doing, you know, they’re turning into some very innovative products. Uh, and which also helps. So we’re also helping UM, some of the SMEs to be able to, you know, produce some of these things ...” (P9) “... we have a company that we partner with that comes to take our food waste and put it into compost and fertilizers to help the small and medium scale farmers ...” (P1)	SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals	Partnership and multiplier metrics: number of active partnerships; tonnes of waste managed through partners; number of community beneficiaries; new products created from recycled materials (value to SMEs)

Source(s): Field data (2025)

4.3 Challenges faced in the implementation of green HRM practices

The integration of Green HRM in Ghana’s star-rated hotels faces a complex interplay of challenges spanning waste management, financial constraints, employee resistance and communication delays. Waste management remains a persistent issue, as hotels struggle to

Table 5. Mapping operational outcomes as KPIs for future measurement

HRM practice	Infrastructure example	How HRM enables/ Mechanism	Expected/Observed outcome	Exemplary quotation
Recruitment and Selection	Hiring based on green criteria; digital job portals	Prioritise candidates with green credentials; paperless hiring signals the organisation's green commitment	Attraction and selection of eco-conscious and digital-literate employees; reduced onboarding time for digital/technical systems	<i>"We do our job posting on our job portal called Pinpoint ... virtual interview ..."</i> (P1)
Training and Development	Automation (taps, chillers), energy systems Digitalisation (Paperless HRM systems, facial scan clocks)	Formal Training, e-learning & EarthCheck routine checks ensure correct operation/usage and preventative maintenance Reduce paper waste; free staff time for system checks; increase data for monitoring	Fewer faults; Substantial energy/ water savings; reduced operational costs Lower paper consumption; streamlined admin; better data for audits	<i>"Most of our training sessions are virtual ... we do have EarthCheck trainings every year."</i> (P1) <i>"Over 70% of our bulbs are LED ... we have an energy recovery system from our chillers."</i> (P5) <i>"Kitchen has a mini regulator ... it goes off by itself ..."</i> (P2) <i>"Payroll is 100% electronic ... staff clock in with their facial scanning ... no paper involved."</i> (P9)
Performance Management	Automated meters/system dashboards	Integrate environmental KPIs into appraisals; monitor adherence to procedures	Staff accountability; measurable reductions in resource use	<i>"Our performance evaluation includes an indicator on environmental responsibility ..."</i> (P9)
Rewards, Recognition, Salary Payments	Infrastructure efficiency targets	Link incentives to technical performance (e.g. reduced consumption) to motivate correct use	Higher compliance; peer modelling of pro-environmental behaviour	<i>"Recently we celebrated some workers and a couple of them had opportunity to go to Liberia for workshop about environmental something to represent us."</i> (P6) <i>"We appointed green champions across departments to oversee our green initiatives."</i> (P9) <i>There will be another award category for the green champions this year ...</i> (P1)

(continued)

Table 5. Continued

HRM practice	Infrastructure example	How HRM enables/ Mechanism	Expected/Observed outcome	Exemplary quotation
Employee Involvement	On-site automated equipment and recycling streams Composting partners: arranged pickups	Champions monitor systems, run “no bin” days, mobilise staff to follow procedures Embeds routines and staff training to segregate and liaise with contractors	Improved segregation, correct use of automation, stronger ownership Improved diversion to compost/recycling	<i>“We appointed green champions . . . they are championing all our green initiatives.” (P9)</i> <i>“Employees also take part in ‘No Bin Days’, where waste generation is minimised by ensuring only necessary food portions are taken . . . We have a company that we partner with that comes to take our food waste and put it into compost and fertilizers to help the small and medium scale farmers” (P1)</i>

Source(s): Field data (2025)

segregate waste at the source and secure reliable recycling partners; established hotels contend with logistical complexities, while emerging hotels often lack in-house infrastructure and rely on external contractors like Zoomlion. Financial constraints further impede progress, with the high costs of sustainable infrastructure, such as automated irrigation systems and sustainability certifications like EarthCheck, delaying implementation. Additionally, employee resistance, especially among long-serving staff accustomed to traditional practices, hinders the shift toward sustainable alternatives, necessitating gradual change management and retraining. Communication delays compound these challenges, as inefficient dissemination of policy updates creates operational bottlenecks. Collectively, these barriers illustrate the multifaceted difficulties in aligning internal and external resources for effective Green HRM implementation in the hospitality sector (Tanveer et al., 2024). Table 6 explicates these challenges with exemplary quotations from the participants.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the multifaceted nature of Green HRM adoption in Ghana’s star-rated hotels, driven by a combination of external pressures, internal motivations and global imperatives. This aligns with Hart’s (1995) NRBV theory, which emphasises that organisations gain a sustainable competitive advantage by leveraging internal capabilities to address environmental challenges. Evidentially, external pressures, including regulatory compliance, customer expectations and brand positioning, play a crucial role in compelling hotels to integrate sustainability initiatives (Shafaei et al., 2020). Regulatory bodies such as the EPA set minimum environmental standards that emerging hotels must adhere to, while established hotels go beyond these requirements to seek global certifications, such as EarthCheck, to enhance their market positioning and maintain international credibility (Ma et al., 2021). Internal motivations also drive Green HRM adoption, particularly through cost-saving initiatives and operational efficiency. Established hotels invest in automated energy and

Table 6. Synthesis of identified implementation challenges

S/ N	Challenges	Exemplary quotations	Summary of findings
I	Waste Management	“... So that is one bit the other bits relating to waste management, the segregation at source has been a challenge ...” (P5) “... Finding those who’ll come for specific things, you know, like the oil, like coming for the paper, the cardboards, you really need to struggle in finding ohm companies that could come and do this and of course not just that but also committing to the regular pickups of it. If not, you end up having to keep these things for a long time and they are not coming. They’re not coming for it, so that was the challenge externally. That was the channel challenge ...” (P9) “... And the wastes too we have a company that comes for it, I’ve forgotten of the company’s name ...” (P4) “... Yeah, you have to gather all of the litter you dispose it. You know we work with Zoom Lion and they are the people who come to take the waste away. So in the nutshell that’s how it’s done here ...” (P3)	Established hotels face waste management challenges with logistical complexities and inconsistent pickups while emerging hotels struggle with limited infrastructure (e.g. in-house segregation) and heavy reliance on external contractors
II	Financial and Resource Constraints	“... For the irrigation bit, the general manager bought into it and all of that. But the cost came to about over 200,000 Cedis, then we’re told that we had to wait for a while ...” (P5) “... We’re also audited, so with Earth Check, for example, they come and audit us. Now we are on silver and we are planning on getting gold which comes with a lot more commitment and a lot more investment on our side ...” (P9)	Established hotels struggle with financial constraints due to high costs of sustainability infrastructure and certifications, while emerging hotels, still in early Green HRM adoption, avoid major financial burdens by limiting large-scale investments
III	Employee Resistance	“... Change is a very hard thing when somebody has been using papers for longer years and all of a sudden, you’re telling the person that you don’t want them to use paper again. We need to go paperless, but it becomes very difficult to do that, so unless you just do it gradually, that’s even with a little strictness ...” (P2) “... Yeah, at first we had a lot of resistance in the beginning, people said “I don’t want the water bottle dispensers if they’re not clean, can be very damaging”, but then now everybody is realizing that, hey, it’s not so bad having a water bottle ...” (P1) “... Getting the staff to put in the right thing, especially in the kitchen, in other areas, it’s better, but then in the kitchen, especially because you know what they are used to, they just wanna put the fruits and plastics in one bin, you know ...” (P5)	Established hotels encounter employee resistance to transitioning from traditional to sustainable practices, particularly among long-serving staff, while emerging hotels face similar challenges due to limited awareness and ingrained work habits

(continued)

Table 6. Continued

S/ N	Challenges	Exemplary quotations	Summary of findings
IV	Communication Delays	<i>“... So you see, the memo is being passed to each of the departmental heads to be passed across the people that are under them, but what we found out was that the delay in communication becomes a little bit of a challenge because some of those memos might be instantaneous ...” (P6)</i>	More dominant among the emerging hotels due to less structured communication channels, delays in relaying policy updates hinder sustainability implementation, causing inefficiencies

Source(s): Field data (2025)

water conservation systems to reduce utility costs and improve sustainability outcomes, consistent with prior studies (e.g. [Minoja and Romano, 2021](#)). Conversely, emerging hotels face financial constraints that limit their ability to adopt similar sustainability measures, reinforcing the challenges associated with resource scarcity in developing economies ([Tanveer et al., 2024](#)). Leadership commitment further plays a pivotal role, as managers in established hotels actively promote a sustainability-oriented culture, embedding environmental initiatives into daily operations, as supported by [Nguyen et al. \(2023\)](#).

The study also identifies key Green HRM initiatives spanning recruitment, training, performance management, rewards and employee engagement. In recruitment, established hotels utilise structured digital platforms and prioritise candidates with environmental credentials, whereas emerging hotels rely on informal social media channels with limited sustainability considerations ([Karatepe et al., 2022](#)). Training practices in established hotels include comprehensive digital sustainability programs, such as EarthCheck certification and virtual learning platforms like GoTo Meeting and Lobster Ink, fostering continuous employee engagement with green initiatives ([Tang et al., 2017](#)). In contrast, emerging hotels conduct occasional training during municipal inspections, lacking formal sustainability education. Performance management practices further reflect this disparity. Established hotels integrate environmental targets into employee evaluations, linking sustainability performance to incentives and rewards, whereas emerging hotels primarily assess employees based on customer service performance ([Suleman et al., 2022](#)). Employee involvement is also more structured in established hotels, where initiatives such as “Green Teams” and designated “Green Champions” encourage active participation in sustainability efforts. Emerging hotels, however, depend more on external sanitation providers like Zoomlion for waste management rather than fostering internal ownership of green initiatives.

The findings also underscore the role of global imperatives, particularly the SDGs, in guiding Green HRM practices. Hotels align their sustainability initiatives with SDGs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12 through initiatives like free health screenings, community clean-up activities, e-ecological learning, gender-balance representation of roles, water conservation, energy efficiency, waste management programs and external partnerships. This strategic alignment not only enhances operational efficiency but also positions hotels as leaders in sustainable hospitality, echoing the global trends highlighted by [Mahajan et al. \(2024\)](#). However, the data reveal that employee resistance remains a significant barrier, with long-serving staff often reluctant to abandon traditional practices. This aligns with [Marrucci et al. \(2023\)](#), who emphasise the importance of change management and continuous training in fostering a sustainability-driven workforce. Additionally, the study reveals persistent challenges in waste management, with both emerging and established hotels struggling with waste segregation and recycling. Established hotels face logistical hurdles in securing reliable waste collection services, while emerging hotels’ reliance on external sanitation providers reduces their ability to control waste management processes ([Nguyen et al., 2023](#)). Communication inefficiencies

further hinder the implementation of Green HRM policies, as delays in disseminating sustainability directives impede timely action.

5.1 Theoretical contributions

This study makes key theoretical contributions to the discourse on Green HRM and sustainability in the hospitality industry by advancing the application of the NRBV theory (Hart, 1995). First, this study is one of the first to empirically explore the antecedents of Green HRM within the industry by comparing insights from both emerging and established star-rated hotels. This extends the NRBV theory by demonstrating how internal capabilities, external pressures and global imperatives drive sustainability practices. The findings reinforce Hart's (1995) argument that sustainable competitive advantage is achieved by strategically managing valuable resources in response to environmental constraints. This study validates that Green HRM functions serve as mechanisms for integrating sustainability into hotel operations, positioning Green HRM as a strategic enabler for achieving long-term environmental, social and economic sustainability (Marrucci *et al.*, 2023; Suleman *et al.*, 2024).

Moreover, the findings demonstrate how Green HRM functions contribute to the three strategic capabilities outlined by the NRBV: pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development (Anaman *et al.*, 2023; Hart, 1995). Pollution prevention was evident in hotels' efforts to adopt energy-saving technologies, waste segregation systems and employee training to reduce operational inefficiencies and environmental harm. Product stewardship emerged through practices that integrate stakeholder expectations, particularly feedback from environmentally conscious guests, into HRM policies, service design and sustainability certifications. Likewise, sustainable development was reflected in long-term cultural commitments such as "No Dustbin Day", digital eco-certifications and community-oriented programs like free health screenings. These initiatives illustrate how hotels embed environmental values into their identity and strategic goals, supporting Hart's (1995) call for continuous innovation and environmental foresight. For instance, the energy-management scholarship demonstrates that technical investments, automation, energy management systems and ISO style standards deliver measurable efficiency gains but do not guarantee sustained performance unless embedded within complementary organisational practices (Mills and Paik, 2012; Valencia *et al.*, 2020). This insight invites a socio-technical perspective in which Green HRM operates as the behavioural and institutional bridge that converts installed infrastructure into durable environmental outcomes. Green HRM through targeted recruitment, training, performance metrics, incentives and employee engagement shapes how staff operate, maintain and optimise technologies (e.g. automated taps, LED systems, chillers), thereby enhancing the realised returns of capital investments. Framing Green HRM as an enabler of infrastructure effectiveness aligns with the NRBV framework, which treats organisational capabilities (including human practices) as strategic resources that leverage physical assets for pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development (Hart, 1995). Our findings, therefore, position Green HRM not as an alternative to technical investment but as an essential complement that sustains, amplifies and routinises infrastructure gains.

Furthermore, this is a premier study that offers a qualitative perspective on how Green HRM practices align with and contribute to the achievement of relevant SDGs. While existing Green HRM literature is dominated by quantitative analyses (Suleman *et al.*, 2025), our qualitative approach reveals the practical, context-specific dynamics of Green HRM adoption, shedding light on hotel managers' experiences as they navigate sustainability challenges. This provides a richer understanding of the operational realities shaping Green HRM practices. Our findings demonstrate how strategic Green HRM practices directly contribute to relevant SDGs. By linking Green HRM initiatives with global sustainability objectives, this study positions Green HRM as an essential driver of corporate social responsibility and environmental stewardship within the industry.

Finally, this study addresses a critical gap in the Green HRM literature by presenting empirical insights from a developing economy. While much existing research on Green HRM has focused on developed regions (Bahuguna *et al.*, 2023), its adoption in developing countries, such as Ghana, remains underexplored. By examining how hotels in Ghana navigate Green HRM implementation amidst financial constraints, regulatory pressures and cultural resistance, this study provides a nuanced understanding of factors influencing sustainability strategies in emerging economies.

Having said the above, this study advances the theoretical understanding of Green HRM by demonstrating its role as a strategic enabler of sustainability within the hospitality industry. It expands the application of the NRBV theory beyond traditional industries, offering a hospitality-specific perspective on how organisations can harness Green HRM to gain a sustainable competitive advantage. The findings highlight the evolving role of HRM in facilitating corporate environmental responsibility, positioning Green HRM as a core component of sustainability-driven business strategy in the hospitality industry.

5.2 Practical implications

This study offers significant and valuable practical implications for managers and practitioners seeking to enhance sustainability through Green HRM practices in the hospitality industry. The findings substantiate that emerging and established hotels face unique challenges and opportunities on their journey towards sustainability, suggesting tailored approaches for each. First, hotels should design HRM mechanisms that compensate for the temporality of their workforce, through initiatives such as short-cycle incentives, team-level rewards and institutionalised Green Champions to translate transient engagement into sustained operational outcomes (Renwick *et al.*, 2016; Tang *et al.*, 2017). Digital HRM tools (paperless recruitment, e-learning platforms, automated performance dashboards) support continuity by preserving institutional memory and enabling rapid redistribution of training content to new hires (Shafaei and Nejati, 2023). Framed by NRBV logic, these human-centred practices act as complementary capabilities that convert infrastructural investments (e.g. automated taps, LED retrofits, ISO-style systems) into enduring environmental gains: recruitment, training and incentive systems make employees the behavioural bridge that realises the *ex ante* promises of technical solutions (Hart, 1995; Mills and Young Paik, 2012). For emerging hotels, constrained by limited resources, a targeted approach is crucial. This can be done by starting with affordable steps like basic waste segregation, sustainability advisories and environmental training. Also, leveraging partnerships with external organisations (e.g. EPA) can provide expertise and support to build capacity. Therefore, these hotels should gradually formalise Green HRM practices to transform short-term measures into sustainable strategies. Established hotels, on the other hand, should continue investing in advanced systems that optimise resource efficiency. By expanding digital tools, like automated HRM platforms that streamline recruitment, performance evaluations and payroll processing, these hotels can further reduce costs and waste. They should also broaden their sustainability scope by exploring initiatives like biodiversity programs and renewable energy projects, enhancing alignment with international sustainability standards and global SDGs.

Moreover, HRM practitioners in the hospitality industry should adopt a multi-faceted, metrics-driven approach to sustainability implementation. This can begin with transitioning to digital recruitment and onboarding processes to reduce paper usage, while also prioritising environmentally conscious candidates. To ensure accountability and enable evidence-based decision-making, organisations should specify clear green key performance indicators (KPIs), such as metered electricity consumption (kWh), water usage (m³), and the percentage of waste diverted from landfill to quantify the HRM-mediated effects of Green HRM initiatives. These indicators should be embedded into employee performance appraisal systems and monitored through time-series measurements to assess the magnitude and timing of environmental

improvements following HRM interventions. In addition, regular training delivered via e-learning platforms can institutionalise green competencies and reinforce pro-environmental norms. Recognising and rewarding measurable green achievements, alongside employee-led initiatives such as Green Champions, team-based sustainability campaigns, and programmes like “No Dustbin Days”, can further empower employees to take ownership of sustainability goals and sustain behavioural change over time.

To conclude, policymakers can support the aforementioned initiatives by offering financial incentives like tax breaks or subsidies to encourage investments in sustainable infrastructure. As such, regulatory bodies can mandate sustainability training and encourage the development of internal waste management and energy-efficient systems. This is important because this approach of combining strategic internal practices with supportive external policies ensures hotels reduce their environmental footprint and enhance long-term competitiveness in an eco-conscious market.

5.3 Limitations and future research directions

Notwithstanding this study’s contributions, it has some limitations that point to fruitful avenues for future studies. First, the geographic focus on emerging and established star-rated hotels in Ghana constrains generalisability to other sub-sectors, countries and institutional contexts; comparative research that contrasts hotels in developing and developed economies would clarify how resource endowments and regulatory regimes shape Green HRM. Second, the cross-sectional, qualitative design yields rich, contextualised insights but lacks statistical generalisability and the ability to track change over time; longitudinal and mixed-methods studies are therefore necessary to capture evolution and causality. Third, our sample privileges managerial perspectives, which is valuable for understanding the strategic intent of policy implementations but omits frontline staff whose daily practices determine many environmental outcomes; future work should incorporate employee voices to obtain a fuller, multilevel picture. We also acknowledge possible heterogeneity arising from managers’ experience and hotel maturity, which may influence reported practices and thus merit systematic examination. To address these gaps, we propose concrete next steps: (1) deploy mixed-methods protocols that combine interviews with objective environmental metrics; (2) specify KPIs, including metered kWh, m³ water consumption and percentage waste diverted to quantify HRM-mediated effects; and (3) design time-series measurements to assess the magnitude and timing of impacts following HRM interventions. By triangulating qualitative narratives with hard performance data and broader samples, future research can validate causal pathways, refine theory and offer a more robust, actionable guidance for policy and practice.

Supplementary material

The supplementary material for this article can be found online.

References

- Aboramadan, M. and Karatepe, O.M. (2021), “Green human resource management, perceived green organizational support and their effects on hotel employees’ behavioral outcomes”, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 33 No. 10, pp. 3199-3222, doi: [10.1108/IJCHM-12-2020-1440](https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-12-2020-1440).
- Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality (2018), “Ghana’s waste sector – a view from the ground”, available at: <https://www.responsibletourismpartnership.org/ghanas-waste-sector-a-view-from-the-ground>
- Anaman, P.D., Ahmed, I.A., Suleman, A.-R. and Dzakah, G.A. (2023), “Environmentally sustainable business practices in micro, small, and medium enterprises: a sub-saharan African country perspective”, *Business Perspectives and Research*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 175-190, doi: [10.1177/22785337231162740](https://doi.org/10.1177/22785337231162740).

- Bahuguna, P.C., Srivastava, R. and Tiwari, S. (2023), "Two-decade journey of green human resource management research: a bibliometric analysis", *Benchmarking: An International Journal/Benchmarking*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 585-602, doi: [10.1108/BIJ-10-2021-0619](https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-10-2021-0619).
- Barney, J. (1991), "Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 99-120, doi: [10.1177/014920639101700108](https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108).
- Berrone, P., Rousseau, H.E., Ricart, J.E., Brito, E. and Giuliadori, A. (2023), "How can research contribute to the implementation of sustainable development goals? An interpretive review of SDG literature in management", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 318-339, doi: [10.1111/ijmr.12331](https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12331).
- Bertaux, D. (1981), *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences*, Sage, London, (Vol. 23).
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2021a), "Can I use TA? Should I use TA? Should I not use TA? Comparing reflexive thematic analysis and other pattern-based qualitative analytic approaches", *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp. 37-47, doi: [10.1002/capr.12360](https://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12360).
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2021b), "To saturate or not to saturate? Questioning data saturation as a useful concept for thematic analysis and sample-size rationales", *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 201-216, doi: [10.1080/2159676x.2019.1704846](https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676x.2019.1704846).
- Caldera, H.T.S., Desha, C. and Dawes, L. (2018), "Exploring the characteristics of sustainable business practice in small and medium-sized enterprises: experiences from the Australian manufacturing industry", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 177, pp. 338-349, doi: [10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.12.265](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.12.265).
- Chams, N. and García-Blandón, J. (2019), "On the importance of sustainable human resource management for the adoption of sustainable development goals", *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, Vol. 141, pp. 109-122, doi: [10.1016/j.resconrec.2018.10.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2018.10.006).
- Clarke, V. and Braun, V. (2017), "Thematic analysis", *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, Vol. 12 No. 3, pp. 297-298.
- Creswel, J.W. (2009), *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Los Angeles.
- Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. (2017), *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Sage Publications, California.
- Graham, S., Cadden, T. and Treacy, R. (2023), "Examining the influence of employee engagement in supporting the implementation of green supply chain management practices: a green human resource management perspective", *Business Strategy and the Environment*, Vol. 32 No. 7, pp. 1-17, doi: [10.1002/bse.3391](https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.3391).
- Guerci, M., Longoni, A. and Luzzini, D. (2016), "Translating stakeholder pressures into environmental performance – the mediating role of green HRM practices", *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 262-289, doi: [10.1080/09585192.2015.1065431](https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2015.1065431).
- Hart, S.L. (1995), "A natural-resource-based view of the firm", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 986-1014, doi: [10.2307/258963](https://doi.org/10.2307/258963).
- Jabbour, C.J.C. (2015), "Environmental training and environmental management maturity of Brazilian companies with ISO14001: empirical evidence", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 96, pp. 331-338, doi: [10.1016/j.jclepro.2013.10.039](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2013.10.039).
- Karatepe, O.M., Hsieh, H. and Aboramadan, M. (2022), "The effects of green human resource management and perceived organizational support for the environment on green and non-green hotel employee outcomes", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 103, 103202, doi: [10.1016/j.ijhm.2022.103202](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2022.103202).
- Koiwanit, J. and Filimonau, V. (2025), "'wasting food is normal!': how food waste can become the (new) norm in casual dining restaurants", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, Vol. 62, pp. 1-13, doi: [10.1016/j.jhtm.2024.12.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2024.12.006).
- Ma, Y., Liu, Y., Appolloni, A. and Liu, J. (2021), "Does green public procurement encourage firm's environmental certification practice? The mediation role of top management support", *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 1002-1017, doi: [10.1002/csr.2101](https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2101).

- Mahajan, R., Kumar, S., Lim, W.M. and Sareen, M. (2024), "The role of business and management in driving the sustainable development goals (SDGs): current insights and future directions from a systematic review", *Business Strategy and the Environment*, Vol. 33 No. 5, pp. 4493-4529, doi: [10.1002/bse.3712](https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.3712).
- Marrucci, L., Daddi, T. and Iraldo, F. (2023), "Institutional and stakeholder pressures on organisational performance and green human resources management", *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Vol. 30 No. 1, pp. 324-341, doi: [10.1002/csr.2357](https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2357).
- Mensah, I. (2020), "Waste management practices of small hotels in accra: an application of the waste management hierarchy model", *Journal of Global Business Insights*, Vol. 5 No. 1, pp. 33-46, doi: [10.5038/2640-6489.5.1.1081](https://doi.org/10.5038/2640-6489.5.1.1081).
- Mills, K. and Paik, Y. (2012), *ISO 50001: How Manufacturers Manage Energy*, Material Handling & Logistics, available at: <https://www.mhlnews.com/facilities-management/article/22040020/iso-50001-how-manufacturers-manage-energy>
- Minoja, M. and Romano, G. (2021), "Managing intellectual capital for sustainability: evidence from a Re-municipalized, publicly owned waste management firm", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 279, 123213, doi: [10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.123213](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.123213).
- Mousa, S.K. and Othman, M. (2020), "The impact of green human resource management practices on sustainable performance in healthcare organisations: a conceptual framework", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 243 No. 1, pp. 181-195, doi: [10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.118595](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.118595).
- Muisyo, P.K., Su, Q., Julius, M.M. and Hossain, S.F.A. (2023), "GHRM and employer branding: empirical study in developing and developed economies", *Management Research Review*, Vol. 46 No. 10, pp. 1297-1314, doi: [10.1108/MRR-04-2022-0280](https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-04-2022-0280).
- Napathorn, C. (2022), "The development of green skills across firms in the institutional context of Thailand", *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 539-572, doi: [10.1108/APJBA-10-2020-0370](https://doi.org/10.1108/APJBA-10-2020-0370).
- Nguyen, T.N., Rowley, C., McLean, G.N., Nguyen, H.T.T. and Nguyen, T.X. (2023), "Top management support, green training and organization's environmental performance: the electric power sector in Vietnam", *Asia Pacific Business Review*, pp. 1-17, doi: [10.1080/13602381.2022.2162267](https://doi.org/10.1080/13602381.2022.2162267).
- Opatha, H.H.D.N.P. and Arulrajah, A.A. (2014), "Green human resource management: simplified general reflections", *International Business Research*, Vol. 7 No. 8, pp. 101-112, doi: [10.5539/ibr.v7n8p101](https://doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v7n8p101).
- Paulet, R., Holland, P. and Morgan, D. (2021), "A meta-review of 10 years of green human resource management: is green HRM headed towards a roadblock or a revitalisation?", *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, Vol. 59 No. 2, pp. 159-183, doi: [10.1111/1744-7941.12285](https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12285).
- Renwick, D.W.S., Redman, T. and Maguire, S. (2013), "Green human resource management: a review and research agenda", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 1-14, doi: [10.1111/j.1468-2370.2011.00328.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2011.00328.x).
- Renwick, D.W.S., Jabbour, C.J.C., Muller-Camen, M., Redman, T. and Wilkinson, A. (2016), "Contemporary developments in green (environmental) HRM scholarship", *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 114-128, doi: [10.1080/09585192.2015.1105844](https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2015.1105844).
- Sathasivam, K., Islam, M.A., Bakar, R.A. and Hashim, R.C. (2024), "Implementing green HRM practices in an emerging country: insights from managerial and nonmanagerial employees across various industries", *Business Strategy and Development*, Vol. 7 No. 3, e404, doi: [10.1002/bsd2.404](https://doi.org/10.1002/bsd2.404).
- Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., Burroughs, H. and Jinks, C. (2018), "Saturation in qualitative research: exploring its conceptualization and operationalization", *Quality and Quantity*, Vol. 52 No. 4, pp. 1893-1907, doi: [10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8).
- Shafaei, A. and Nejati, M. (2023), "Green human resource management and employee innovative behaviour: does inclusive leadership play a role?", *Personnel Review*, Vol. 53 No. 1, pp. 266-287, doi: [10.1108/PR-04-2021-0239](https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-04-2021-0239).

- Shafaei, A., Nejati, M. and Mohd Yusoff, Y. (2020), "Green human resource management: a two-study investigation of antecedents and outcomes", *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol. 41 No. 7, pp. 1041-1060, doi: [10.1108/IJM-08-2019-0406](https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-08-2019-0406).
- Suleman, A.-R., Amponsah-Tawiah, K., Adu, I.N. and Boakye, K.O. (2022), "The curious case of green human resource management practices in the Ghanaian manufacturing industry; a reality or a mirage?", *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*, Vol. 33 No. 3, pp. 739-755, doi: [10.1108/MEQ-12-2021-0269](https://doi.org/10.1108/MEQ-12-2021-0269).
- Suleman, A.R., Amponsah-Tawiah, K. and Ametorwo, A.M. (2023), "The role of employee environmental commitment in the green HRM practices, turnover intentions and environmental sustainability nexus", *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, Vol. 31 No. 9, pp. 3055-3078, doi: [10.1108/BIJ-06-2022-0393](https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-06-2022-0393).
- Suleman, A.R., Kyei-Frimpong, M. and Akwetey-Siaw, B. (2024), "The role of green innovation in the relationship between green HRM practices and sustainable business performance; evidence from the mining industry", *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, Vol. 16 No. 5, pp. 1112-1131, doi: [10.1108/APJBA-09-2023-0471](https://doi.org/10.1108/APJBA-09-2023-0471).
- Suleman, A.-R., Nejati, M., Shafaei, A. and Redmond, J. (2025), "Green human resource management practices in the hospitality and tourism industry: an integrative multilevel systematic review", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, Vol. 62, pp. 46-56, doi: [10.1016/j.jhtm.2024.12.009](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2024.12.009).
- Tang, G., Chen, Y., Jiang, Y., Paillé, P. and Jia, J. (2017), "Green human resource management practices: scale development and validity", *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, Vol. 56 No. 1, pp. 31-55, doi: [10.1111/1744-7941.12147](https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12147).
- Tanveer, M.I., Yusoff, Y.M., Ngah, A.H. and Khan, M.A.K. (2023), "Mapping the link between CSR and sustainability performance through GHRM practices in hotel industry", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 429, 139258, doi: [10.1016/j.jclepro.2023.139258](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2023.139258).
- Tanveer, M.I., Yusliza, M.Y. and Fawehinmi, O. (2024), "Green HRM and hospitality industry: challenges and barriers in adopting environmentally friendly practices", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, Vol. 7 No. 1, pp. 121-141, doi: [10.1108/JHTI-08-2022-0389](https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTI-08-2022-0389).
- Tien, N.H., Viet, P.Q., Duc, N.M. and Tam, V.T. (2021), "Sustainability of tourism development in Vietnam's coastal provinces", *World Review of Entrepreneurship Management and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 17 No. 5, pp. 579-598, doi: [10.1504/wremsd.2021.117443](https://doi.org/10.1504/wremsd.2021.117443).
- Valencia, G., Rodriguez, K.N., Matos, G.R.T., Acevedo, C. and Forero, J.D. (2020), "Implementation of the ISO 50001 standard to sustainable energy and economic saving the industrial sector", *Scientia et Technica*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 261-268, doi: [10.22517/23447214.23541](https://doi.org/10.22517/23447214.23541).
- World Bank (2016), "Forest investment program, Ghana: public-private partnership for the restoration of degraded forest reserve through VCS and FSC certified plantations report", available at: <https://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/177881538153640578/1969-FIP-Ghana-AfDB-Project-Proposal-Public-Documents-August-2016-1.pdf>
- World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) (2020), "Travel and tourism economic impact 2019 Africa", available at: <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/regions-2019/africa2019.pdf>
- Yong, J.Y., Yusliza, M.Y. and Fawehinmi, O.O. (2020), "Green human resource management: a systematic literature review from 2007 to 2019", *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, Vol. 27 No. 7, pp. 2005-2027, doi: [10.1108/BIJ-12-2018-0438](https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-12-2018-0438).
- Yu, W., Chavez, R., Feng, M., Wong, C.Y. and Fynes, B. (2020), "Green human resource management and environmental cooperation: an ability-motivation-opportunity and contingency perspective", *International Journal of Production Economics*, Vol. 219, pp. 224-235, doi: [10.1016/j.ijpe.2019.06.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpe.2019.06.013).

Corresponding author

Abdul-Razak Suleman can be contacted at: abdulrazaksuleman10@gmail.com

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:

www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm

Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com