Ensuring Environmental Sustainability with HRM Practices in Hospitality and Tourism: A Systematic Literature Review[*]

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Abstract

This study explores Environmental Sustainability-focused Human Resource Management (ESHRM) practices within the hospitality and tourism (H&T) sector. The review reveals that most studies on Green HRM in this sector focus on isolated practices, without positioning them within a comprehensive ESHRM framework. Key theoretical perspectives identified include the Social Exchange Theory, the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity framework, and the Self-Determination Theory. The study presents a nomological network outlining the antecedents, mediators, moderators, and outcomes of ESHRM. Using a systematic literature review approach, 39 articles published between January 2008 and May 2025 and indexed in the Web of Science database were analysed. The findings indicate that ESHRM contributes to outcomes such as environmental performance, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and creativity. Furthermore, leadership style, organizational green culture, and top management commitment are identified as key antecedents of ESHRM. However, the study also highlights negative outcomes associated with environmental pressures, including environmental concerns, reduced perceived behavioural control, and breaches of the psychological contract. Overall, the study contributes to the literature by offering a comprehensive theoretical and practical understanding of ESHRM in the H&T context.

Keywords: *Environmental Sustainability, Green HRM, Environmental Sustainability-focused HRM, Hospitality, Systematic Literature Review.*

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1. Introduction

Sustainability is a holistic concept that encompasses economic potential, environmental balance, and social responsibility (Choudhary & Datta, 2024). In response to the evolving dynamics of the modern labor market, the environmental dimension of sustainability has gained increasing significance (Iqbal, 2020). The hospitality and tourism (H&T) sector's high dependence on non-renewable natural resources and its substantial carbon footprint have subjected it to growing environmental scrutiny (Lenzen et al., 2018; Muisyo et al., 2022). H&T sector has underscored the need to develop practices that explicitly incorporate sustainability principles and address environmental concerns. Accordingly, businesses operating in the H&T sector are now expected not only to operate efficiently and create value but also to demonstrate environmental accountability (Yong et al., 2019).

Environmentally friendly practices adopted in the H&T sector commonly include reducing waste in operational processes, efficient use of energy and water resources, and environmental awareness-raising initiatives targeting both employees and customers (Bohdanowicz et al., 2011; Rahman et al., 2012). In addressing environmental challenges, organizations are placing increasing emphasis on meeting consumer expectations regarding green products and services. In this context, organizations are adopting strategic and long-term approaches within the framework of environmental management (Daily & Huang, 2001). These approaches contribute to ecologically sustainable development by aiming to strike a balance between industrial growth and environmental protection (Lim & McAleer, 2005; World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). In pursuit of these goals, human resource management (HRM) plays a critical role in the effective implementation of organizational sustainability initiatives (Spooner & Kaine, 2010).

The impact of sustainability on HRM is often overlooked. However, the effective implementation of environmental measures is largely contingent upon the contributions of HRM (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Cohen et al., 2012). This is particularly important in the H&T sector, where intergrating environmental protection efforts into HRM processes is essential (Choudhary & Datta, 2024). In recent years, there has been a marked increase in scholarly attention to the relationship between environmental sustainability and HRM. This growing interest necessitates a comprehensive examination of HRM practices that prioritize environmental sustainability (Spooner & Kaine, 2010).

HRM practices focusing on environmental sustainability are commonly addressed in the literature under the frameworks of "Green HRM" and "Sustainable HRM" (De Souza Freitas et al., 2012; De Stefano et al., 2018; Jackson et al., 2011; Renwick et al., 2013). Accordingly, practices such as green recruitment and selection, green employee empowerment, green training, green performance management, green compensation and reward, and green involvement are grouped under the umbrella of Green HRM (Renwick et al., 2013). In addition, concepts such as green talent management, commitment-based and compliance-based green practices, environmental training, and green job analysis are also prominent. In this study, the practices are collectively referred to as Environmental Sustainability-focused HRM (ESHRM) practices, as they embody HRM initiatives designed to foster employee engagement in environmental issues. Although several systematic reviews on ESHRM exist, research conducted specifically within the H&T context remains relatively limited (Alreahi et al., 2022; Choudhary & Datta, 2024; Fazlurrahman et al., 2021; Suleman et al., 2025; Susanto et al., 2022; Tanova & Bayighomog, 2022). Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to conduct a systematic literature review of ESHRM in the H&T sector. These practices are considered particularly important in shaping environmental sustainability strategies in a sector characterized by high resource consumption (Suleman et al., 2025).

This study offers four potential contributions. First, it provides a comprehensive assessment of ESHRM practices. Second, it identifies the antecedents, outcomes, mediating, and moderating variables associated with ESHRM. Third, it analyses research trends over time to reveal developmental dynamics in the field. Lastly, it offers recommendations for future research by identifying theoretical gaps in the current literature.

2. Literature Review

Environmental sustainability and human resource management practices and previous studies in tourism and hospitality concepts are explained in this section.

2.1. Environmental Sustainability and Human Resource Management Practices

The environmental sustainability of HRM dimension refers to human resource practices that aim to protect the environment and reduce environmental impacts in the long term (Campos-García et al., 2024). Today, organizations are increasingly adopting innovative methods and processes to reduce the environmental impacts of their operations to achieve environmental sustainability. These efforts aim to address deficiencies in environmental performance within business operations and seek to integrate environmentally friendly elements into existing HRM practices.

In the H&T sector, Environmental Sustainability-focused HRM (ESHRM) practices have generally been examined within the scope of Green HRM (Alreahi et al., 2022; Choudhary & Datta, 2024; Suleman et al., 2025; Susanto et al., 2022; Tanova & Bayighomog, 2022). Green HRM is defined as "*a set of practices that represent a proactive approach aimed at achieving high performance in environmental management and environmental sustainability*" (Renwick et al., 2013, p. 2). These practices include green recruitment and selection, green employee empowerment, green training, green performance management, green compensation and reward, and green involvement. Within Green HRM functions (Renwick et al., 2013): Green recruitment and selection refers to the hiring of employees environmentally conscious employees. Green employee training involves providing employees with training aimed at enhancing environmental awareness and competencies. Green performance management helps set goals at both the individual and departmental levels and enables periodic evaluations to address existing environmental issues. Green compensation systems motivate employees to make extra efforts to achieve environmental goals by rewarding green behaviors. Green employee involvement encourages creative thinking and supports the organization's environmental performance objectives. In addition, ESHRM includes green talent management, compliance-based green practices, and commitment-based green practices. Green talent management is a strategic framework used by organizations to attract, develop, and retain highly qualified employees who are committed to environmental sustainability (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024). Compliance-based and commitment-based green practices are initiatives that contribute to the environmental goals of organizations (Ali & Hassan, 2023).

ESHRM functions serve as critical tools in developing environmentally aligned and performance-enhancing sustainable strategies, particularly in resource-intensive sectors like H&T (Suleman et al., 2025). ESHRM also signals an organization's alignment with environmentally friendly trends (Alreahi et al., 2022). With the increasing strategic importance of environmental sustainability goals, scholarly interest in exploring the role of such practices has grown (Bhardwaj et al., 2025; Iqbal, 2020). ESHRM practices are of critical importance for fostering effective interaction between organizations and employees and for achieving corporate sustainability. Promoting the active participation of employees in HRM processes is essential not only to contribute to environmental sustainability but also to ensure the long-term sustainability of human resources within organizations (Campos-García et al., 2024; Spooner & Kaine, 2010). The literature clearly underscores the critical role of HRM in achieving environmental objectives. The integration of environmentally friendly practices into HRM processes can significantly enhance an organization's overall sustainability performance (De Souza Freitas et al., 2012; Jackson et al., 2011; Renwick et al., 2016).

2.2. Previous Studies in Tourism and Hospitality

A review of the H&T literature reveals that some systematic investigations have been conducted on ESHRM (see Table 1). For instance, Suleman et al. (2025), through the synthesis of 77 empirical studies, highlighted that the literature has largely neglected the potential adverse consequences of Green HRM, including greenwashing and employee burnout. Choudhary and Datta (2024), in their review of 52 articles, concluded that organizations adopting sustainable HRM practices (e.g., Green HRM initiatives)

are more likely to cultivate an environmentally conscious workforce. Similarly, Tanova and Bayighomog (2022), in their review of 52 articles, emphasized that organizations capable of integrating environmental management initiatives into their HR systems tend to achieve enhanced outcomes at both organizational and employee levels. Alreahi et al. (2022), based on their review of 59 studies, asserted that Green HRM practices reflect firms' environmental awareness and responsibility; however, they also stressed that the effective implementation of such practices is contingent upon the commitment and support of key decision-makers. Susanto et al. (2022), in their examination of 12 articles, found that Green HRM practices in the H&T sector are linked to the AMO (Ability-Opportunity-Motivation) model and environmental management systems. They also highlighted the impact of these practices on financial performance, corporate image, and environmental outcomes. Lastly, Fazlurrahman et al. (2021), analyzing 38 studies, observed that increasing consumer awareness has positioned Green HRM practices as a focal point of contemporary sustainability management research within the H&T. Collectively, these studies emphasize the significant contributions of Green HRM practices to environmental sustainability in the H&T sector, while also drawing attention to the practical challenges and potential negative outcomes that may arise during their implementation. HRM is regarded as a tool for ensuring sustainability within organizations; however, the true meaning or content of HRM and sustainability has not been sufficiently examined as a distinct activity separate from other functional areas of the organization (Spooner & Kaine, 2010). In this context, this study aims to present a comprehensive overview of ESHRM.

Table 1. Summary of studies

Authors	Number of Articles	Key Findings
Suleman et al. (2025)	77	Neglected consequences of Green HRM such as greenwashing and burnout.
Choudhary & Datta (2024)	52	Sustainable HRM practices foster an environmentally conscious workforce.
Tanova & Bayighomog (2022)	52	Integration of environmental initiatives into HR systems improves organizational and employee outcomes.
Alreahi et al. (2022)	59	Green HRM reflects environmental awareness, but effective implementation requires managerial support.
Susanto et al. (2022)	12	Green HRM is linked to AMO model and environmental management systems; affects financial performance, image, and environmental outcomes.
Fazlurrahman et al. (2021)	38	Consumer awareness makes Green HRM a focus of sustainability research in H&T.

3. Methodology

This study uses a systematic literature review (SLR) method. SLR is used to synthesize existing research and identify the key characteristics of a specific topic (Susanto et al., 2022). A final search string was developed using the keywords; 'environmental sustainability''', 'human resources', 'tourism', and 'hospitality' to retrieve relevant research articles from electronic databases. The Web of Science (WoS) database was chosen for its broad usage and academic recognition. The search criteria focused on articles published between January 2008 and May 2025 that were indexed in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCI-E), Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), and Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI). A total of 84 articles were initially retrieved based on these criteria. These articles were then screened by reviewing their abstracts and full texts. Following this process, 45 articles were excluded because they did not align with the research topic. Consequently, 39 English-language articles were included in analysis (Figure 1).
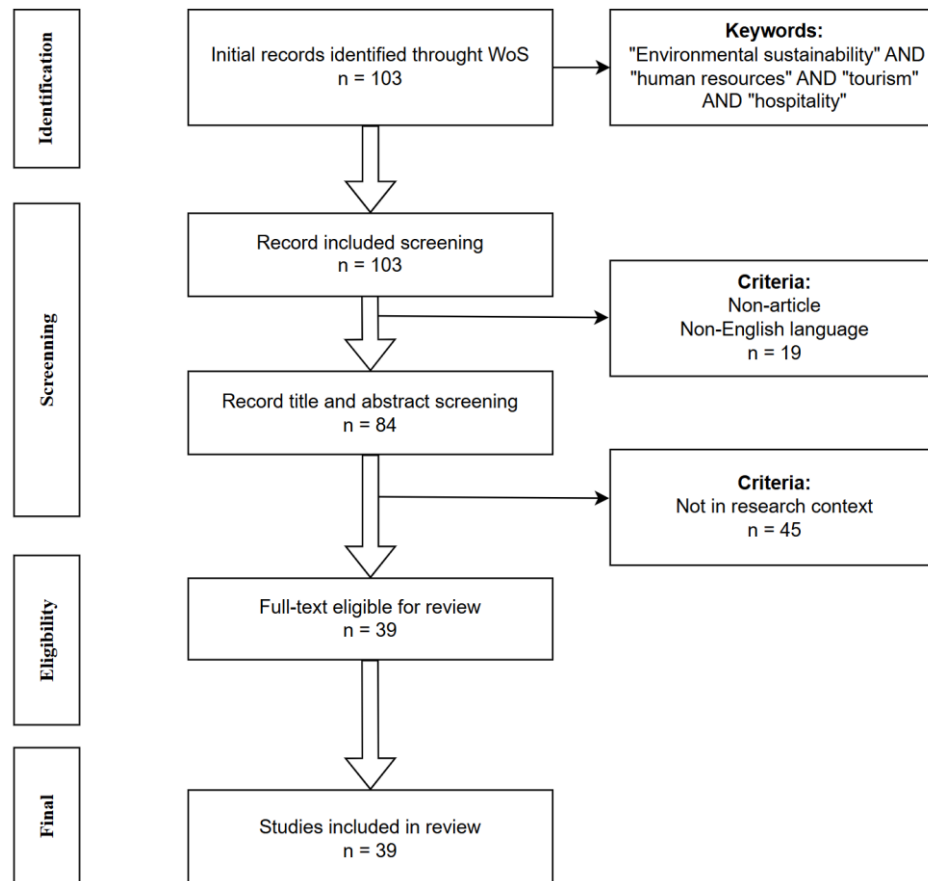
Figure 1. Article selection process

4. Findings

This study is based on a SLR of 39 articles examining ESHRM in the H&T sector. The findings are presented through a descriptive overview, theoretical framework, methodological analysis, and a nomological network linking environmental sustainability and HRM within the H&T context.

4.1. Descriptive Overview

In the context of H&T sector, it has been identified that the primary focus of HRM studies related to environmental sustainability is Green HRM. In addition, the literature includes studies on corporate social responsibility (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008), green talent management (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024; Bratton, 2018), green training (Alola et al., 2022; Hao et al., 2025), green employee involvement (Patwary et al., 2022), green reward and compensation (Ansong et al., 2024), green employee empowerment (Ansong et al., 2025). The first study addressing HRM practices focused on environmental sustainability in the H&T sector dates to 2008 (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008). Since then, academic interest in this topic has significantly increased. This interest peaked in 2020 with the publication of nine studies. Although the number of publications slightly declined in 2021 (n = 3) and 2022 (n = 5), it rose again in 2023, reaching another peak with nine studies. In 2024, seven studies were published, and as of May 2025, four additional studies have been identified (see Figure 2).
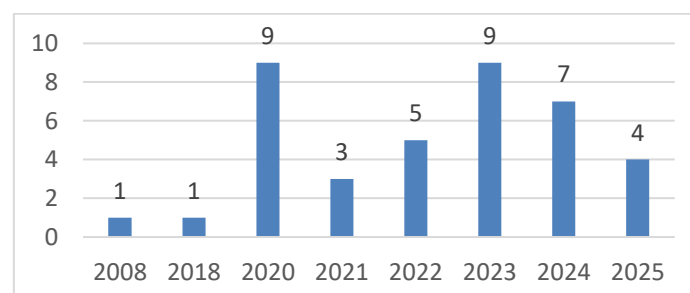
Figure 2. Publications year by year

More than 51% of the published articles appeared in four key journals, as shown in Table 2: Sustainability (n = 7), Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights (n = 5), International Journal of Hospitality Management (n = 4), and International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management (n = 4). A closer inspection of Table 2 suggests that while a diverse range of journals have contributed to this literature, those specializing in hospitality and tourism have demonstrated a comparatively higher level of interest in the topic. Additionally, two articles were published in Environmental Science and Pollution Research, and the remaining articles appeared in various other journals, each represented by a single publication.

Table 2. Journals and publications

Journals	Indexing	Count
Administrative Sciences	ESCI	1
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	SSCI	1
Environmental Science and Pollution Research	SCI-E	2
Global Business Review	ESCI	1
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	SSCI	4
International Journal of Hospitality Management	SSCI	4
Journal of Asian Finance Economics and Business	ESCI	1
Journal of Cleaner Production	SCI-E	1
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights	ESCI	5
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	SSCI	1
Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management	SSCI	1
Journal of Public Affairs	ESCI	1
Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality Tourism	ESCI	1
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	SSCI	1
Mathematics	SCI-E	1
Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	SSCI	1
Science Technology and Society	SSCI	1
Sustainability	SCI-E, SSCI	7
Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal	ESCI	1
Tourism and Hospitality Management Croatia	ESCI	1
Tourism Management	SSCI	1
Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes	ESCI	1

4.2. Theoretical Overview

This study identifies several theoretical perspectives that underpin ESHRM. Some of the studies included in the review adopted multiple theoretical frameworks. Table 3 presents the frequency of theories utilized in the analysed research. Among them, the Social Exchange Theory (SET) was employed in eleven studies. In addition, the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) framework (eight studies) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (four studies) were also among the most applied theories.

SET defines social exchanges as "*voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others*" (Blau, 1964, p. 91). According to the theory, for relationships to evolve into trust and mutual commitment, parties must adhere to certain norms and rules of exchange (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). When organizations seriously implement environmental policies, they create a foundation for employees to engage in positive environmental behaviors. In the context of ESHRM, this theory explains how employees' environmental commitment increases when they receive training on social responsibility-related topics (Arasli et al., 2020). When employees perceive that

managers are investing in them through green training, reward systems, and empowerment, they tend to reciprocate with environmentally responsible behaviors (Tabrizi et al., 2023).

Several studies in the literature support this association. For instance, Darvishmotevali and Altinay (2022) demonstrated that Green HRM has a direct effect on task-related pro-environmental performance and proactive pro-environmental performance in the H&T sector. Arasli et al. (2020) posited that employee resilience mediates the relationship between Green HRM and environmental commitment. Pham et al. (2020) found that both green training and employee involvement significantly enhance employee environmental commitment, organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment, and corporate environmental performance. Lastly, based on SET, Nurul Alam et al. (2025) emphasized the link between Green HRM practices and employees' green commitment.

According to the AMO framework, employee-related outcomes are shaped by three core elements: ability, motivation, and opportunity (Appelbaum, 2000). In this regard, HRM-related performance and behaviors are derived from enhancing individual ability (*A*) through training, fostering motivation (*M*) via performance management systems, and creating opportunities (*O*) through suggestion and involvement mechanisms. These three dimensions jointly ensure the organization's overall performance (Moraes et al., 2019; Renwick et al., 2016). Consequently, employees trained under the AMO framework are more likely to engage in environmentally responsible organizational citizenship behaviors while also demonstrating behavioral control in task-related activities (Alola et al., 2022).

While the AMO model has been widely applied in the manufacturing sector, its use in H&T remains relatively limited (Alola et al., 2022). Recent empirical evidence highlights its relevance to this context. For example, Truong et al. (2025) found that Green HRM has a positive contribution to sustainable business performance. Elshaer et al. (2023a) found that individual green values and job satisfaction mediate the relationship between Green HRM and innovative performance. Their findings suggest that Green HRM enhances employees' environmental commitment and job satisfaction, which in turn foster innovative behaviors and performance. Pham et al. (2020) further showed that employee environmental commitment and organizational citizenship behavior for the environment mediate the effect of Green HRM on corporate environmental performance. Alola et al. (2022) found that organizational citizenship behavior mediates the impact of green training on perceived behavioral control. Similarly, Yeşiltaş et al. (2022) emphasized the role of organizational green culture in facilitating Green HRM practices. Wang et al. (2025) also drew attention to the potential of Green HRM in enhancing employee engagement and contributing to sustainability awareness in the H&T industry.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is built upon three basic psychological needs that play a critical role in shaping employee behavior: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. According to this theory, when these needs are fulfilled, employees are intrinsically motivated to perform at their best (Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT suggests that both performance and well-being are influenced by the type of motivation individuals bring to their work. The theory distinguishes between different forms of motivation, each activated by different functional triggers (Deci et al., 2017). In the context of environmental sustainability, SDT focuses on the dynamic relationship between individual behavior and the social context. Accordingly, employees' perceptions of support from their organizations and colleagues for environmental practices significantly influence their own pro-environmental behaviors (Patwary et al., 2024).

Studies grounded in SDT offer valuable insights. Karatepe et al. (2025) found that workplace spirituality enhances employees' intrinsic motivation and promotes sustainable and environmentally responsible behavior. Kim et al. (2020) indicated that environmental beliefs mediate the relationship between environmental training and organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment. Their findings underscore the importance of managerial commitment to sustainability initiatives in encouraging extra-role environmental behaviors among employees. Finally, Patwary et al. (2024) demonstrated that employees' green attitudes mediate the effects of corporate social responsibility and green inclusive leadership on proactive environmental behavior.

Table 3. Theories

Theories	Count
Ability-Opportunity-Motivation	8
Attribution Theory	3
Broaden-and-Build Theory	1
Cognitive Consistency Theory	1
Conservation of Resources Theory	2
Contingency Theory	1
Dynamic Capability Theory	1
Field Theory	1
Job Demands-Resources Theory	2
Job Embeddedness Theory	1
Motivation Theory	2
Organizational Support Theory	2
Reformulation of Attitude Theory	2
Resource-Based View Theory	3
Self-Determination Theory	4
Self-Expansion Theory	1
Social Cognitive Theory	3
Social Exchange Theory	11
Social Identity Theory	3
Social Information Processing Theory	3
Social Learning Theory	1
Stakeholder Theory	2
Supply-Value-Fit Theory	3
Theory of Planned Behaviour	3
Value-Belief-Norms Theory	3

4.3. Methods Overview

Among the reviewed studies, one adopted a mixed-method design (Yeşiltaş et al., 2022), two employed a SLR methodology (Nadeem et al., 2025; Tanova & Bayighomog, 2022), two adopted a case study approach (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008; Bratton, 2018), and two presented conceptual frameworks (Ari et al., 2020; Tulsi & Ji, 2020), three studies utilized qualitative research designs (Filimonau et al., 2023; Sibian & Ispas, 2021; Tanveer et al., 2024) while the remaining twenty-nine studies were based on quantitative research
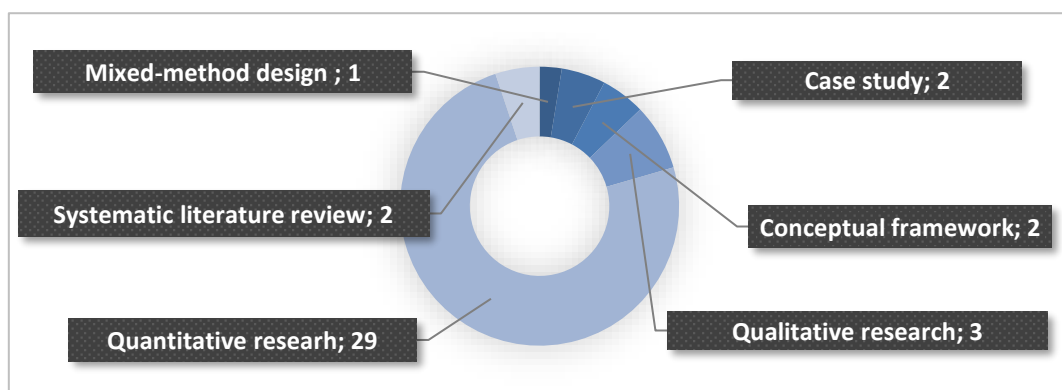
Figure 3. Methods

methods (see Figure 3). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) has been employed in most of the quantitative research studies. While studies are predominantly applied at the individual level, a study has extended its use to variables measured at higher levels, such as the cultural level (Luu, 2024).

4.3.1. Measurement Overview

Several measurement scales were employed in the quantitative studies reviewed in this study. First, the reviewed studies predominantly conceptualized Green HRM as reflective constructs, a trend that aligns with previous literature reviews focusing on service-oriented contexts (Arici et al., 2025; Tanova & Bayighomog, 2022). This approach reflects a widespread methodological inclination toward reflective measurement in the field. One of the most widely used scales for measuring Green HRM was developed by Kim et al. (2019). This unidimensional scale comprises 6 items and offers a comprehensive assessment of various Green HRM practices. Within the current research sample, the scale was employed in eight studies (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021; Darvishmotevali & Altinay, 2022; Elshaer et al., 2023b; Karatepe et al., 2025; Ribeiro et al., 2022; Tabrizi et al., 2023; Umrani et al., 2020; Yeşiltaş et al., 2022). The items primarily focus on the provision of training related to environmental values, the integration of pro-environmental behaviors into performance appraisal processes, and the alignment of such behaviors with reward systems. Additionally, the scale evaluates the extent to which recruitment processes consider the congruence between candidates' environmental values and organizational values, employees' awareness of environmental policies, and their active involvement through suggestions for environmental improvements.

Another widely used measurement tool in the literature is the Green HRM scale developed by Dumont et al. (2017), which consists of 6 items and adopts a unidimensional structure. This scale has been utilized in three studies (He et al., 2021; Luu, 2024; Yoo, 2024). It evaluates key practices such as setting environmental goals, providing training to raise awareness of pro-environmental values, and offering developmental initiatives aimed at enhancing employees' environmental competencies. Additionally, the scale includes the assessment of environmental performance, the recognition and rewarding of environmentally responsible behaviors, and the incorporation of such behaviors into promotion decisions. Unlike some other scales, this one does not cover recruitment and selection dimensions; rather, it places greater emphasis on the formulation and implementation of environmental objectives.

A multidimensional Green HRM scale developed by Jabbour (2011) comprises 15 items across four dimensions: green recruitment and selection (4 items), green training and development (5 items), green performance management and appraisal (3 items), green compensation and rewards (3 items). This scale has been utilized in two studies (Haldorai et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2025). It aims to capture the holistic approach of organizations toward environmental sustainability by addressing Green HRM practices from multiple angles. The acquisition of environmental knowledge and skills is measured through job analyses and descriptions, while recruitment processes emphasize candidates' environmental awareness and motivation. Training is offered continuously and prioritized, being regarded as a strategic investment at the organizational level. In performance appraisal systems, employees are assigned environmental goals, and their contributions are systematically evaluated. The scale highlights the importance of rewarding environmentally responsible employees as a means of encouraging sustainable behavior. Similarly, a scale developed by Masri and Jaaron (2017) also addresses multiple dimensions of Green HRM. This instrument consists of 23 items across five dimensions: green recruitment and selection, green performance management and appraisal, green employee empowerment, green rewards and compensation, green training, and development. It has been applied in three studies (Ansong et al., 2024, 2025; Patwary et al., 2022).

Lastly, several measurement instruments have been employed more sparingly in the literature. For example, the environmental training scale developed by Cantor et al. (2012), which comprises 3 items, has been used in only one study (Kim et al., 2020). This scale evaluates how much employees are trained in areas like global warming, environmental management, and sustainability tools. Another example is the

green talent management scale developed by Ogbeibu et al. (2022), which consists of 14 items across two dimensions: green hard talent management and green soft talent management. This scale evaluates organizational efforts to promote employee well-being and environmental initiatives, with an emphasis on practices such as coaching and workshops. It also includes the assessment of rigorous performance appraisal systems aimed at encouraging green behaviors. To date, this scale has been utilized in only one study (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024).

4.4. Environmental Sustainability with HRM Nomological Network in the H&T

Overall, a substantial number of studies have examined the antecedents, outcomes, mediators, and moderators of concepts falling under the umbrella of ESHRM practices. Nevertheless, scholarly attention to antecedent and moderating variables remains relatively limited in scope. Figure 4 provides a comprehensive synthesis of the variables identified in this review, offering a panoramic overview of the conceptual landscape within the domain.

4.4.1. Antecedents

An analysis of the antecedents related to ESHRM practices reveals that only eight variables have been predominantly emphasized in the literature (see Figure 4). The key antecedents that contribute to the development and implementation of ESHRM practices include: organizational green culture (Truong et al., 2025; Yeşiltaş et al., 2022), green transformational leadership (Truong et al., 2025), top management green commitment (Haldorai et al., 2022), green intellectual capital (Haldorai et al., 2022), workplace spirituality (Karatepe et al., 2025), green inclusive leadership (Patwary et al., 2024), and green knowledge sharing (Ansong et al., 2025).

4.4.2. Outcomes

An examination of the outcomes associated with ESHRM practices reveals a broad range of variables emphasized in the literature (see Figure 4). In several studies, employee performance-related outcomes are at the forefront. These include: job performance (Karatepe et al., 2025), green performance (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024), sustainable business performance (Truong et al., 2025), corporate environmental performance (Pham et al., 2020), corporate sustainable performance (Sun et al., 2023), environmental performance (Haldorai et al., 2022; Umrani et al., 2020; Yusoff et al., 2020), innovative performance (Elshaer et al., 2023a), green recovery performance (Karatepe et al., 2025), and employee task performance (He et al., 2021).
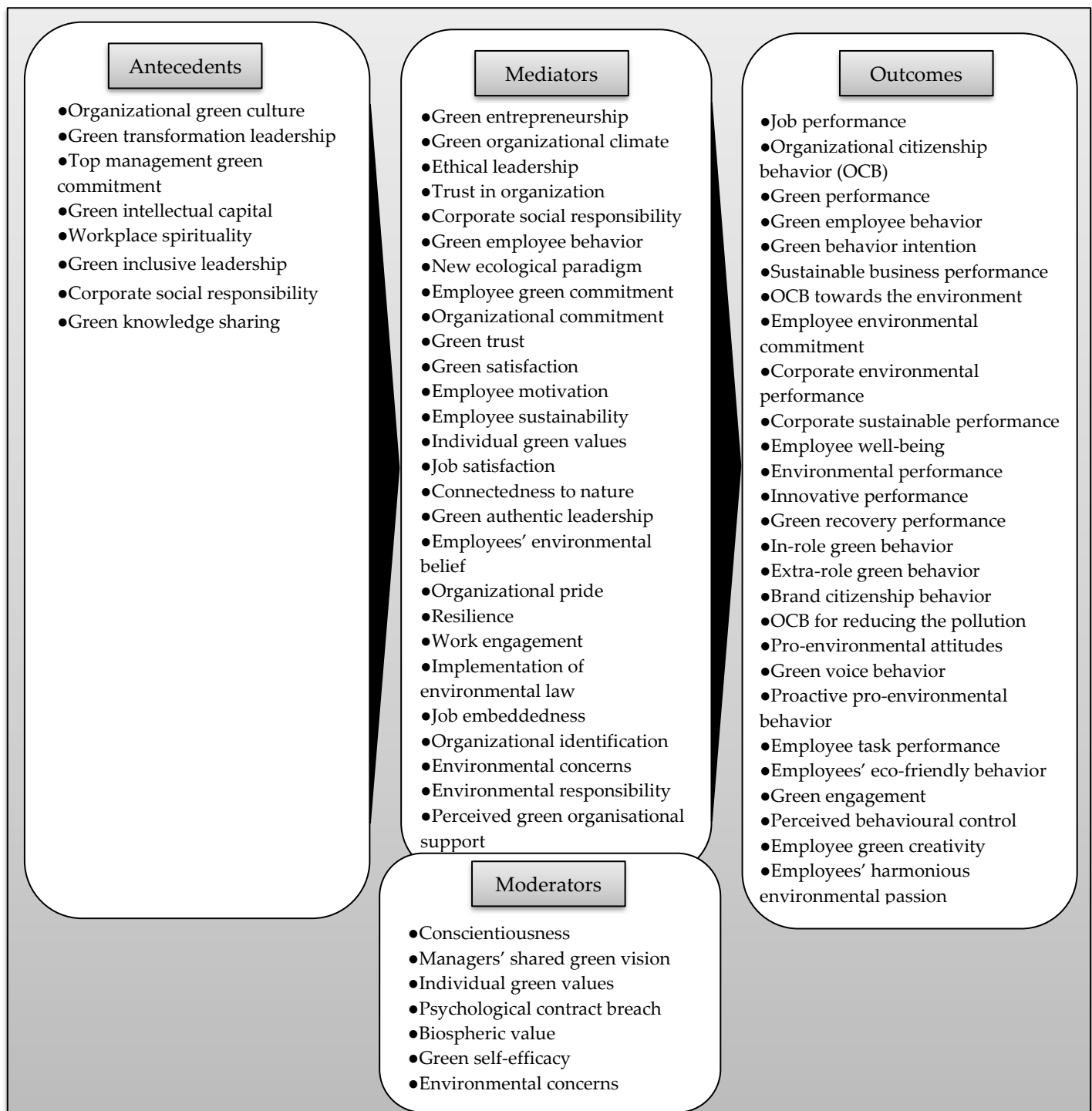
In addition to performance outcomes, a variety of studies have highlighted employees' environmentally related behavioral outcomes. These include: green employee behavior (Yeşiltaş et al., 2022), organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Alola et al., 2022; Karatepe et al., 2025), green behavior intention (Ali & Hassan, 2023), OCB towards the environment (Kim et al., 2020; Pham et al., 2020; Yoo, 2024), employee environmental commitment (Arasli et al., 2020; Pham et al., 2020), employee well-being (Wang et al., 2025), in-role green behavior (Karatepe et al., 2025), extra-role green behavior (Karatepe et al., 2025), employees' harmonious environmental passion (Luu, 2024), brand citizenship behavior (Elshaer et al., 2023b), OCB for reducing pollution (Patwary et al., 2022), pro-environmental attitudes (Nisar et al., 2023), green voice behavior (Tabrizi et al., 2023), proactive pro-environmental behavior (Darvishmotevali & Altinay, 2022; Patwary et al., 2024), employees' eco-friendly behavior (Ribeiro et al., 2022), green engagement (Hao et al., 2025), perceived behavioral control (Alola et al., 2022), and employee green creativity (Ansong et al., 2025).

4.4.3. Mediators and Moderators

Research on ESHRM practices has identified a variety of mediating variables (see Figure 4). However, the number of moderating variables explored in the literature remains relatively limited. The mediators identified in the reviewed studies include: perceived green organisational support (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021), green entrepreneurship (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024), green organizational climate (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024), ethical leadership (Ali & Hassan, 2023), trust in organization (Ali & Hassan, 2023), corporate social responsibility (Truong et al., 2025), new ecological paradigm (Yoo, 2024),

employee green commitment (Nurul Alam et al., 2025), organizational commitment (Yoo, 2024), green trust (Sun et al., 2023), green satisfaction (Sun et al., 2023), employee motivation (Wang et al., 2025), employee sustainability (Wang et al., 2025), job satisfaction (Elshaer et al., 2023a), connectedness to nature (Darvishmotevali & Altinay, 2022), green authentic leadership (Luu, 2024), employees' environmental belief (Kim et al., 2020), organizational pride (Elshaer et al., 2023b), resilience (Arasli et al., 2020), implementation of environmental law (Patwary et al., 2022), job embeddedness (Tabrizi et al., 2023), organizational identification (Ribeiro et al., 2022), and environmental responsibility (Umrani et al., 2020).

In contrast, the number of moderators identified in the literature is more limited. These include: conscientiousness (Darvishmotevali & Altinay, 2022), managers' shared green vision (Luu, 2024), individual green values (Elshaer et al., 2023b), psychological contract breach (Patwary et al., 2024), biospheric value (Hao et al., 2025), green self-efficacy (Nurul Alam et al., 2025), and environmental concerns (Umrani et al., 2020).

Antecedents

- Organizational green culture
- Green transformation leadership
- Top management green commitment
- Green intellectual capital
- Workplace spirituality
- Green inclusive leadership
- Corporate social responsibility
- Green knowledge sharing

Mediators

- Green entrepreneurship
- Green organizational climate
- Ethical leadership
- Trust in organization
- Corporate social responsibility
- Green employee behavior
- New ecological paradigm
- Employee green commitment
- Organizational commitment
- Green trust
- Green satisfaction
- Employee motivation
- Employee sustainability
- Individual green values
- Job satisfaction
- Connectedness to nature
- Green authentic leadership
- Employees' environmental belief
- Organizational pride
- Resilience
- Work engagement
- Implementation of environmental law
- Job embeddedness
- Organizational identification
- Environmental concerns
- Environmental responsibility
- Perceived green organisational support

Outcomes

- Job performance
- Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)
- Green performance
- Green employee behavior
- Green behavior intention
- Sustainable business performance
- OCB towards the environment
- Employee environmental commitment
- Corporate environmental performance
- Corporate sustainable performance
- Employee well-being
- Environmental performance
- Innovative performance
- Green recovery performance
- In-role green behavior
- Extra-role green behavior
- Brand citizenship behavior
- OCB for reducing the pollution
- Pro-environmental attitudes
- Green voice behavior
- Proactive pro-environmental behavior
- Employee task performance
- Employees' eco-friendly behavior
- Green engagement
- Perceived behavioural control
- Employee green creativity
- Employees' harmonious environmental passion

Moderators

- Conscientiousness
- Managers' shared green vision
- Individual green values
- Psychological contract breach
- Biospheric value
- Green self-efficacy
- Environmental concerns

Figure 4. Overview of variables

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study employed a comprehensive systematic literature review (SLR) methodology to synthesize the existing body of research on Environmental Sustainability-focused Human Resource Management (ESHRM) practices within the hospitality and tourism (H&T) context. An examination of the literature in the H&T domain reveals that most practices evaluated under the ESHRM framework are generally situated within the broader Green HRM literature (Alreahi et al., 2022; Choudhary & Datta, 2024; Suleman et al., 2025; Susanto et al., 2022; Tanova & Bayighomog, 2022). It is also evident that many of these Green HRM practices have been addressed in isolation under singular thematic categories (Alola et al., 2022; Patwary et al., 2022; Hao et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the ESHRM literature has also begun to incorporate broader concepts such as green talent management (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024; Bratton, 2018) as well as compliance-based and commitment-based green practices (Ali & Hassan, 2023). Within this scope, the current study aims to fill a gap in the literature by adopting a holistic perspective that consolidates these various practices under the umbrella of ESHRM.

Among the leading theoretical approaches identified in the ESHRM literature are Social Exchange Theory (SET), the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) framework, and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). SET posits that when organizations fulfil their environmental commitments, employees are likely to reciprocate with environmentally responsible behaviors (Arasli et al., 2020). This assumption has been widely supported across studies (Darvishmotevali & Altinay, 2022; Pham et al., 2020; Nurul Alam et al., 2025). According to the AMO model, Green HRM practices enhance employee outcomes by improving their abilities (e.g., through green training), reinforcing motivation (e.g., via green performance management), and offering opportunities to contribute (e.g., through green suggestion systems) (Renwick et al., 2013, 2016). This model has been validated in several studies (Truong et al., 2025; Yeşiltaş, 2022; Alola et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2025). SDT, in turn, focuses on the dynamic interaction between social context and individual behavior, emphasizing that environmental support from organizations and peers significantly enhances pro-environmental attitudes (Karatepe et al., 2025; Kim et al., 2020; Patwary et al., 2024).

From a methodological standpoint, most reviewed studies employed quantitative research methods, with Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) being the most frequently used analytical technique. The growing interest in ESHRM and the development of Green HRM scales since 2008 have contributed to the popularity of this approach (Karatepe et al., 2025; Ribeiro et al., 2022; Tabrizi et al., 2023; Umrani et al., 2020). This methodological trend is also reflected in the increasing number of SLR studies in the field (Nadeem et al., 2025; Tanova & Bayighomog, 2022). Nonetheless, a limited number of studies have utilized mixed-method approaches (Yeşiltaş et al., 2022), qualitative research designs (Filimonau et al., 2023; Sibian & Ispas, 2021; Tanveer et al., 2024), and case study methodologies (Bratton, 2018; Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008), indicating a growing diversification in methodological orientations.

This study's findings suggest that organizations' commitment to environmental sustainability acts as a crucial driver of ESHRM practices. A strong top management commitment and the presence of a green organizational culture significantly facilitate the adoption of such practices (Truong et al., 2025; Yeşiltaş et al., 2022; Haldorai et al., 2022). Furthermore, widespread green knowledge sharing among employees contributes to the institutionalization of ESHRM within organizations (Ansong et al., 2025). Leadership styles such as green inclusive leadership and green transformational leadership have also been found to positively influence ESHRM practices (Patwary et al., 2024; Truong et al., 2025).

In terms of outcomes, ESHRM practices are associated with a range of positive indicators, including employees' green behaviors (Ali & Hassan, 2023; Nisar et al., 2023), environmental performance (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024; Pham et al., 2020; He et al., 2021), organizational citizenship behavior for the environment (Kim et al., 2020; Patwary et al., 2022), and employee well-being (Wang et al., 2025). Moreover, leadership styles (Ali & Hassan, 2023; Luu, 2024), environmental concern, and corporate social responsibility orientation function as mediating and moderating variables in these relationships (Umrani

et al., 2020). Considering these findings, future research is encouraged to conduct more multidimensional and in-depth analyses to better capture the complex interplay of variables that shape the impact of ESHRM practices (Suleman et al., 2025).

6. Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This study offers several theoretical and practical contributions. From a theoretical perspective, first, the key theories employed in the field of ESHRM (e.g., SET, AMO, and SDT) have been systematically classified and comparatively analysed. This analysis provides clarity regarding which theories are more prominent in specific contexts and the types of research in which they are applied. Second, a nomological network comprising the antecedents, mediators, moderators, and outcomes associated with ESHRM has been developed to reduce conceptual ambiguity and offer a guiding theoretical framework for future research. Third, this study draws attention to typically overlooked negative aspects in the literature—such as environmental concerns, reduced perceived behavioral control, and psychological contract breach—and emphasizes the need for theoretical approaches capable of explaining such dynamics. In this regard, the findings highlight a clear need for novel theoretical insights, context-specific analyses, and interdisciplinary models in advancing the ESHRM literature. Finally, the study contributes theoretically by consolidating various environmentally related HR practices—often used interchangeably in the literature—under a unified ESHRM framework.

From a practical contribution, the findings serve as a valuable resource for hotel managers, HR professionals, and sustainability consultants. The results indicate that ESHRM practices not only contribute to reducing environmental impact but also enhance employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, environmental commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and creativity. Accordingly, managers are advised to integrate environmentally conscious HRM practices by offering green training programs, involving employees in decision-making processes, and clearly articulating green performance criteria. Moreover, the implementation of green reward systems is shown to be effective in reinforcing environmentally friendly behaviors. Lastly, from the standpoint of employer branding and corporate image, HRM practices that are aligned with environmental sustainability can be considered a strategic asset capable of creating a competitive advantage in the sector.

Achieving organizational sustainability goals is not solely dependent on technical solutions or scientific systems; it also requires the effective management of the human element. In this respect, the successful implementation of environmental initiatives necessitates alignment with the structural and cultural conditions of human resources within the organization (Daily & Huang, 2001). These conditions also call for a holistic approach that involves not only managers and employees but also unions, suppliers, and broader societal stakeholders (Iqbal, 2020). The literature clearly emphasizes the critical role of HRM in realizing environmental objectives. Therefore, integrating environmentally friendly practices into HRM processes has the potential to significantly enhance an organization's overall sustainability performance (De Souza Freitas et al., 2012; Jackson et al., 2011; Renwick et al., 2016). According to this study, when managers internalize sustainability initiatives, they play a vital role in encouraging employees to exhibit extra-role behaviors that support such efforts (Kim et al., 2020).

7. Limitations and Future Directions

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the review was limited to English-language articles retrieved solely from the Web of Science database, excluding other databases and publications in different languages. This restriction may limit the comprehensiveness of the literature coverage. Second, most of the reviewed studies are based on quantitative research methods, while qualitative analyses and mixed-method approaches remain underrepresented. Future research may address this gap by employing case studies, action research, or experimental designs to generate deeper insights. Moreover, the study assumes that all HRM practices included under the ESHRM framework

contribute positively to environmental sustainability. This underlying assumption constitutes another limitation of the research. Future studies could adopt critical perspectives to evaluate the extent and effectiveness of such practices. Additionally, the influence of cultural differences on ESHRM implementation remains largely unexplored in the existing literature. Cross-cultural comparative studies can offer more generalizable and context-sensitive conclusions regarding the applicability of ESHRM across diverse organizational and national settings. Finally, future research would benefit from a closer examination of psychological variables such as employees' perceptions, resistance, and engagement with green practices. Investigating these dimensions can provide a more nuanced understanding of the behavioral mechanisms that drive or hinder the successful implementation of ESHRM strategies.

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