

# Go Green, Stay Happy: Unlocking Employee Satisfaction Through Green Human Resource Management

Nguyen Thi Thanh Van\*

Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Engineering, Vietnam

## KEYWORDS

Green human resource management, Green recruitment, Green training and development, Green performance management and appraisal, Job satisfaction.

## ABSTRACT

In response to growing environmental concerns, organizations are increasingly adopting sustainable practices, including Green Human Resource Management (GHRM). This study investigates the impact of GHRM on employee job satisfaction within the Vietnamese context. Drawing on survey data from 165 employees across five companies implementing GHRM initiatives, the research examines five key dimensions: green recruitment, green training and development, green performance management and appraisal, green reward and compensation, and green employee empowerment. Using SmartPLS for data analysis, the findings reveal that all five GHRM practices positively influence employee job satisfaction. These results underscore the strategic importance of integrating environmental sustainability into HRM frameworks and offer practical implications for managers seeking to enhance employee satisfaction while advancing organizational sustainability goals. This study employed a small sample size in Vietnam, which limits the generalizability of the findings, and since GHRM has so far focused only on five core elements, further research is needed to expand its scope.

## 1. Introduction

Human resource management (HRM) plays a pivotal role in the sustainable development of enterprises, particularly in today's intensely competitive business landscape. The processes of recruiting and retaining employees require considerable time and financial resources and are also closely tied to employees' satisfaction with their working environment. In the current era, when environmental issues such as climate change, pollution, and resource depletion are becoming increasingly severe, individuals are paying greater attention to the environmental quality that surrounds their daily lives, especially within the workplace. This growing awareness has influenced how employees perceive their organizations. As highlighted by Hameed

et al. (2020), employees tend to experience higher levels of satisfaction when their companies adopt green practices, as such actions reflect a genuine and tangible commitment to environmental sustainability. Meanwhile, Alherimi et al. (2024) indicate that employees' pro environmental behaviors not only benefit the environment but also have a positive impact on organizational performance, including employee morale and corporate reputation. Al-Sabi et al. (2024) further demonstrate that empowering green employees and providing green training are crucial strategies that enhance job satisfaction and encourage engagement in environmentally friendly behaviors. These green strategies increase job satisfaction by improving employees' knowledge and skills related to environmental issues, which in turn strengthens

\*Corresponding author. Email: [vanntt@hcmute.edu.vn](mailto:vanntt@hcmute.edu.vn)

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their overall perception of their work. This evidence compels enterprises to reconsider their operational approaches in alignment with sustainability goals, particularly in the area of GHRM.

GHRM has been receiving increasing attention and is being actively promoted in contemporary organizations. GHRM not only focuses on minimizing negative impacts on the environment but also contributes to creating a positive workplace for employees. It is implemented through the integration of environmental considerations into human resource policies and practices. This includes recruiting employees who are environmentally conscious, providing training on environmental issues, and encouraging staff participation in environmental protection activities. The significance of GHRM lies not only in enhancing a company's public image but also in fostering a positive working environment, which in turn influences employee job satisfaction. This is supported by the study of Jabbour and Santos (2008), which found that the adoption of GHRM practices contributes to higher levels of employee satisfaction. Organizations that implement GHRM tend to achieve higher retention rates and greater overall job satisfaction. This can be explained by the sense of pride employees feel when working for an environmentally responsible organization, which in turn motivates them and strengthens their long-term commitment to the organization.

Within the context of the current Vietnamese labor market, does GHRM truly influence employees' job satisfaction? Is it necessary for enterprises to shift their management approach from traditional HRM to GHRM? These remain open questions that require further empirical investigation. Recognizing this urgency, the present study aims to achieve the following objectives (1) Identify the GHRM factors that influence employees' job satisfaction. (2) Examine the demographic characteristics of employees in relation to job satisfaction under the influence of GHRM factors. Addressing these objectives will provide enterprises with a solid foundation to build a sustainable and environmentally friendly workplace. At the same time, it will enable the integration of green policies into HRM practices, thereby raising environmental awareness and enhancing employees' job satisfaction.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Human resource management (HRM)

According to Tran and Tran (2023), HRM is defined as a comprehensive system that integrates philosophies, policies, and functional activities aimed at attracting, developing, and retaining individuals within an organization. Its primary objective is to align with the strategic goals of the organization while simultaneously addressing the evolving and increasingly justified needs of employees. In line with

the conventional human resource lifecycle, HRM functions are commonly grouped into three core areas: human resource attraction, human resource training and development, and human resource maintenance.

### 2.2. Green human resource management (GHRM)

Papademetriou et al. (2023) define GHRM as an innovative management concept that applies "green" principles to HRM in order to achieve the strategic goals of corporate environmental management. GHRM is also regarded as an organization's aspiration to design and implement an HRM system that supports a proactive and positive approach to addressing environmental concerns through the establishment of green philosophies, policies, practices, and technological processes (Ren et al., 2018). GHRM consists of HRM policies and practices aimed at fostering sustainable development and environmental protection within an organization (Renwick et al., 2013). Likewise, Mandip (2012) argues that GHRM involves the use of HRM policies to promote the sustainable use of resources in enterprises, thereby contributing to environmental sustainability. In this sense, GHRM can be understood as an overarching strategy that focuses on shaping, promoting, and nurturing environmentally friendly behaviors within the workforce. Its goal is to build a green working environment that is harmonious with nature, while simultaneously enhancing business performance and elevating corporate value. Mandip (2012) notes that GHRM encompasses green recruitment, green training and development, and green performance appraisal. Xie et al. (2023) further identify five key components of GHRM, namely green recruitment, green training and development, green performance management and appraisal, green reward and compensation, and green employee empowerment.

### 2.3. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a concept that has been studied for a long time and has been widely applied across various professional fields. According to Hoppock (1935), job satisfaction is defined as the overall satisfaction arising from psychological, physiological, and other environmental factors that lead an individual to genuinely feel fulfilled and content with their work. The study by Tung et al. (2019) identifies six key components used to evaluate employee satisfaction: salary, the nature of the job, opportunities for promotion, relationships with colleagues, relationships with supervisors, and the working environment.

In recent HRM policies, environmental protection elements have been increasingly integrated. It can be envisioned that true employee satisfaction emerges only when the actual value they receive is not less than, and ideally exceeds, their initial expectations.

This evaluation is shaped by observing and perceiving important aspects of the job, including the nature of the work, opportunities for advancement and development, salary levels, relationships with colleagues, support from leaders, and the quality of the working environment. Furthermore, a job that generates satisfaction is one that sparks interest and passion, making employees feel positive during their work process and appreciate the value of what they are doing.

Based on Xie et al. (2023), this study continues to examine the five dimensions of GHRM - green recruitment and selection, green training and development, green performance management and appraisal, green rewards and benefits, and empowering employees toward green initiatives - in relation to employees' job satisfaction.

#### **2.4. Green recruitment**

According to Ahmad (2015), green recruitment is the process of identifying and attracting individuals who possess relevant expertise along with environmentally friendly behaviors. Ogbu Edeh and Okwurume (2019) highlight that green recruitment involves the use of paperless methods in order to minimize potential ecological impacts. Online platforms such as email, electronic job application forms, and global talent pools are utilized to receive applications. In addition, green recruitment also includes video or telephone interviews to reduce any environmental impact associated with travel (Mwita and Kinemo, 2018). Green recruitment plays an essential role as it aligns the recruitment process with the organization's sustainability objectives, ensuring that the workforce contributes positively to environmental conservation and sustainable development (Jamil et al., 2023). Employees who are passionate about environmental issues and who believe in their company's sustainability mission often experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Hicklenton et al., 2019). Green recruitment has been identified as having a positive effect on job satisfaction (Xie et al., 2023). From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H1: Green recruitment has a positive impact on job satisfaction.*

#### **2.5. Green training and development**

Green training and development are the process of equipping employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out environmental protection activities and contribute to the sustainable development of the organization. According to Ahmad (2015), green training and development activities help employees become aware of various aspects and values of environmental management. Xie et al. (2023) state that when organizations demonstrate their commitment

and investment in sustainability, employees tend to feel more satisfied with their jobs. In such cases, they are more likely to embrace the organization's environmental goals and actively contribute to sustainable initiatives. The study also indicates that green training is a key component of GHRM practices that significantly influences employee satisfaction. From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H2: Green training and development has a positive impact on job satisfaction.*

#### **2.6. Green performance management and appraisal**

Ahmad (2015) defines green performance management and appraisal as the process of encouraging employees to enhance their professional skills in order to help them achieve the organization's goals and directions more effectively, while aligning with environmental concerns and the company's environmental policies. Jabbour et al. (2010) emphasize that green performance management and appraisal reflect employees' environmental sustainability and provides feedback to management regarding individual efforts on environmental issues. In addition, Khan and Qureshi (2021) point out that green performance management and appraisal has a positive impact on sustainability, including employee satisfaction. Many organizations have established environmental goals and evaluate their contribution to environmental planning, control, and sustainable development. Green performance management and appraisal has also been found to affect job satisfaction in the study by Xie et al. (2023). From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H3: Green performance management and appraisal has a positive impact on job satisfaction*

#### **2.7. Green reward and compensation**

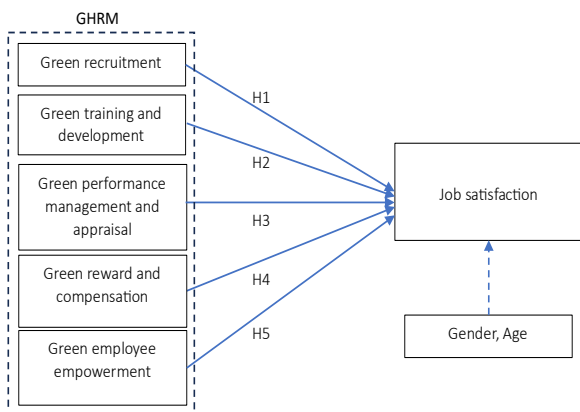
Green rewards and compensation are defined as key processes within GHRM through which employees are recognized for their achievements in supporting environmental initiatives within the organization (Ahmad, 2015). Linking both financial and non financial rewards to sustainability goals not only enhances work motivation but also encourages environmentally responsible behavior. Papademetriou et al. (2023) point out that through green rewards and compensation, a company can effectively attract and retain high quality employees by offering recognition and strengthening engagement in the workplace. This can lead to higher employee satisfaction and productivity. Xie et al. (2023) also found that green incentives and recognition significantly influence job satisfaction. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H4: Green rewards and compensation have a positive impact on job satisfaction*

### 2.8. Green employee empowerment

Green employee empowerment refers to fostering a collaborative environment, including encouraging participation in decision making processes and contributing creative ideas for sustainable practices. This approach creates a sense of ownership and autonomy, thereby enhancing job satisfaction (Hameed et al., 2020). In addition, companies that focus on empowering employees often prioritize the development and training of staff in sustainability initiatives, thereby creating opportunities for growth and skill enhancement (Xie et al., 2023). This emphasis on personal and professional development can increase job satisfaction by providing employees with a sense of progress and opportunities to acquire career advancing skills. Green empowerment enables employees to feel heard, valued, and connected to the organization, while also creating a healthy and collaborative working environment both physically and mentally. This is considered one of the key factors contributing to job satisfaction. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H5: Green employee empowerment has a positive impact on job satisfaction.*



**Figure 1. Conceptual model**

### 3. Research methods

#### 3.1. Participants

This study employed a quantitative research method, with data collected through an online survey using Google Forms. The study conducted a survey among employees working in various companies. The participants were required to have knowledge of GHRM and to recognize that their companies are implementing GHRM practices, even if not comprehensively. A total of 165 valid responses were collected, including 93 male respondents (56.4%) and 72 female respondents (43.6%). Among them, 98 respondents were between 20

and 29 years old (59.4%), 45 were between 30 and 39 years old (27%), and 22 were over 40 years old (13%).

#### 3.2. Measurement scales

The measurement scale for GHRM factors was adapted from the study by Xie et al. (2023), including a total of 23 observed variables covering five components: green recruitment, green training and development, green performance management and appraisal, green reward and compensation, and green employee empowerment. The job satisfaction scale was adapted from Xie et al. (2023), consisting of 10 observed items. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

#### 3.3. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using SmartPLS3 software. Regarding the measurement model, all items were confirmed to meet the criteria for reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and unidimensionality. The structural model concentrated on examining the regression relationships as defined by the equation.

$$JS = \beta_1 * GRS + \beta_2 * GTD + \beta_3 * GPMA + \beta_4 * GRC + \beta_5 * GEE + \beta_6 * Age + \beta_7 * Gender + \epsilon$$

### 4. Results and discussion

#### 4.1. Results

##### 4.1.1. Measurement Model

**Table 1. Measurement Model**

Factors	Items	Outer loading	AVE	CR
Green employee's empowerment	GEE2	0.902	0.828	0.951
	GEE3	0.861		
	GEE4	0.935		
	GEE5	0.939		
	GPMA1	0.876		
Green performance management and appraisal	GPMA2	0.888	0.769	0.930
	GPMA3	0.840		
	GPMA4	0.902		
	GRC1	0.794		
Green reward and compensation	GRC2	0.752	0.640	0.842
	GRC3	0.852		
	GRS1	0.765		
Green recruitment	GRS2	0.780	0.616	0.888
	GRS3	0.715		
	GRS4	0.748		
	GRS5	0.902		

Green training and development	GTD1	0.937	0.728	0.930
	GTD2	0.757		
	GTD3	0.832		
	GTD4	0.884		
	GTD5	0.845		
Job satisfaction	JS1	0.745	0.726	0.949
	JS2	0.832		
	JS3	0.828		
	JS4	0.863		
	JS5	0.865		
	JS6	0.917		
	JS7	0.905		

Variables GEE1, GPMA5, JS10, JS8, and JS9 were excluded from the model due to outer loadings below the 0.7 threshold. Concurrently, Composite Reliability (CR) values exceeded 0.8 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were greater than 0.5 (Table 1). Furthermore, all Fornell-Larcker criterion matrix coefficients were larger than their corresponding correlations within the same column (Table 2). These results collectively affirm that the measurement scales for all constructs demonstrate satisfactory reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, unidimensionality, and content validity. Consequently, the proposed model exhibits a robust fit with the market data.

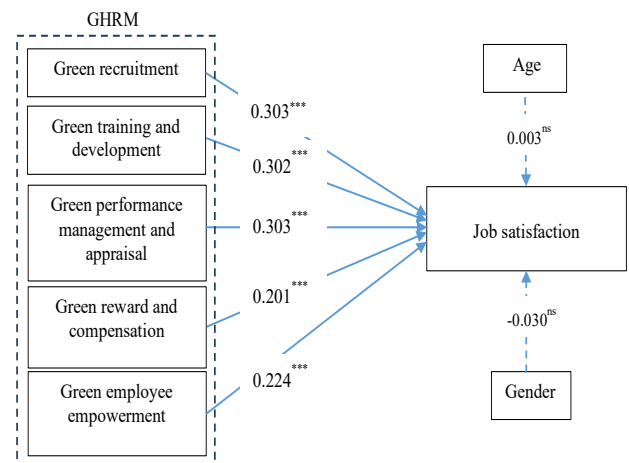
**Table 2. Fornell and Lacker Criteria**

	GEE	GPMA	GRS	GRC	GTD	JS
GEE	0.910					
GPMA	-0.174	0.877				
GRS	0.032	0.181	0.785			
GRC	0.224	0.229	0.190	0.800		
GTD	0.195	0.206	0.332	0.265	0.853	
JS	0.302	0.422	0.505	0.463	0.565	0.852

4.1.2. Structural Model

The results of the structural model are presented in Table 3 and Figure 2. As indicated in Table 3, the factors of Green recruitment, Green training and development, Green performance management and appraisal, Green reward and compensation, and Green employees’ empowerment all exhibited p-values less than 0.05. This finding signifies that H1 to H5 positively influence Job satisfaction. This result is similar to those reported by Khan and Qureshi (2021), Papademetriou et al. (2023) and Xie et al. (2023).

Regarding the two control variables, Age and Gender, their p-values exceeded 0.05. This indicates that neither gender nor age significantly differentiates job satisfaction in the context of the GHRM factors’ impact.



Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ , ns = not significant

**Figure 2. Structural model**

4.2. Implications

4.2.1. Green Performance Management and Appraisal

Companies should establish transparent and equitable performance evaluation systems by clearly

**Table 3. Structural model**

	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values	Decision
Green employees’ empowerment → Job satisfaction	0.244	0.065	3.744	0.000	Accept
Green performance management and appraisal → Job satisfaction	0.303	0.058	5.219	0.000	Accept
Green recruitment → Job satisfaction	0.303	0.063	4.791	0.000	Accept
Green reward and compensation → Job satisfaction	0.201	0.061	3.290	0.001	Accept
Green training and development → Job satisfaction	0.302	0.061	4.932	0.000	Accept
Age → Job satisfaction	0.003	0.044	0.072	0.943	Non-accept
Gender → Job satisfaction	-0.030	0.048	0.619	0.536	Non-accept

defining and communicating specific evaluation criteria to all employees. When employees understand the methods and standards used for assessment, they are more likely to perceive the system as fair and to be motivated to improve their performance. Providing regular feedback and developmental support is equally essential. Managers should deliver continuous feedback on employee performance, emphasizing areas for improvement while also acknowledging achievements and efforts. In addition, offering training and career development opportunities enables employees to feel valued and supported by the organization. Fostering a positive evaluation culture is also important. Organizations should cultivate an environment in which performance evaluation is not solely a managerial responsibility but also an opportunity for employees to engage in self-assessment and peer feedback. Such an approach enhances individual performance while promoting a collaborative and supportive workplace culture. Finally, organizations are encouraged to integrate sustainability and social responsibility criteria into their performance management systems. Doing so allows employees to take pride in their contributions and feel more motivated, knowing that their efforts generate a positive impact on both the community and the environment.

#### *4.2.2. Green Training and Development*

Companies should design training programs that extend beyond technical competencies to include topics such as sustainability, social responsibility, and environmental protection. Incorporating these dimensions enables employees to better understand their role in contributing to the sustainable development of both the organization and the broader community. Encouraging continuous learning is equally important. Organizations should cultivate an environment that supports ongoing learning and development through initiatives such as online courses, workshops, and mentoring programs, thereby helping employees enhance their skills and knowledge. When employees perceive ample opportunities for self development, they are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. It is also essential to implement systems for evaluating and recognizing employees' learning efforts and developmental achievements. Acknowledging accomplishments in training not only motivates employees but also reinforces their sense of being valued within the organization. Furthermore, organizations should regularly assess the impact of training programs on employee satisfaction. Collecting employee feedback on training activities allows companies to refine their programs, enhance effectiveness, and ultimately foster greater job satisfaction

#### *4.2.3. Green Recruitment and Selection*

Companies should establish recruitment criteria that consider not only professional competencies but also personal values related to sustainability and social responsibility. Such criteria help identify candidates who are aligned with the organization's culture and long term vision. It is also important to strengthen communication about green values throughout the recruitment process. Job advertisements should explicitly convey the company's commitments to sustainability and environmental stewardship. This approach attracts candidates who share the organization's mission and demonstrate a genuine interest in environmental issues. A transparent and fair selection process should be implemented. Ensuring openness and equity in recruitment enables candidates to feel respected and properly evaluated. Fairness in recruitment builds trust and contributes to higher levels of satisfaction among newly hired employees. In addition, cultural fit should be carefully assessed during recruitment. Interview processes should evaluate whether candidates are compatible with the organization's culture. Employees who fit well within the organizational culture are more likely to experience greater job satisfaction. Finally, companies are encouraged to create opportunities for current employees to participate in green recruitment and selection. Involving employees in interviews or candidate evaluations increases engagement and fosters a sense of shared responsibility in building a sustainable workforce.

#### *4.2.4. Green Employee's Empowerment*

Companies should clearly define the responsibilities and decision making authority of each employee. When employees have a clear understanding of their roles and are granted the autonomy to make decisions, they tend to feel more confident, empowered, and motivated. Employees should also be encouraged to participate in decision making processes, particularly those directly related to their work. Such involvement fosters a sense of respect and strengthens their feeling of belonging within the organization. Furthermore, in order for employees to effectively fulfill their responsibilities, companies should provide appropriate training and support programs. These initiatives help employees develop the necessary skills and build confidence in their decision making capabilities

#### *4.2.5. Green Reward and Compensation*

Companies should develop compensation programs that go beyond financial rewards to include support for health, environmental initiatives, and sustainability. For instance, offering comprehensive

health insurance, providing support for sports activities, or creating incentives for using public transportation can significantly enhance employee well being and engagement. In addition, benefits that promote work–life balance - such as flexible working hours, generous paid leave, and mental health care programs - can help employees feel more comfortable in their roles and more satisfied with their work. It is also essential to regularly gather feedback from employees regarding existing reward and compensation programs. By incorporating this feedback, companies can adjust and refine their policies to better address employee needs and ultimately foster higher levels of job satisfaction.

## 5. Conclusion and limitations

### 5.1. Conclusion

This study aims to identify the key GHRM factors that influence employee job satisfaction and to examine the effects of employees' demographic characteristics on their job satisfaction. The analysis demonstrates that green recruitment, green training and development, green performance management and appraisal, green rewards and compensation, and green employee empowerment all have significant positive impacts on job satisfaction. In contrast, the two control variables reveal that neither gender nor age produces a significant difference in job satisfaction within the context of GHRM factors. These findings underscore the growing adoption of GHRM practices in Vietnamese enterprises. The effective implementation of GHRM not only enhances employee job satisfaction but also promotes stronger work motivation and long-term organizational commitment.

The research findings make an important contribution by filling a gap in GHRM theory regarding the strategic shift from traditional approaches to human resource management aligned with sustainable development goals as a prevailing trend. In Vietnam, the impact of GHRM is universal across the workforce regardless of demographic characteristics. This finding highlights the distinctive feature of Vietnam's labor market, where consensus on sustainability values is emerging as a common motivational driver for employees rather than being divided by individual differences.

### 5.2. Limitations

This study employed a convenience sampling method with a sample size of 165 employees, which inherently limits the representativeness of the data. As a result, the findings cannot be fully generalized to the broader population. GHRM remains a relatively nascent concept within the body of HRM literature. This research specifically examined five core elements

of GHRM: green recruitment, green training and development, green performance management and appraisal, green rewards and compensation, and green employee empowerment. Future studies may consider exploring additional influencing factors, particularly within the dynamic and evolving context of Industry 4.0.

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