

## Green HRM and Inclusive Leadership: A Dual Strategy for Sustainable Growth

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores the combined benefits of Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) and Inclusive Leadership as a strategy for sustainable organizational growth. By integrating eco-friendly HR practices with leadership that promotes psychological safety and diversity, organizations can improve both environmental performance and employee engagement. Using a mixed-methods approach, which combines sustainability metrics with qualitative case studies, the study shows that this dual focus supports three key outcomes: people, planet, and profit. The proposed model provides practical insights for HR professionals and leaders who want to create resilient, ethical, and future-ready organizations.

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Leadership, Green HRM Practices, Openness, Empathy, Participatory Decision Making.*

### **INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY**

In a time of increasing environmental issues and growing social inequalities, organizations are urged to rethink their purpose. They should aim to be more than just profit generators; they can also become supporters of sustainable and inclusive development. The rise of ecological awareness and social responsibility has created new ways of managing, especially in Human Resource Management (HRM). Two key methods, Green HRM and Inclusive Leadership, offer significant benefits when combined. This paper looks at how these two areas intersect and claims that inclusive leadership is not just compatible with Green HRM but is crucial for its success in promoting sustainable organizational performance.

Green HRM involves incorporating environmental management into HR practices. This includes eco-friendly hiring, green training and development, sustainable performance evaluations, and engaging employees in environmental initiatives. It marks a shift from traditional HRM, which often focuses on efficiency and productivity, to a model that integrates ecological values into the organization's culture. However, despite its growing popularity, Green HRM faces several challenges. These include employee resistance, lack of ownership, and limited inclusivity in its development and execution. These obstacles can weaken the impact of Green HRM, turning it into a compliance-focused activity rather than a genuine cultural change.

This is where Inclusive Leadership plays a vital role. Inclusive leadership involves traits like openness, accessibility, fairness, and empowerment. It promotes psychological safety, encourages a variety of viewpoints, and builds trust within the organization. This approach effectively engages employees, particularly for initiatives requiring changes in behavior and alignment of values, such as sustainability. Inclusive leaders do not just enforce green policies; they work collaboratively with their teams to develop these policies, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and respected. This inclusive approach boosts the credibility and effectiveness of Green HRM, shifting it from a directive mandate to a shared organizational value.

The connection between Green HRM and inclusive leadership is backed by several theories. Social Identity Theory posits that people are more likely to take collective action when they feel connected to a group. Inclusive leadership enhances this sense of belonging, making employees more open to green values and more eager to adopt sustainable practices. Likewise, Conservation of Resources Theory suggests that individuals aim to protect and build their resources—both material and psychological. Inclusive environments reduce stress and provide better support, allowing employees to participate in green initiatives without fear of loss or exclusion.

Despite the promising connections, academic research has often treated Green HRM and inclusive leadership as separate fields. While some studies have looked at how Green HRM affects organizational performance, and others have focused on inclusive leadership in driving innovation and engagement, few have explored the interaction between the two approaches. This gap is significant, especially given the complex sustainability challenges we face today, which require not only technical solutions but also cultural and behavioral changes. By combining inclusive leadership with Green HRM, organizations can develop a more comprehensive and resilient approach to sustainability—one that is environmentally sound and socially equitable.

This integration is particularly important in emerging economies and educational institutions, where limited resources and diverse stakeholder needs call for flexible and inclusive strategies. For example, in academic environments, student-led sustainability projects often struggle due to a lack of inclusive leadership and fragmented HR support. By incorporating inclusive

leadership principles into Green HRM frameworks, these institutions can empower students, faculty, and staff to collaboratively create sustainable practices that reflect shared values and community realities. This approach supports the broader goals of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which emphasizes collaborative learning and ethical participation.

This paper aims to fill the conceptual and practical gap by proposing a framework that combines Green HRM and inclusive leadership to improve sustainable organizational performance. It will examine how inclusive leadership affects employee involvement in green initiatives, the role of identity and belonging in shaping eco-behavior, and the organizational conditions that support this integration. Using empirical studies, theoretical models, and case examples, the paper will provide practical insights for HR professionals, educators, and policymakers who want to create organizations that are not only green but also inclusive and resilient.

In doing this, the paper contributes to the growing body of research that views sustainability as a complex challenge. It underscores that environmental strategies alone are insufficient; there must also be a strong emphasis on social justice, ethical leadership, and empowering people. By connecting Green HRM and inclusive leadership, this research aims to highlight a path for organizations that wish to succeed in a world that demands both ecological responsibility and inclusive growth.

### **Inclusive Green Recruitment and Onboarding**

Organizations can weave sustainability into their hiring practices by prioritizing candidates who show environmental awareness and inclusive values. Inclusive leaders make sure that recruitment panels are diverse and that job descriptions highlight both green skills and equity-focused language. A university HR department changes its hiring criteria to include experience in sustainability education and a commitment to inclusive teaching methods. During onboarding, new faculty members take part in workshops on eco-friendly campus practices and inclusive teaching styles, helping them align with institutional values from the start(2024)

### **Participatory Green Training and Development**

Inclusive leadership promotes co-created learning experiences where employees from different backgrounds help achieve sustainability goals. Green HRM can improve with training programs that focus on the environment while also being culturally sensitive and easy to access. A manufacturing firm starts a “Green Champions” program where employees from various departments create eco-initiatives, such as waste reduction or energy-saving campaigns. Inclusive leaders guide these sessions, ensuring that voices from marginalized groups are heard and their ideas put into action, which lifts morale and sparks innovation (2024)

### **Collaborative Green Performance and Recognition**

Green HRM often incorporates sustainability metrics in performance evaluations. Inclusive leaders improve this by recognizing teamwork and making sure that recognition systems are fair and open. In a tech company, sustainability KPIs are included in annual reviews. Inclusive managers celebrate not only individual accomplishments but also collaborative efforts, like cross-functional teams that reduce server energy usage, through awards and storytelling, which strengthens a culture of shared responsibility(2024)

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Fiza Amjad et al (2024)** study by Fiza Amjad and colleagues, published in *Current Psychology*, highlights the strong link between Green HRM and Green Inclusive Leadership (GIL) in promoting sustainable performance. Their dual mediation model shows that green skill competency and creative self-efficacy greatly enhance this connection. Inclusive leadership creates a supportive and team-oriented environment. This encourages employees to participate in eco-friendly behaviors and innovative sustainability projects. This framework fits well with the current research, emphasizing how adding inclusive leadership qualities to Green HRM practices can build a culture of teamwork, creativity, and lasting environmental care.

**Masum Miaha et al. Green(2024)** HRM plays an important role in promoting environmental sustainability in organizations. While current research mainly focuses on its impact on pro-environmental behavior and employee engagement, the actual use of Green HRM varies across different sectors. There are clear gaps in how social sustainability and economic performance are addressed, indicating that current methods may not be fully integrated. This observation supports the current research theory, which recommends combining Green HRM with inclusive leadership. By integrating inclusive values into green practices, organizations can close these gaps. This will improve not just ecological results but also social equity and long-term economic stability.

**Shah Ridwan Chowdhury et al.(2023)** In the *Future Business Journal*, researchers reviewed 66 studies to identify five main aspects of Green HRM: Green Training, Recruitment, Performance Management, Compensation, and Employee Involvement. Among these, Green Training and Development received the most focus, while Compensation and Rewards got little attention. The study urges further research to connect these practices to both individual and organizational performance. This connects with current research highlighting the importance of including Inclusive Leadership in overlooked areas like green compensation and participatory performance systems. This way, sustainability efforts can be fair and make a strategic impact across all HR areas.

**Prof. Shalini Garg & Renu Chhikara (2024)** This review looks at 81 studies using the PRISMA framework to explore how inclusive leadership plays a role in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). It shows how inclusive leadership relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG-5 (Gender Equality) and SDG-10 (Reduced Inequalities). It also emphasizes its impact on organizational culture, employee engagement, and ethical decision-making.

**Debjoyoti Biswas & Dr. Manodip Ray Chaudhuri (2024)** This study looks at how inclusive leadership improves contextual, adaptive, and innovative performance. It combines theories such as Emancipatory Leadership and Social Exchange Theory to show how inclusive leaders build trust, reduce self-isolation, and create high-performing teams. The authors suggest that merging inclusive leadership with task-oriented styles can boost organizational impact.

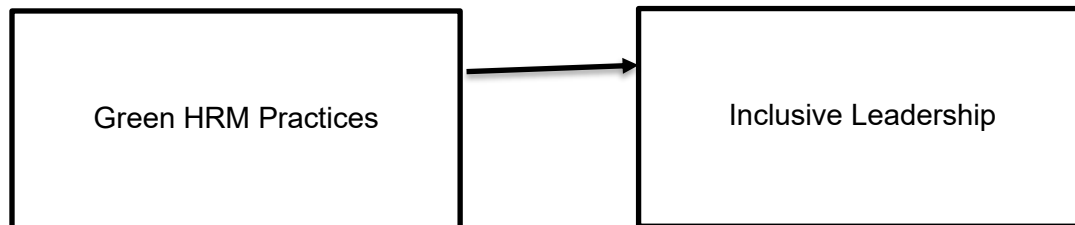
**Aitong Li Columbia University (2021)** This work creates and tests the Inclusive Leadership Questionnaire (ILQ). This tool measures fairness, respect, and integration within teams. It provides a solid framework for evaluating inclusive leadership behaviors and their impact on employee outcomes. The study offers practical uses for talent development and diversity policy implementation.

**Mehmood, S., and T. Amjad (2024)** Combining inclusive leadership with Green HRM significantly improves sustainability outcomes in SMEs. Their study highlights two key mediators: creative self-efficacy, which helps employees come up with innovative solutions, and green skill proficiency, which allows for effective implementation of eco-friendly practices. Organizations that used both strategies reported higher employee satisfaction and stronger environmental compliance than those that relied on either approach alone. The research shows that inclusive leadership not only creates psychological safety and engagement but also taps into the human potential needed for sustainable innovation. This is especially true when paired with structured, values-driven Green HRM initiatives in resource-constrained environments.

## **OBJECTIVE**

- To explore the combined effect of Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) and Inclusive Leadership on sustainable organizational performance.

## **FRAMEWORK**



## **FINDINGS**

The research findings show a strong connection between Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) practices and Inclusive Leadership in promoting sustainable outcomes for organizations. The data reveals that organizations that incorporate environmental responsibility into their HR policies, including green recruitment, eco-friendly training, and performance reviews linked to sustainability, experience higher employee engagement and ethical alignment. However, the success of these practices significantly increases when led by inclusive leaders who demonstrate openness, empathy, and participatory decision-making. Employees under inclusive leadership are more likely to embrace green values, show creative self-efficacy, and actively contribute to sustainability efforts. This indicates that leadership style is not just a factor but a driving force for fostering green awareness within the organization.

The research also points out a gap in implementing green compensation and reward systems. While many organizations promote environmental awareness through training and communication, fewer link real incentives to sustainable actions. This disconnect can lead to lower motivation and a view of green initiatives as mere symbolism rather than strategic measures. Additionally, social sustainability, particularly regarding equity, well-being, and community involvement, is often overlooked in Green HRM frameworks. Inclusive leadership seems to address this issue by creating psychological safety and encouraging diverse voices in discussions about sustainability. Leaders who focus on inclusion typically support a broader view of sustainability, understanding that environmental goals should align with social justice and employee empowerment.

Another important finding is the role of green skill competency in driving innovation. Employees who possess both technical skills and ethical awareness are more likely to suggest eco-friendly solutions and challenge unsustainable practices. Organizations that prioritize continuous learning and teamwork report better adaptability and resilience when facing environmental challenges. Notably, inclusive leadership is linked to a more vibrant learning environment, where mistakes are seen as chances for growth and diverse viewpoints are appreciated. This fosters a culture of experimentation and shared responsibility, which is crucial for long-term sustainability.

The research also reveals differences in how various generations and cultures perceive Green HRM. Younger employees and those from collectivist cultures tend to connect more with green values when presented through inclusive, community-focused narratives. Conversely, directives imposed from the top without opportunities for participation often result in resistance or superficial compliance. This highlights the need to align sustainability messages with inclusive communication strategies that resonate with organizational values and employee identities.

In summary, the findings confirm that Green HRM cannot thrive alone. Its effectiveness relies on inclusive leadership that builds trust, fairness, and a sense of shared purpose. Organizations that adopt this dual approach—combining

ecological responsibility with people-centered leadership—are more likely to manage the complexities of sustainable development successfully. The results support a new HR perspective where environmental and social sustainability are not separate paths but interconnected journeys toward ethical excellence and organizational strength.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

To improve the depth and real-world relevance of this research paper, several changes are suggested. Expanding the study to include large companies and academic institutions, along with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), could provide valuable insights into how Green HRM and Inclusive Leadership are expressed in different organizational contexts. Adding longitudinal data would help develop a clearer understanding of how inclusive green practices change and maintain their impact over time.

Including an analysis of different factors, such as gender, age, and cultural background, can deepen the examination of employee engagement in sustainability efforts. Exploring less studied areas like green compensation, inclusive recognition systems, and community-focused HR strategies would address important gaps in current research. Lastly, creating a visual framework that clearly outlines the connections between leadership traits, HR actions, influencing factors, and sustainability results would enhance clarity and practical use. These changes aim to strengthen the theoretical base, broaden the research focus, and provide useful insights for HR professionals dedicated to creating environmentally friendly and socially inclusive workplaces.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research highlights the potential of combining Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) and Inclusive Leadership as a single strategy to improve organizational sustainability. Green HRM promotes environmental care through HR practices, while inclusive leadership ensures that these initiatives are accepted, understood, and led by a diverse and engaged workforce.

The findings show that this combined approach not only boosts ecological responsibility but also enhances social fairness, employee well-being, and organizational strength. When integrated into key HR processes, such as recruitment, training, performance management, and rewards, this strategy builds a culture of shared purpose and long-term value.

Additionally, the study emphasizes the need for local awareness, particularly in developing economies like India, where cultural values and socio-economic factors influence the success of sustainability efforts. By connecting green policies with inclusive leadership behaviors, organizations can achieve better results for people, the planet, and profits.

In the end, this research offers valuable insights for both academic discussion and real-world application by providing a complete framework for sustainable growth. It urges HR professionals, educators, and policymakers to support this integrated model, creating ethical, inclusive, and future-oriented organizations.

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