

# Green HRM and Job Pursuit Intention

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## Green HRM and Job Pursuit Intention

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## **Abstract**

Numerous businesses have been turning to more sustainable and responsible practices over the years considering that environmental issues have become a primary concern worldwide. Green human resource management is becoming an essential component of management theory and practice that focuses on an organization's capacity to integrate environmental sustainability via human resource management. The purpose of this research was to explore whether green human resources practices enhance a firm's attractiveness in acquiring new potential employees, with a focus on young talent. Results of this research show that potential employees are generally attracted to organizations that have green human resource management practices in place and have shown a positive attitude toward green human resource practices. However, these results indicate that GHRM cannot be a replacement for any other job preference, yet can become an additional benefit or advantage when all other job preferences are satisfied.

*Keywords: green human resource management, environmental HRM, employer attractiveness, intention to apply, sustainability in hospitality*

## **Green HRM and Job Pursuit Intention**

Green human resource management (GHRM) is becoming an essential part of management theory and practice, that deals with an organization's ability to incorporate environmental sustainability through the organizational most valuable asset: its people, making it the most important aspect of long-term corporate sustainability (Ahdmad, 2015). Green HRM can be defined as policies, procedures, and systems that make organizational employees green for the sake of the organization, natural environment, individuals, and society (Ahdmad, 2015., as cited in Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014).

Environmental issues have become a high-priority problem worldwide, making organizations turn towards more sustainable practices. Sustainability, being a global problem, is becoming the main center of attention for different organizations, where they are focused on the effect of environmental issues on their long-term performance and competitiveness. Current publications on environmental management acknowledge that organizations can employ suitable human resource management practices to influence their employees for the purpose of accomplishing environmental sustainability (Paillé et al. 2014).

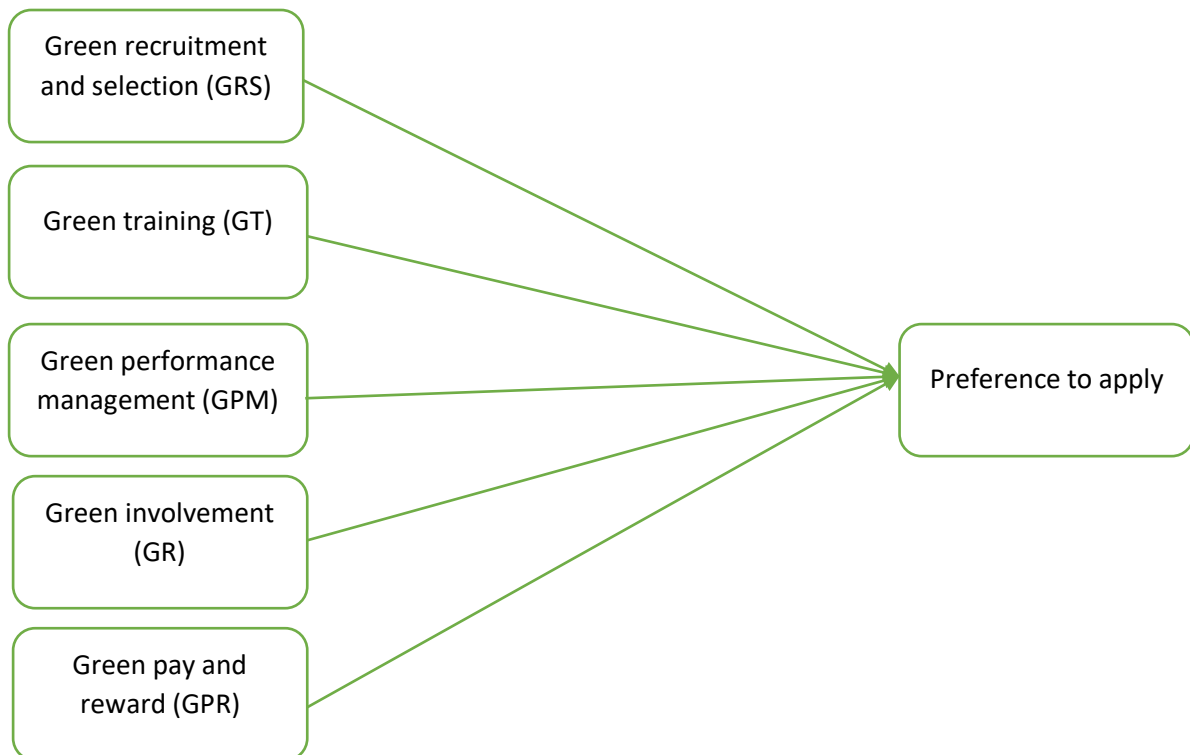
Human resource management aspects of environmental management incorporates practices such as recruitment and selection, training, performance management, involvement, and, pay and reward with a focus on the operational processes of the organization and its sustainability. As a result, environmentally sustainable practices can help an organization to build a good reputation, decrease stakeholder pressure, and in the long-term, benefit future generations (Tang et al. 2018).

According to Duarte (2014), the degree to which a potential employee considers an organization as a preferable place to work for and a positive desire of developing a working relationship with the same is considered to be the organization's attractiveness. One of the key issues in human resource management is the effectiveness of attracting qualified and adjusted profiles of potential employees. Therefore, the pressure for attracting newcomers is considerably high bearing in mind that it is a critical matter for the competitiveness of the organization (Duarte et al. 2014).

The main purpose of this research project is to explore whether green human resources practices enhance companies' attractiveness in acquiring new potential employees, focusing on young talent.

The model that will be used in this senior project will be based on Research Framework found in “Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) Practices and Millennial Employees’ Turnover Intentions in Tourism Industry in Malaysia: Moderating Role of Work Environment” (Islam et al. 2020). For the purposes of this project, this model will be adjusted in order to serve this research’s needs and requirements.

The following model and hypothesis will be tested:



Based on the proposed model, the paper will examine the following hypotheses:

H1: *The higher the Green recruitment and selection (GRS), the higher preference to apply.*

H2: *The higher the Green training (GT), the higher preference to apply.*

H3: *The higher the Green performance and management (GPM), the higher preference to apply.*

H4: *The higher the Green involvement (GR), the higher preference to apply.*

H5: *The higher the Green pay and reward (GPR), the higher preference to apply.*

## **Green human resource management**

According to the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity theory (Appelbaum et al. 2000), those HRM practices that improve the organization's human capital through the development and improvement of human capabilities and skills, which lead to positive performance outcomes such as higher productivity, decreased waste, higher quality, and profitability. The theory states that HRM works by attracting and developing a high-performing workforce thus increasing employees' ability; incorporating practices such as rewards systems and effective performance management, which leads to increasing employees' motivation; and by employees participating in knowledge-sharing and problem-solving activities through employee involvement programs, thus provides employees with an opportunity to engage in those learning activities (Renwick et al., 2013).

Green HRM practices are a part of wider corporate social responsibility programs, where GHRM consists of two main components: environmentally friendly HR practices and conservation of knowledge capital (Mandip, 2012). Throughout the HRM process of selection, recruitment, training, performance management, compensation, involvement, and advancement of its human capital, GHRM is directly responsible for creating environmentally friendly employees that understand, appreciate and practice green initiatives set by the organization, along with ensuring that the organization's greens objectives are met (Mathapati, 2013).

In essence, the fundamental goal of Green HRM is to educate and train employees to become more aware of the complexities of environmental management in the context of the required actions, how they function, and how they benefit the environment (Ahdmad, 2015). By developing environmentally conscious green employees who can identify environmental issues in their business activities, green HRM practices are the best strategy for helping organizations incorporate environmental management into their everyday practices. (Dutta, 2012).

Green human resource management incorporates practices such as recruitment and selection, training, performance management, involvement, and pay and reward, focusing on the operational processes of the organization and its sustainability. Accordingly, pro-environmental practices can help an organization to develop a positive reputation, decrease stakeholder pressure, and benefit future generations. (Tang et al. 2018).

### **Green recruitment and selection**

Jabbour et al., (2010) describe recruitment and selection as an HR process in which an organization encourages potential candidates to apply for open job positions. During this process, an organization can attract and retain potential candidates who would be dedicated to improving environmental management and sustainability in the organization (Tang et al., 2018). Therefore, throughout the selection process, HR managers should attract and select candidates that already green-conscious and have environmental awareness. Shah (2019) reports that potential candidates acquire information about the organization's green performance and are ready to devote their time and effort to an organization that operates in a sustainable manner. Hence, HR should use green practices including green marketing and branding to attract and hire green candidates. Jerónimo et al., (2020) reflect on green recruitment and selection practices an organization can implement such as: using a website to post job offerings and facilitate all the communication through online channels, as well performing interviews and tests online; creating job descriptions that include green practices, as well as assessing the candidate's environmental consciousness and values during an interview. Renwick et al., (2013) report that the best indicator of an organizational overall attractiveness for potential employees was a favorable environmental image.

### **Green training**

Green training has an important strategic significance that helps an organization become more sustainable. Organizations should provide green training and additional education to their employees to improve their environmental understanding and direct them towards sustainable practices, in order to make environmental performance a fundamental component of their organization's culture. Ivanchevic (1992) describes the training as a continuum of learning activities, such as skills, knowledge, and abilities, that directs employees' actions towards meeting organizational goals. Yusoff et al., (2020) define green training as an additional learning and on-the-job training provided by the organization aimed at incorporating green management goals in GHRM practices. Additionally, he states that organizations benefit from implementing green training since it aids in the establishment of high-level standards within the company thus increasing their competitive advantage. Wong (1998) noted that green training can improve employees' understanding of the importance of environmental management, as well as improve their knowledge about pro-environmental activities. This results in employees being more attentive to environmental protection. Incorporating green training as a part of the job requirement is critical for motivating them to engage in environmental performance (Yafi et al., 2021). Organizations need to communicate those

policies and procedures in an interesting manner that will motivate and engage them to participate in those sustainable activities. Green training and additional education should be provided to every employee, regardless of their role and job description (Tang et al., 2018).

### **Green performance management**

According to Ahmand (2015), performance evaluations are the most important component of green performance management for both employers and workers, since they impact the process and efficacy of subsequent awards and pay. As a result, performance management systems must have clear green performance indicators. Performance management is a practice aimed at improving employees' professional abilities and performance, in order to help the organization accomplish its objectives. Renwick et al., (2013) observe that applying performance management to environmental management has its downsides. One of them is determining how to assess environmental performance through various organizational departments and obtain accurate and useful data. Abbas (2020) proposes that the TQM system (total quality management) is one of the approaches an organization can use to improve its green performance. Yusr et al., (2017) believe that TQM is a pro-environment system that can reduce or minimize the waste an organization is producing.

### **Green involvement**

Employee relations and collective bargaining are critical in implementing an organization's environmental management plans and programs in the framework of GHRM (Shah, 2019). Renwick et al., (2013) suggest that other employees, rather than just managers and specialists, should participate and contribute to environmental management, which is considered to be essential for positive results and outcomes. Employment involvement in environmental management appears to have three main activities: actively encourage and motivate employees to contribute by making suggestions for environmental improvements; create a workplace culture that supports environmental management efforts, and discover tacit knowledge their employees acquire during their work. Tang et al., (2018) suggest that green activities such as publishing newsletters, forming green teams, or forming a problem-solving group may be used to incentivize employee participation in environmental management. By encouraging green involvement, employees have an opportunity to engage and use their skills and knowledge to participate in the improvement of quality and in problem-solving activities that are connected with environmental issues. This is seen as an effective method to encourage employees to become involved in environmental management. Ahmad (2015) confirms that chances of



improved green management are increasing by aligning employees' activities, objectives, and goals with green management practices.

### **Green pay and reward**

Green pay and reward can come in many shapes (Jerónimo et al., 2020). It can be monetary (e.g., financial incentives for employees to buy green products), non-monetary (e.g., flexible work schedule), promotion (e.g., promoting to a higher job position), recognition-based (e.g., praise from superiors), and negative reinforcement (e.g., warnings). This incentive system should be set up to motivate, promote and encourage positive environmental behavior and practices. By incorporating green practices in the pay and reward system, there can be an increase in employees adopting and committing to pro-environmental practices. Ahmed (2015) states that pay and reward can be seen as a possible strategy for encouraging environmental initiatives in the organization in the context of GHRM. Nowadays, organizations are designing rewards systems to promote environmentally friendly efforts undertaken by employees. According to Pellegrini et al. (2018), the incentive has a favorable impact on long-term sustainable behavior. In addition, Tang et al. (2018) suggest that employees should be rewarded with non-monetary rewards that are connected to environmental management, such as green travel benefits.

### **Sustainability and Green management in the hospitality**

The tourism and hospitality industry plays an essential role in the global economy since it significantly contributes to the world's economy and global GDP. World Travel and Tourism Council (2019) reports that the tourism industry has created 319 million jobs, making up 10% of total employment, and has contributed to the global service sector, accounting for 10.4% of global GDP in 2018 (WTTC, 2019). Consequently, this makes the tourism industry one of the world's largest consumers of natural resources. Since it contributes to and is influenced by environmental issues, the tourism industry must be a part of the change and is required to minimize the effect of those environmental issues, along with adapting to the threats it poses.

The tourism and hospitality industry are critical for this change since it provides good employment, secure income, and protects the heritage of the destination. This includes creating destinations and communities that are sustainable, green, safe, and healthy based on successful models practiced by equally sustainable industries. In addition, since the tourism industry has extensive interconnections with other industries, gives this industry the ability to be an initiator for systemic change (WTTC,2019).

Brundtland Report (1987), was the first one to define sustainable development as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." As stated by Tosun (1998), sustainable development can be viewed as all types of tourism developments that contribute to, or do not contradict, the long-term development principles without negatively impacting future generations and their ability to meet their own needs and desires. UNESCO (2015) defines sustainability as a model of thinking about the future in which economic, environmental, and societal determinants are harmonized in the pursuit of a better quality of life.

Since the introduction of different environmental management systems, that follow the criteria of "International Organization of Standardization" known as ISO 14001, and Agenda 21 in the 1990s, environmental management's importance has increased. Environmental management represents a significant issue in the tourism and hospitality industry, and thus the industry has a vested interest in environmental protection considering that safe and attractive surroundings are a part of the core product it offers (Chan 2016).

Adopting sustainable practices many enhance organizational performance by actions such as lowering energy consumption and expenses, reducing waste, improving risk readiness, fuel efficiency improvements, including enhancing brand awareness and potential of revenue growth and development. In addition, these sustainable practices can boost an organization's competitive advantage and increase its attractiveness towards customers, employees, and other stakeholders (WTTC, 2019).

Deraman et.al (2017) claim that guests are nowadays becoming more conscious and environmentally concerned, therefore it is expected from the hospitality industry to become more environmentally responsible, transparent, and accountable for their contribution to environmental protection. As a result, organizations are implementing basic green practices such as reusing and recycling programs. The awareness of building and carrying out these green practices seems to have a positive impact. In addition, guests feel responsible to contribute to these sustainable practices without expecting any personal gains or rewards from environmental protection and conservation activities (Deraman et al. 2017).

According to Bohdanowicz (2005), the growth and success rate of the hospitality industry in tourism destinations are dependent on the continuous availability of natural resources. Many of the hotel services are resource-intensive, which results in a substantial influence on ecological footprint. Tourism destinations use the natural beauty of the destination as one of

their most valuable tourist assets to attract tourists, thus being threatened by the decline of the quality of the natural environment, as well as the unsustainable use of natural resources. Consequently, the top of the priorities for the business agenda should be preserving a high level of environmental quality, as advocated by green management within the hospitality industry. For those changes to take place, in addition to necessary expertise and financial resources, organizations in the industry have to be willing to act environmentally responsible and develop sustainable practices.

Hopkins (2009) states that there are both external and internal drivers of sustainability management that pressure companies to embrace sustainable practices. Environmental issues, market, suppliers, human and societal values, legal compliance, public, and competitors are considered to be external drivers for sustainability management. Internal drivers are those such as innovation, shortage of resources, risk management, cost reduction, leadership, moral and ethical obligation. These drivers are important since they have a huge impact on organizations' ability to attract and retain their employees, reduce costs, increase product productivity and quality, establish trust outside the company, and help enhance corporate and brand reputation.

Sustainable Development Goals have emerged from a joint effort by the World Tourism Organization and its partners with the goal of the tourism industry advancing their sustainable development through 2030 by aligning business practices and policies to those sustainable development goals. The tourism industry is acknowledged as a critical contributor to economic growth through job creation, decreasing poverty rates, and offering incentives for the conservation of the environment. Hence, the tourism industry has the potential to significantly accelerate the progress of aligning with sustainable development (UNWTO, 2018).

### **Employer branding and attractiveness**

Organizations are encountering problems with efforts to retain existing and attract potential employees considering the rapid growth of labor shortages across different industries (De Smet et al., 2021). A significant number of employees on the labor market are quitting or are considering doing so. Poor employee experience is one of the main reasons why employees are leaving their organizations. They are turning towards those organizations in which, among many things, they can create meaningful social connections and interactions, are valued by the organization, and are feeling a sense of the shared social identity. Organizations that make their work fulfilling through creating a sense of purpose, meaningful work and are providing better, more stable career paths will have an advantage in attracting and retaining talent. Hence, those

organizations are turning towards branding, increasing attractiveness as an employer, and using it as a key competitive advantage.

To increase their competitive advantage, companies are making strategic investments into employer branding strategies, that aid them in attracting and attaining talent and becoming an employer-of-choice, therefore increasing their employer reputation and competitive advantage (Kalinska-Kula & Staniec, 2021).

Introduced by Ambler and Barrow (1996), employer branding was described as a combination of psychological, functional, and economical advantages provided by the employer within the company. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) define employer branding as an organization's attempt to promote their employer identity and create an image of an attractive and desirable employer, both externally and internally. CIPD (2008) explained employer branding as a set of qualities and traits that differentiate the organization from its competitors, that attracts potential employees, and who offers a distinct type of employment experience. Ghielen et al., (2021) describe employer branding as a process that promotes an organization as a desirable and attractive employer for both current and potential employees. According to Backhaus (2016), the goal of employer branding is to increase employee commitment to the organization and emotional connection with the brand, as well as differentiate themselves on the employer market.

In the context of person-environment and person-organization fit, individuals are seeking environments and organizations that are compatible with their personal qualities and traits (Ghielen et al., 2021). Those individuals are searching for an environment that will reinforce their identity and meet their personal needs. Organizations must actively meet those expectations since it encourages employee engagement and retention, thus increasing employee commitment and improving overall performance (Arasanmi & Krishna, 2019). Employees whose needs are satisfied and who have a sense of belonging, have a high level of commitment and a strong emotional attachment to the organization, therefore are more likely to stay within that same organization. Incorporating different branding strategies and policies assist organizations to increase their attractiveness, as well as recruit, engage and retain their employees

Employer image and attractiveness have emerged from employer branding, whose practices are having a direct impact on employer attractiveness (Kalinska-Kula & Staniec, 2021). As mentioned, to successfully attract and attain talented employees it is crucial for an organization

to become an attractive employer on the market (Story et al., 2016). Organizational attractiveness can be defined as the willingness of job seekers to pursue and accept employment offers within that same company. The attractiveness may be enhanced by the organization's image and reputation they have on the market as an employer. If an organization is seen as caring concerning societal issues that are relevant from the perspective of job seekers, those organizations seem more trustworthy and creditable, thus increasing their willingness to apply for that organization as an employer-of-choice.

Several factors are influencing an employer's attractiveness, such as pay and reward, working conditions, education and development opportunities, job security, nature and content of work, career advancement, and corporate social responsibility. Benefits of employer attractiveness are enhanced company image, increased employee loyalty and productivity, attraction and retention of talent, and improved trust within and outside the company (Hathever, 2021).

An organization's ability to recruit a talented and skilled workforce is enhanced by obtaining an attractive employer image which leads to an increase in employee productiveness and creativeness, hence increasing the overall competitiveness of the organization (Figurska & Matuska, 2013). The tourism and hospitality industry, being labor-intensive, requires large numbers of talented and skilled employees. This proposes one of the biggest challenges for the organizations in this industry, considering the large numbers of labor shortages and high turnover rates (Karanasiopoulou & Tsakiridou, 2021). Given all things mentioned, it is evident that employees are a critical source of competitiveness, and that companies are actively competing for those talented and skilled employees.

### **Job seekers and green agenda**

Promoting the organization as responsible and committed to suitability through recruitment helps the process of attracting young talent (Carballo-Penela et al., 2020). Younger generations seem to appear to be more conscious of environmental problems and sustainability concerns, where many applicants are seeking organizations that share their commitment to sustainability.

Social identity theory proposes that our self-concept consists out of both personal identity, composed of individual distinctive characteristics of the self, and social identity, acquired from the social groups one belongs to (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016). Those social groups can be based on different characteristics such as large-scale social categories (e.g., age, gender, language, ethnicity), interest-based groups (e.g., climate change), and those groups we voluntarily chose to belong to (e.g., sports team fans).

Environmental issues are most commonly connected with intergroup relations (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016). Those intergroup relations have a huge impact and influence on shaping the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the group members, that are associated with environmental issues. Whether one supports or opposes environmental issues depends on which social group they identify with. When an individual associates themselves with a certain social group identity, the process of that identity categorization highlights the similarities and differences between themselves and other ingroup members. Thereby, the attitude, beliefs, and behavior of an individual are assimilated with the norms set by the group's social salience. Therefore, it is recognized that individuals who are more closely affiliated with the group are more impacted by the ingroup norms.

This social identity theory can be applied to employers and individuals' intention to apply. According to Chaudhary (2018), "...the greater the similarity applicants perceive they share with the organization, as evaluated during the recruitment experience with the organization, the stronger will be their organizational identification."

Individuals who are members of a certain social identity group feel more comfortable with their in-group members since they seem alike to those in-group members, and they view and evaluate things from their in-group's perspective (Brieger, 2019). Individuals who perceive they are a part of a social group will more likely act in a way that will benefit the well-being of the group, which leads to an increase in willingness to take actions that will benefit the group members. In addition, those individuals are more likely to display environmental concern and are willing to safeguard the environment when they are surrounded by other members with whom they share devotion and sympathy.

People are more likely to accept collective judgments, desires, and behavior patterns that are common within their social group (Fritzsche et al., 2018). Social identity influences individuals to become a part of collective behavior. Since issues, such as environmental, are an outcome of collective behavior, they are considered to be large-scale problems and are a common problem for different social groups.

Based on attraction-selection-attrition theory (Schneider, 1987), person-organization fit theory analyses the compatibility between an individual and organizational values and characteristics (Chaudhary, 2018). If a potential job candidate perceives that the organization's values fit with their own, they will show an interest to apply for those companies that are better person-organization fit. Organizations that recognize that current job seekers are more concerned with

environmental sustainability can strengthen their sustainability commitment and practices to attract young talent (Carballo-Penela et al., 2020). Hence, pro-environment organizations that practice green human resource management are more likely to be identified by individuals who value the environment (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016).

## **Method**

As mentioned, the main purpose of this research is to explore whether green human resources practices enhance a firm's attractiveness in acquiring new potential employees, with a focus on young talent.

In hospitality research, using a method of asking participants questions about their current and past behavior is a dominating technique to evaluate their behavior and to acquire empirical data, even though various behavioral measures are available (Dolnicar, 2018). For the purposes of this research, an online survey was used as a method and was distributed primarily through e-mail and social media networking, in the form of Google forms. Following that, the snowball sampling approach was employed in order to obtain additional survey participants. The targeted participants of this study were young hospitality professionals in the range of 20 to 30 years of age.

The survey's main goal is to answer the research question and to gather information about behaviors, beliefs, and knowledge (Story et al. 2018). A good survey should be brief, clear, and straightforward in order to increase response rates and reliability. Close-ended questions are commonly used in online surveys and are the best choice since they are less time-consuming, simple to evaluate, and are providing researchers with standardized responses. Thus, this survey will consist of close-ended questions in order to minimize the risks and increase validity. Additionally, online surveys are low-cost, convenient, have a short response time, and offer immediate access to a larger audience (Ilieva et.al 2002).

There are various risks connected with survey research (Dolnicar, 2018). Lack of validity and reliability, as well as social desirability bias and respondent fatigue, are frequent challenges researchers come across when conducting surveys. Valid inferences cannot be formed from the acquired data if the survey fails to measure what it is supposed to measure. In order to mitigate that risk, the Likert scale was used in order to ensure the validity of the survey. The format of the answers was in the shape of a five-point Likert scale where participants expressed their level of agreement with the given statement. In addition, other challenges connected with the

online survey are low response rate, reliability of answers, privacy, and sampling issues (Nayak and Narayan, 2019).

### **Instrument**

The instrument for this senior project was based on constructs and proposed measurement items from “Green human resource management practices: scale development and validity” (Tang et al. 2018). Authors have designed and validated a measurement instrument that analyzes and provides an understanding of Green human resource management practices. Their survey consists of 19 measurement items measured by using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). For the purposes of this project, the survey used was adjusted in order to serve this research’s needs and requirements. Instead of examining the GHRM practices in companies as the authors did in their research, in this project the focus was on measuring the preference to apply young talent for companies that engage in the Green HRM practices. In total, nine questions were taken from the research and have been adopted to measure the attractiveness of green HRM practices in companies from the perspective of young talent.

In addition, in order to measure “preference” Green HRM was contrasted to other job preferences through a series of questions set on a five-point side-by-side matrix scale. Survey participants had to choose their preference between Green HRM and other job preferences such as salary, working hours, workplace atmosphere, personal development, job security, and job location. These job preferences were adopted from “Job Selection Preferences Of Business Students” by Thompson et al. (2004). where the authors have created a table of the most important attributes based on previous studies on job attitude preferences of business students.

### **Sample**

The targeted participants of this study were young hospitality professionals in the range of 20 to 30 years of age. The survey was primarily distributed through e-mail in an online format and sent to RIT Croatia Dubrovnik and University of Dubrovnik students. In total, 103 responses have been recorded. Out of 103 responses, 67% were female participants (n=69), 32% were male participants (n=33), and 1 non-binary participant (1%). For the majority of participants, the highest level of education completed is a bachelor’s degree (n=45) and high school (n=43), followed by a master’s degree (n=15). (Table 1)

A greater part of the participants (n=86) is exposed to hospitality meaning they are either studying or working in hospitality, while a minority (n=26) is not exposed to hospitality,



meaning that their studies/work is not related to hospitality. In total, 63.1% of participants were targeted age group, between 20 and 30 years of age (n=65).

*Table 1: Demographic table of respondents*

	N	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	33	32,00%
Female	69	67,00%
Non-binary	1	1,00%
<b>Age</b>		
Under 19	0	0,00%
20-30	65	63.1 %
31-40	16	15,50%
41-50	18	17.5%
51-60	4	3.9%
Above 61	0	0,00%
<b>Education</b>		
High school	43	41,70%
Bachelor	45	43,70%
Master	15	14,60%
<b>Exposure to hospitality</b>		
Exposed to hospitality	86	76,79%
Not exposed to hospitality	26	23.21%

Source: Author

## Results

Statistical analysis shows agreement that participants would prefer to apply for a company that brands itself as green and chooses its candidates based on green criteria (M=3.93, SD=0.99). The highest results were noticed in green involvement (M=4.32, SD=0.97) followed by green pay and reward (M=4.24, SD=0.89) indicating that incentives and participation in problem-solving on green issues have a positive impact on participants. In addition, participants feel positive about organizations that offer training in environmental management (M=4.17, SD=0.78). The lowest results have been reported for green performance management where participants are slightly agreeing that they would like to work for a company that evaluates its employees based on green performance indicators (M=3.78, SD=1.09). (Table 2)

*Table 2: Descriptive statistics*

	Min	Max	Average	SD
Green recruitment and selection	3	10	3,93	0,99
Green training	2	5	4,17	0,78
Green performance indicators	2	10	3,78	1,09
Green involvement	1	10	4,32	0,97
Green pay and reward	3	10	4,24	0,89
Preference to apply	14	35	4,04	0,96

Source: Author

When comparing other job preferences with Green HRM practices results show that other job preferences are more important. There is an agreement that participants would rather apply for a job within an organization that nurtures environmental practices over an organization that does not ( $M=4.02$ ,  $SD=1.07$ ). Nonetheless, participants value the most personal development over environmentally sustainable practices ( $M=4.22$ ,  $SD=0.86$ ), as well as the workplace atmosphere ( $M=4.22$ ,  $SD=0.86$ ). The lowest score was for the job location ( $M=3.64$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ) indicating that there is a slight agreement that location is more important than the environmentally sustainable practices, but is not as significant as other job preferences.

*Table 3: Descriptive statistics*

	Min	Max	Average	SD
Preference to apply	1	5	4,02	1,07
Salary	1	5	3,95	0,89
Working hours	1	5	4,07	0,84
Workplace atmosphere	2	5	4,22	0,86
Personal development	1	5	4,28	0,86
Job security	1	5	4,08	0,89
Job location	1	5	3,64	1,14

Source: Author

The five variables were tested using correlation analysis. (Table 4)

*H1: The higher the Green recruitment and selection (GRS), the higher preference to apply.*

There is no correlation between Green recruitment and selection ( $r=0.19$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), therefore not confirming the hypothesis.

H2: *The higher the Green training (GT), the higher preference to apply.*

There is no correlation between Green training ( $r=0$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), therefore not confirming the hypothesis.

H3: *The higher the Green performance and management (GPM), the higher preference to apply.*

There is no correlation between Green performance and management ( $r=0.07$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), therefore not confirming the hypothesis.

H4: *The higher the Green involvement (GR), the higher preference to apply.*

There is no correlation between Green involvement ( $r=0.02$ ,  $p>0.05\%$ ), therefore not confirming the hypothesis.

H5: *The higher the Green pay and reward (GPR), the higher preference to apply.*

There is no correlation between pay and reward ( $r=0.08$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), therefore not confirming the hypothesis.

*Table 4: Correlation between different categories*

	PTA
Green recruitment and selection	0.19
Green training	0.00
Green performance indicators	0.07
Green involvement	0.02
Green pay and reward	0.08
Preference to apply	-

Source: Author

$p>0.05$  not significant

## **Discussion**

The purpose of this research was to explore whether green human resources practices enhance a firm's attractiveness in acquiring new potential employees, with a focus on young talent. The results have shown that overall respondents have a positive attitude toward green human

resource practices. In addition, results indicate that in general, respondents are attracted to organizations that have green human resource management practices in place.

Respondents show positive interest in organizations that select their job candidates based on green criteria and brand themselves as green. It is important for the organizations that their current and potential employees share the same values when it comes to pro-environmental behavior. In addition, respondents agree that they are attracted to organizations that offer green training programs in environmental management. Daily et al. (2012) findings show that all other aspects of GHRM implementation to the processes, principles, and actions are interconnected with effective green training.

Survey participants had a neutral opinion about green performance management which indicates that individuals neither agree nor disagree with organizations using green indicators to evaluate their employees. Green involvement received the highest score out of the other four GHRM practices where the result shows that individuals are positive about organizations that involve their employees in quality improvement and problem-solving on environmental issues. This indicates that participants would participate in knowledge-sharing and problem-solving through employee involvement programs, therefore contributing to pro-environmental behavior.

Green pay and reward has the second-highest score out of other GHRM practices in this research. The results indicate that individuals are having a positive feeling about participating in pro-environment practices if offered an incentive. Pay and reward can be used to encourage pro-environmental behavior in an organization. This can be supported by the previous research done by Jackson et al. (2011) where the authors state that compensation, rewards, and incentives have a positive influence on the motivation of the employees to act in accordance with environmental practices and activities.

Overall, individuals have a positive attitude toward green human resource practices and show a willingness to apply for a job in an organization that nurtures environmental practices over an organization that does not. However, even though participants have a positive attitude towards organizations that practice GHRM, there is no correlation between GHRM practices and preference to apply. This is contrary to Chaudhary's (2018) findings that noted there is a significant impact of GHRM practices on the job pursuit intention of potential job candidates.

When comparing GHRM practices with other job preferences such as salary, working hours, workplace atmosphere, personal development, job security, and job location; participants find

these job preferences somewhat more important than the company's environmentally sustainable practices. One should take into consideration the possibility of social desirability bias where participants may have had a tendency to present themselves in a more favorable way when it comes to preferring to apply for a company that nurtures environmental practices over an organization that has not. In addition, the targeted participants were young talents and their socioeconomic status should be taken into account when looking at the results. One of the assumptions may be that if young professionals are not financially stable, they will find their salary more important than the company's environmental practices. In addition, these results indicate that GHRM cannot be a replacement for any other job preference, yet can become an additional benefit or advantage when all other job preferences are satisfied.

In my view, the most compelling explanation for the present set of findings is that individuals and companies in this region in general lack environmental consciousness and pro-environmental behavior. Sinistaj's (2021) research shows that in implementing green initiatives and making important contributions to environmental activities, corporations in this region have demonstrated to be considerably more passive than proactive which supports the previous claim.

Numerous businesses have been turning to more sustainable and responsible practices over the years considering that environmental issues have become a primary concern worldwide. Either because of the law regulations, customer expectations, or corporate citizenship, these environmental issues have become the focal point in the different organizations throughout different industries. Human resource management plays a crucial role in adopting responsible and sustainable practices through different organizational levels and structures. However, one of the key issues nowadays is to attract and acquire a qualified and talented workforce, forcing companies into adopting new practices to attract potential employees. GHRM and pro-environmental practices can help an organization to develop a positive reputation, decrease stakeholder pressure, and benefit future generations. (Tang et al. 2018).

Green behavior and environmentally sustainable practices are a change that is looming at an unprecedented pace, where organizations will have to adapt to the different needs of customers and other stakeholders. Organizations should lead the way and become an example of green and sustainable behavior. This can be achieved through human resources management practices and digital transformation with a focus on sustainability. In addition, educational organizations should put effort into educating their students on green behavior and set green

agendas. This will induce students to behave more green and responsibly, where this must be supported and continuously developed throughout education and employment.

### **Limitations and recommendations**

When looking at the results, one should keep in mind the limitations of this study. The most significant limitation was the time considering we had a limited time frame to complete our research project. This created limited time constraints on acquiring survey participants therefore snowballing effect had to be used to acquire enough samples. Given that the snowballing effect was used to acquire participants for the research survey, these results are not considered a representative sample and cannot be used for representative or indicative purposes.

Considering time limitations and that the survey was filled with regional participants, the recommendation is to use a larger sample size of participants for future research. Furthermore, it is recommended to go into depth and explore sociocultural and socioeconomic attitudes and differences toward pro-environmental behavior.

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