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Advancing Green Management Practices through Green HRM: Empirical Insights from the RMG Sector of Bangladesh

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Abstract: Bangladesh is a frontrunner in the RMG sector, with the highest number of green factories worldwide. Green HRM is both directly and indirectly influencing the Human Resource management policies to contribute towards a sustainable business environment. The study aims to enrich the green ecosystem and enhance the literature in the proposed area by investigating the effects of GHRM on green management practices (GMP) controlled by employees' green behavior in the RMG sector. It takes a holistic perspective using survey data gathered from 126 RMG HR professionals, and the analysis was conducted with structural equation modeling. The findings show that green pay and reward do not positively affect employee green performance and GMP in our study. Instead, other environmental management variables, such as green hiring and promotion, training and development, and determining green performance demands, are important in influencing employees to display a profound level of green behavior and manage them "green". The initiative of this study will help Bangladesh's RMG factory managers leverage GHRM effectively to adopt and implement GMPs, which are essential for attracting foreign buyers and may trigger greater economic success. The findings of the study may inform future researchers investigating GHRM practices in other sectors and expanding on the related variables of this phenomenon.

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Introduction

The Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry of Bangladesh has consistently contributed to diverse dimensions of GDP, including export revenue, foreign direct investment, and employment creation, thereby enhancing the nation's economic welfare. The sector rose as the sole substantial source of export income in the early 1990s. Total exports grew swiftly from less than 5% in the mid-1980s to around 60% within around ten years. Currently contributing more than 7% to global apparel exports, Bangladesh is the second-largest garment exporter worldwide, based on both financial and quantitative measures (Rafique & Islam, 2025). According to the BGMEA database, in the 2022-23 fiscal year, the RMG sector accounted for more than 85% of Bangladesh's total exports, generating substantial employment opportunities for around 4 million people, the majority of whom were women. This growth brings with it its share of challenges with dire consequences, such as substantial wastewater volumes, biochemical contamination, and supply chain bottlenecks. It also serves as a motivator for decarbonizing business strategies, attracting investments in climate solutions, addressing regulatory clarity, addressing unmet infrastructure needs, and assuring healthier working conditions (Hossain et al., 2018).

The term human resource management (HRM) is defined to extricate it from the traditional concept of personnel management, and these impact hypotheses must also be testable, with a trivial share contributed by communal industrial relations (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). Nonetheless, consciousness for the environment is snowballing, and a new direction towards green human resource management (GHRM), including environmental aspects in HR management, has become evident in recent years. Various authors have differently theorized it in the literature. GHRM is a means of highlighting certain HR practices that positively enhance the organization's performance, community, and environmentally friendly settings. It embodies HRM policies and practices by integrating green HR practices to use resources more economically. It endorses sustainability efforts, such as waste minimization, work-life balance, e-filing, carpooling, and energy-efficient office management, which serve as brilliant examples of an eco-friendly workplace that inspires its employees and benefits society. It is a broad concept that recognizes changes as lawful organizational practices. (Srividya et al., 2022; Mousa & Othman, 2020).

GHRM advocated the inclusion of environmental values into HRM principles. It consists of green recruitment and selection (GRS), the processes that organizations follow to find candidates whose environmental values align with their own; green training and development (GTD), whereby employees learn about the company's role in this area and internalize how to perform better and reduce such impacts; green performance management (GPM) that measures how employees contribute to achieving environmental goals; finally it addresses a green pay and reward (GPR) system, where employee behavior is steered through structured pay scheme that rewards environmentally conscious choices (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021; Zhang et al., 2019). Based on the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Institutional Theory, GHRM proposes that if an organization visibly incorporates sustainability into its practices, it will not only enhance its competitive advantage but also comply with institutional demands for ecological responsibility (Renwick et al., 2012). The institutional theory postulates that the adoption

of practices aimed at improving environmental performance is a consequence of legitimacy, under coercive, normative, and mimetic pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Despite the global shift towards sustainability, few structured studies have investigated the impact of GHRM practices in Bangladesh (Islam et al., 2020). Among most of the research on RMG industries, none have explored the challenges and opportunities of the implementation of GHRM practices in a developing country like Bangladesh (Satata & Sakib, 2025). On the other hand, studies conducted in developed countries were highly focused on service-oriented sectors, yielding comparatively less empirical evidence for labor-intensive manufacturing sectors such as the RMG industry (Renwick et al., 2012; Mousa & Othman, 2020). The existing literature often treats GHRM as a single, unified construct. It fails to analyze the distinct effects of individual practices (such as GRS, GTD, GPM, and GPR) on employee behavior and organizational sustainability outcomes (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021). As a result, there is still insufficient research on whether existing GHRM frameworks are applicable in manufacturing contexts in developing countries. This void is worth exploring, as it offers insights into how GHRM can improve operational performance, sustainability, and competitiveness in the RMG sector, thereby contributing to further academic research with real-world applications. Moreover, studies on Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) in the Bangladeshi RMG sector are also scarce. While prior work identifies implementation challenges, a lack of institutional support, and a general lack of organizational preparedness for environmental HR practices, research has insufficiently explored the mechanisms through which these factors affect pro-environmental behavior and subsequent sustainability performance at the employee level (Islam et al., 2020).

Despite an increasing interest in GHRM, significant research gaps remain. First, there is a notable contextual gap: the study of GHRM practices has been limited to labor-intensive manufacturing industries, such as the RMG sector, in developing countries like Bangladesh. Second, there is a lack of empirical evidence, as most prior research has been conducted in developed economies and service-based organizations, limiting generalizability to emerging markets. Third, there is a conceptual gap: past research often treats GHRM as a unified construct, overlooking the differentiated effects of its core components on employees' environmental attitudes and behaviors. Lastly, an additional theoretical gap exists in integrating the Resource-Based View and the Institutional Theory into a single framework that explains both internal capability development (processes) as well as external institutional pressures to adopt GHRM.

This study provides important contributions by addressing the gaps. First, it offers empirical evidence from the Bangladesh Ready-Made Garments (RMG) sector, a significant yet under-researched manufacturing context in sustainability and HRM research. Second, it provides deeper insight into GHRM by dissecting its core dimensions individually and evaluating their effect on employee environmental behavior and organizational sustainability performance. Third, by building on the RBV and Institutional Theory, this study contributes theoretically to the emerging literature on GHRM adoption by illustrating that both internal organizational capabilities and external institutional pressures jointly influence the GHRM adoption process. In conclusion, the

research provides useful insights for policymakers, factory owners, and HR practitioners in formulating practical green HR practices to promote environmental sustainability adaptation among local export-oriented manufacturing sectors.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is the integration of environmental concerns into an organization's human resource management policies to strengthen environmental stewardship and encourage employees' eco-conscious behavior. Environmental sustainability concerns in corporate contexts are increasingly gaining momentum, particularly in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Organizations across all fields are emphasizing green initiatives (Elder & Olsen, 2019). They are no longer profit-oriented; they have also begun to prioritize environmentalism (van Zanten & van Tulder, 2018). As a result, organizations are restructuring their objectives and policies to uphold their sustainability profile (Yakovleva & Vazquez-Brust, 2018).

The ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh is one of its major contributors to economic growth. Albeit, this growth brings with it a handful of detrimental environmental impacts. This engenders a need for GMP. GHRM acts as a key enabler of innovation by integrating green policies and concerns into the organization's HR practices, including staffing, employee development, appraisal, and incentive systems (Mahi Uddin, 2022). This study is grounded in the Resource-Based View (RBV), the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) framework, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), and Institutional Theory to explain how Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) influences Employees' Green Behavior (EGB) and Green Management Practices (GMP).

From the Resource-Based View (RBV), organizations achieve sustainable competitive advantage through valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources. In this context, GHRM is conceptualized as a strategic organizational capability that enhances environmental performance and sustainability outcomes by developing firm-specific human capital and green organizational routines. (Barney, 1991; Malik et al., 2020). The AMO framework explains the behavioral mechanism linking HR practices and employee outcomes. Green recruitment enhances opportunity alignment, green training develops ability, while green rewards and performance management enhance motivation and behavioral direction. (Ahmad et al., 2023; Appelbaum et al., 2001; Faisal, 2023). Thus, AMO provides the micro-foundation for how GHRM translates into Employees' Green Behavior.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) further suggests that behavior is shaped by reciprocal interactions among cognition, the environment, and behavior. GHRM acts as an environmental stimulus that strengthens employees' environmental self-efficacy, attitudes, and behavioral intention, leading to sustained EGB (Fawehinmi et al., 2024). Institutional Theory further explains why an organization adopts green practices under external pressures and legitimacy concerns. International buyers' coercive pressures, environmental regulations, sustainability certifications, and the influence of stakeholders worldwide are increasingly creating an urgency for organizations in the Bangladesh RMG sector to institutionalize green organizational practices. Therefore, GHRM is used

by companies not only to improve internal environmental performance but also to achieve legitimacy and gain a competitive edge in global supply chains.

Recent literature increasingly supports these theoretical explanations. For example, Ercantan & Eyupoglu (2022) and Fawehinmi et al. (2024) found that GHRM significantly enhances employee environmental behavior through psychological mechanisms. Similarly, Ali et al. (2024) confirmed that green HR practices improve environmental performance through behavioral mediation. However, recent studies also highlight inconsistencies, suggesting that GHRM effectiveness is context-dependent. For instance, Aftab et al. (2023) and Tahir et al. (2024) found that GHRM does not always translate into environmental performance unless supported by a strong environmental strategy and leadership. Likewise, Veerasamy et al. (2024) show that moderation and contextual factors significantly influence the strength of GHRM–EGB relationships. These findings indicate that GHRM effects are not universal but contingent on organizational conditions.

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM)

GRS plays a mediating role, directly leading to further extra-role green employee behavior, which is a forerunner of successful green-oriented management practices and sustainability performance. Building on this, using available empirical evidence and case studies from the manufacturing and service industries, evidence has established the pivotal role of GRS in fostering employees' commitment to environmental management values that activate green behavior, contributing to positive organizational sustainability performance (Shah & Soomro, 2023; Veerasamy et al., 2024). According to the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm, green recruitment and selection (GRS) enables organizations to create a network of valuable green human capital that effectively transforms into a sustainable competitive capability. The AMO approach can be useful for increasing the likelihood of an organizational climate focused on pro-environmentalism by recruiting environmentally conscious employees to enhance motivational alignment and by offering them opportunities to engage in pro-environmental behavior. Specifically, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) asserts that nurtured organizational environments conducive to pro-environmental behavior lead employees to learn and cement green norms. Hence, green recruitment employees are more likely to exhibit environmentally friendly workplace behaviors. A study by Ercantan & Eyupoglu (2022) showed that it had a significant impact on the environmental behavior of employees. Similarly, AlKetbi & Rice (2024) and Madero-Gómez et al. (2023) posit a positive association with sustainability-related employee outcomes. However, contradictory findings exist. Faeni et al. (2025) discuss that recruitment has a limited behavioral application unless coupled with training and reward systems. This thus indicates that GRS may be both a necessary but not sufficient condition for EGB.

GTD has the potential to endorse environmental management practices by helping develop relevant employee skills and knowledge and boosting sustainable attitudes and motivation in the workplace. Such training and motivation enhance green behavior and operational effectiveness and help craft sustainability strategies (Shah & Soomro, 2023;

Yafi et al., 2021). In essence, when GTD is linked to other GHRM practices, it fosters a green climate that enhances organizational long-term commitment to sustainability (Abbas et al., 2022; Shah & Soomro, 2023; Veerasamy et al., 2024). The AMO framework suggests that green training and development improve employees' environmental capabilities by enhancing green knowledge, competencies, and problem-solving authority. According to SCT, training builds environmental self-efficacy and confidence in action-taking, which leads employees to convert green awareness into work-based green behavior. According to the RBV and VRIO frameworks, skilled employees in environmental affairs are strategic intangible resources that drive sustained performance over time. Sun et al. (2024) found that green training significantly improved environmental performance. Moreover, Miah et al. (2024) found that supports this from a sample in the context of developing economies: green training improves environmental knowledge-sharing and workplace green behavior. However, inconsistent findings also exist. According to Mousa & Othman (2020) Training alone may not result in practice change because it is poorly supported by very few organizational systems that incentivize behavior, thus demonstrating an intention-behavior gap.

GPM factors in employees' sustainable behaviors during performance appraisal. It provides a strong foundation for managerial accountability in advocating eco-friendly practices among the workforce. It also incorporates green thinking into core employee behaviors, such as optimism, engagement, and creativity, which, in turn, act as motivators of eco-friendly behavior (Kuo et al., 2022). Although variations are likely across industries, GPM implementation has received strong support from sectors such as hospitality, manufacturing, and healthcare, in which earlier observations of this variable have demonstrated strong predictive power for environmental outcomes (Huo et al., 2022). Based on the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity Framework, GPM can motivate employees and systematically provide opportunities for pro-environmental change through accountability and feedback systems. In the same vein, Social Cognitive Theory states that sustained behavioral learning and behavioral commitment to the environment are reinforced through ongoing mechanisms for performance feedback among employees. Additionally, from a Resource-Based View perspective, environmental performance systems can be viewed as an organized (strategic) capability of an organization that enables the development of sustainable competencies specific to the firm. Empirical evidence shows positive effects. Ali et al. (2024) and Huo et al. (2022) established that the GPM enhances employees' environmental conduct and sustainability outcomes. However, according to Patwary et al. (2025), GPM may create a compliance-based or an intrinsic environmental motivation. It highlights that performance systems do not necessarily always achieve big behavioral change.

Both financial and non-financial GPR are motivational factors that encourage employees to contribute to sustainable practices on which successful green management is founded (Jamal et al., 2021; Kuo et al., 2022). Several similar studies in the industry have reported that structuring salaries based on environmental targets enhances sustainability performance and supports the attraction and retention of employees committed to green ambition (Jamal et al., 2021; Khatoon et al., 2022; Kuo et al., 2022; Shah & Soomro, 2023). Reward systems are key motivational mechanisms within the Ability–Motivation–

Opportunity Framework that help shape employee attitudes and behavioral engagement. Likewise, the premise of Social Cognitive Theory is that positive reinforcement, namely reward through recognition or social endorsement, supports desirable environmental behavior via behavioral conditioning. The Resource-Based View (RBV) perspective reveals the overall sustainable retention of environmentally committed employees and enhances the long-term organization's sustainability capability through green reward systems. Empirical studies, for example, Aboramadan and Karatepe (2021) and Jamal et al. (2021), show that green rewards are much more effective than standard incentives in promoting environmental behavior. However, contradictory evidence exists. Khatoon et al. (2022) and Liu et al. (2022) suggest that environmental intrinsic motivations may diminish when a person is given excessive extrinsic rewards, making them less effective in the long term. Together, these four practices also represent a core driver of EGB, which plays a key role in achieving organizational sustainability.

H1: GRS positively influences EGB
H2: GTD positively influences EGB
H3: GPM positively influences EGB
H4: GPR positively influences EGB

Besides EGB, the same GHRM practices have also been directly linked to GMP as part of their organizational-level environmental initiatives to promote sustainable performance. GRS is the process of attracting and recruiting people who demonstrate a preference for and are inclined to pro-environmental behavior. The Resource-Based View shows that environmentally conscious employees can enhance an organization's environmental capabilities, thereby improving sustainable operational performance. The A–M–O Framework also indicates that HR systems designed to align with organizational goals of environmental sustainability enable collective action for sustainable practices within organizations. Wang et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of GRS in attracting employees with eco-awareness who are willing to work in an environmentally friendly organization. Jamal et al. (2021) also reported that GRS contribute to corporate sustainability by helping to identify candidates who share similar values. Faisal (2023) noted that eco-friendly practices enabled the organization to accomplish more in a green context. GTD refers to employee training on environmental management systems and sustainability. According to the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity Framework, training improves employees' environmental competence and their involvement in sustainability activities. The Resource-Based View also explains that employees with environmental skills become an ideal organizational resource that supports capabilities on sustainable operations. Haque et al. (2024) found that green competency fosters greater work engagement with environmental initiatives through the sharing of green knowledge. Environmental knowledge and green self-efficacy can be developed through training and are pertinent to the formation of green behavior (Miah, Szabó-Szentgróti, et al., 2024). Ahmed et al. (2021a) observed that this type of training program cultivates an environmentally responsible organizational culture. GPM means incorporating the sustainability aspects into an employee's KPA. Drawing on the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity Framework, structured environmental evaluation systems encourage employee involvement and shape organizational sustainability efforts. Similarly, the

Resource-Based View views environmental performance systems as key organizational capabilities for sustainable, long-term environmental management. Malik et al. (2021) observed that green performance appraisal could improve green OCB. Hameed et al. (2022) showed that when employees perceive strong organizational support for green initiatives, this amplifies the association between green performance assessment and the cultivation of green creativity. Therefore, GPM works to ensure that employees' performance aligns with the organization's sustainability goals.

The phrase GPR is a simplified notation for the approach, which describes a mechanism for rewarding people and the agreed-upon basis for such GPR rewards. The Ability–Motivation–Opportunity framework explains that reward systems support employee motivation toward organizations' sustainability goals. At the same time, the Resource-Based View suggests that environmentally committed employees are central to the organization's long-term sustainability capability. Moreover, Social Cognitive Theory indicates that positive reinforcement and organizational learning mechanisms foster environmentally responsible behavior through reward and recognition systems. Faisal (2023) claimed that the green compensation drives have a positive effect on environmental sustainability. Organizations that use green reward systems tend to foster intrinsic motivation among their employees, which, in turn, raises performance levels and encourages a positive workplace attitude (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021). U. Ahmed et al. (2021b) emphasized that awareness of the outcomes of green initiatives enhances employee motivation to participate. From RBV, GHRM builds up dynamic environmental capabilities. The AMO theory posits that HR systems are interrelated, and enhanced, synchronized systems create organization-level sustainability. SCT highlights the institutionalization of green behavior.

Empirical support is strong. Ercantan & Eyupoglu (2022) and Ali et al. (2024) Confirming the positive role of GHRM on environmental performance also demonstrates that the mediating role of employee behavior in the relationship between employee behavior and firm environmental performance supports firm environmental performance. However, contradictory findings persist. Aftab et al. (2023) and Tahir et al. (2024) argue that merely instituting GHRM is insufficient without accounting for environmental strategy, leadership commitment, and organizational culture.

Overall, these findings provide a strong foundation to formulate the following hypotheses:

H5: GRS positively influences GMP
H6: GTD positively influences GMP
H7: GPM positively influences GMP
H8: GPR positively influences GMP

Employees' Green Behavior (EGB)

Employees' Green Behavior (EGB) comprises employee attitudes and activities aimed at promoting environmental sustainability in the workplace. Miah, Rahman, et al. (2024) found that awareness of environmental concerns reinforces employees' morale and encourages active participation in environmentally friendly initiatives. SCT interprets

EGB as behavior reflecting ongoing interactions between environmental stimuli and cognition, whereas AMO theory considers it the behavioral outcomes of HR-facilitated ability, motivation, and opportunity. In practice, EGB has been repeatedly confirmed as a mediator in numerous empirical studies. Ercantan & Eyupoglu (2022) provide evidence that EGB also mediates the effect of GHRM on environmental performance. Similarly, Madero-Gómez et al. (2023) found partial mediation effects. However, Gupta & Kaur (2024) found partial mediation, indicating that other organizational factors, such as leadership and culture, are also important.

H9: EGB mediates the relationship between

a) GRS and GMP
b) GTD and GMP
c) GPM and GMP
d) GPR and GMP

Green Management Practices (GMP)

Green Management Practices (GMPs) are a wide-ranging set of practices aimed at reducing the carbon footprint and other detrimental impacts, and promoting sustainability across the organization. RBV views EGB as a dynamic capability that strengthens GMP. Environmental behavior is shaped by the dynamic interaction among environmental stimuli, cognitive learning, and organizational reinforcement systems, as viewed through the lens of Social Cognitive Theory. The Ability–Motivation–Opportunity Framework extends EGB to encompass behavioral outcomes resulting from employees' environmental abilities, motivation, and opportunities to participate created through HR practices. The second basis is the Resource-Based View, which states that employee environmental behavior is a strategic organizational capability that, in turn, supports sustainable management systems and sustained long-term environmental performance. Liaquat et al. (2024) found evidence of interrelationships between EGBs and environmental performance, with mediating variables exerting a strong positive effect on environmental performance. Ali et al. (2024) build on this by arguing that, when combined with green supply chain management, GHRM improves overall environmental stewardship. Munawar et al. (2022) and Kuo et al. (2022) studied the interplay between green innovation and human capital. The study's outcomes depicted an evident mediating relationship between the two variables and their impact on firms' environmental performance. The application of GMP in businesses emphasizes that adopting green policies facilitates aligning core business practices with established environmental objectives. However, contradictory findings indicate that EGB does not automatically carry over to a formal GMP unless supported by supportive systems and a shared vision (Aftab et al., 2023).

H10: EGB positively influences GMP

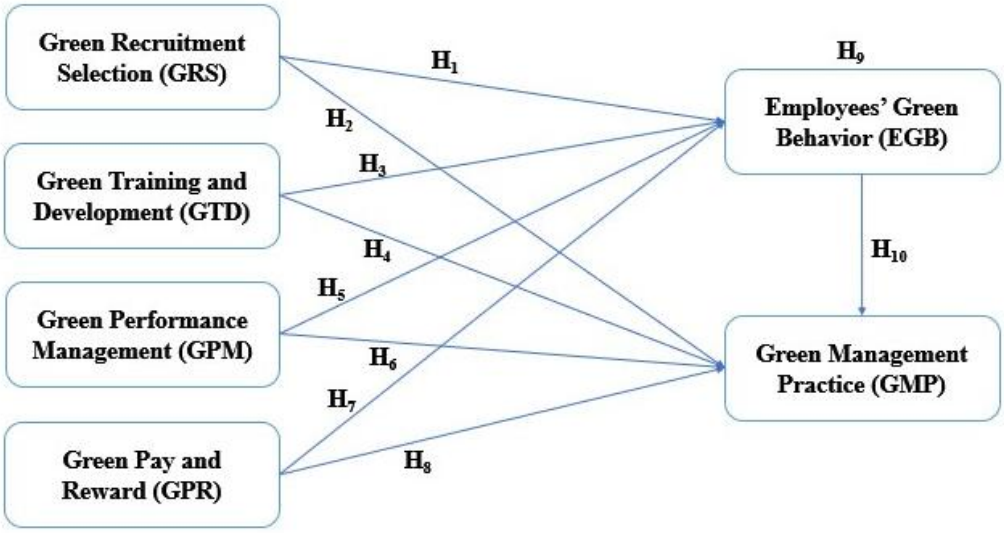


Figure 1: Research Framework

Thus, the findings from our literature review align with our theoretical model. The four GHRM practices (GRS, GTD, GPM, and GPR) significantly predict environmentally friendly employee behavior. These practices are tied to the mass adaptation of GMP. The findings from this review may provide a theoretical basis for future empirical research into how GHRM might drive sustainable, eco-friendly change in Bangladesh's RMG industry.

Methodology

Study instrument

A survey instrument was developed following an extensive review of the relevant literature to collect the required data. The GRS construct was measured using three items taken from Suleman et al. (2024) and Tirno et al. (2023). Similarly, GTD was operationalized with three items as well from the same sources. For GPM, three items were modified from Suleman et al. (2024). However, three items were developed for GPR, based on the work of Suleman et al. (2024). Zihan et al. (2024) measured EGB among Employees and GMP using three items, taken from Dumont et al. (2017) and Oyetunde et al. (2023), respectively. A five-point Likert scale 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) was used to measure all the constructs.

The domain of the study

The research was conducted in Bangladesh's Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry, and firms that adopted or intend to adopt GHRM practices were surveyed. HR personnel, administrative staff, and workers from some RMG factories were selected as key informants, as they are direct stakeholders in the company's GHRM policies. A structured questionnaire via Google Forms was used to collect qualitative data. The

research used a snowball sampling method, as participants who responded early forwarded the survey to other members of interest. This method enabled the researcher to obtain targeted responses from employees across the RMG sector and facilitated data collection.

Sample size

We used G*Power 3.1 software to calculate the sample size for this study. (Faul et al., 2009). Analysis parameters were set at a medium effect size (f2) of 0.05, with a significant level (α) of 0.05, and a statistical power of 0.95 (Faul et al., 2009). Under these settings, the sample size required to test the model was calculated as 111. Additionally, the sample size was verified according to the 5-times rule of thumb proposed by Hair et al. (2017), which states that the sample size should be at least 5 times the total number of items. As 18 items were used in this study, a sample size of at least 90 is needed. As Tirno et al. (2020) also applied a similar rule of thumb in their empirical investigation of organizational practices in Bangladesh, this approach will ensure that the sample size is sufficiently large to yield reliable results. After all considerations, 126 valid responses were collected, which provided a sufficient statistical basis for data analysis.

Study tools

This research used a Google Form to collect research data from the respondents. After the collection, the data were classified and sorted using MS Excel. The descriptive statistics were prepared using the same tool. The study used SmartPLS version 4 to analyze the data due to its capability to analyze complex relations among endogenous and exogenous variables. Reliability, validity, and multicollinearity tests were conducted using SmartPLS. The study ran a bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples to conduct the path analysis.

Findings and Analysis

Respondents' Profile

Among the 126 valid responses, 80 were male, and 46 were female, yielding a 16:9 male-to-female ratio. The 36-45 years age bracket had the highest number (42.06%), while the least observed age bracket was 3.17% aged 46-55 years. However, no one over 55 responded. Almost the entire group of respondents was well educated, with 98.41% holding a graduate degree. A very low percentage of respondents were high school graduates only. A substantial percentage of respondents had around 6-10 years of work experience (45.24%), followed by freshers (37.30%), and those with experience exceeding 16 years accounted for 5.56%. The overall distribution of the demographic analysis revealed trends aligned with findings from other HRM studies based in Bangladesh. Demographically, by division, most respondents were from Dhaka (44.44%), followed by Chattogram (36.51%), and 19.05% were from other areas. This indicates that the study primarily collected data from the two key commercial cities of Bangladesh, suggesting that its conclusions are relevant to central business areas across the nation. This trend is consistent with the previous empirical literature: Dhaka and

Chattogram were reported to be the most successful in terms of professional representation.

Table 1

Demographic profile of respondents

		Gender		Total	Percentage
		Male	Female		
Age	16-25	6	15	21	16.67%
	26-35	29	19	48	38.10%
	36-45	41	12	53	42.06%
	46-55	4	0	4	3.17%
	55+	0	0	0	0%
Education	HSC	2	0	2	1.59%
	Graduate	35	20	55	43.65%
	Postgraduate	43	26	69	54.76%
Experience	0-5 years	23	24	47	37.30%
	6-10 years	41	16	57	45.24%
	11-15 years	11	4	15	11.90%
	16+ years	5	2	7	5.56%
Location (Division)	Dhaka	40	16	56	44.44%
	Chattogram	31	15	46	36.51%
	Other	9	15	24	19.05%
Male Respondents		80			
Female Respondents		46			
Total		126			

Measurement Model

To build the factor format, this paper employed a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using a hierarchical component model in a two-stage approach. This approach enabled testing the measurement model, which was a reflective first-order construct. (Sarstedt et al., 2019). The measurement model has been evaluated according to the guidelines of the most prominent scholars of SEM regarding validity and reliability.

In terms of indicator reliability, the outer loading of all items retained was greater than the acceptable value of 0.708, as the range of items is 0.818 to 0.934 (Table 2). Internal consistency of every construct was also confirmed because Cronbach's alpha, rho-A, and composite reliability (CR) were higher than the standard value of 0.708. In particular, the values of Cronbach's alpha were between 0.799 and 0.912, whereas CR was between 0.882 and 0.945. Moreover, the values of all the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were greater than 0.500 (Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2019, Avi et al., 2025), with values ranging from 0.713 to 0.851, thus providing evidence of convergent validity.

Heterotrait-monomethod ratio (HTMT) was used to test discriminant validity. All the values of HTMT fell below the conservative 0.85 (Mustakim & Tirno, 2024; Hair et al.,

2019), with the value of 0.774 between GMP and GRS (Table 3) being the highest. These findings support the view that the constructs are conceptually distinct.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was used to assess multicollinearity. Table 4 demonstrates that the VIF values (1.581 to 3.965) were less than or equal to the critical value of 5 (F. Ali et al., 2018). Even though some of the items (e.g., GPR2 = 3.965) were close to the upper boundary, still within acceptable limits, this means that no serious concerns of multicollinearity can be identified.

All in all, the measurement model indicates that indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity are observed, with no significant multicollinearity. This suggests that the measurement model can be used in subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 2

Measurement model

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Employees' Green Behavior	EGB1	0.91			
	EGB2	0.897			
	EGB3	0.896	0.884	0.928	0.811
Green Management Practice	GMP1	0.912			
	GMP2	0.921			
	GMP3	0.934	0.912	0.945	0.851
Green Performance	GPM1	0.867			
Management	GPM2	0.907			
	GPM3	0.818	0.836	0.899	0.748
Green Pay and Reward	GPR1	0.934			
	GPR2	0.932			
	GPR3	0.894	0.91	0.943	0.847
Green Recruitment & Selection	GRS1	0.899			
	GRS2	0.93			
	GRS3	0.917	0.903	0.939	0.838
Green Training and	GTD1	0.827			
Development	GTD2	0.879			
	GTD3	0.827	0.799	0.882	0.713

Table 3

HTMT criterion.

	EGB	GMP	GPM	GPR	GRS	GTD
EGB						

GMP	0.688				
GPM	0.501	0.391			
GPR	0.241	0.248	0.686		
GRS	0.52	0.774	0.233	0.163	
GTD	0.66	0.744	0.665	0.416	0.628

Table 4

Variance inflation factor (VIF)

Items	**VIF**	**Items**	**VIF**
EGB1	2.541	**GPR1**	3.490
EGB2	2.572	**GPR2**	3.965
EGB3	2.392	**GPR3**	2.497
GMP1	2.778	**GRS1**	2.458
GMP2	3.291	**GRS2**	3.367
GMP3	3.444	**GRS3**	3.203
GPM1	1.687	**GTD1**	1.727
GPM2	2.570	**GTD2**	1.983
GPM3	2.166	**GTD3**	1.581

Structural Model (Hypotheses Testing)

The second stage involved evaluating the structural model to test the proposed hypotheses. Figure 2 below displays the standardized path coefficients (β values) and their corresponding levels of significance, with the circles within the circles indicating the coefficient of determination (R^2). The R2 values indicate that the exogenous constructs explain 62.8% of the variance in GMP and 36.7% of the variance in Employees' Green Behavior (EGB). Such values have moderate explanatory power.

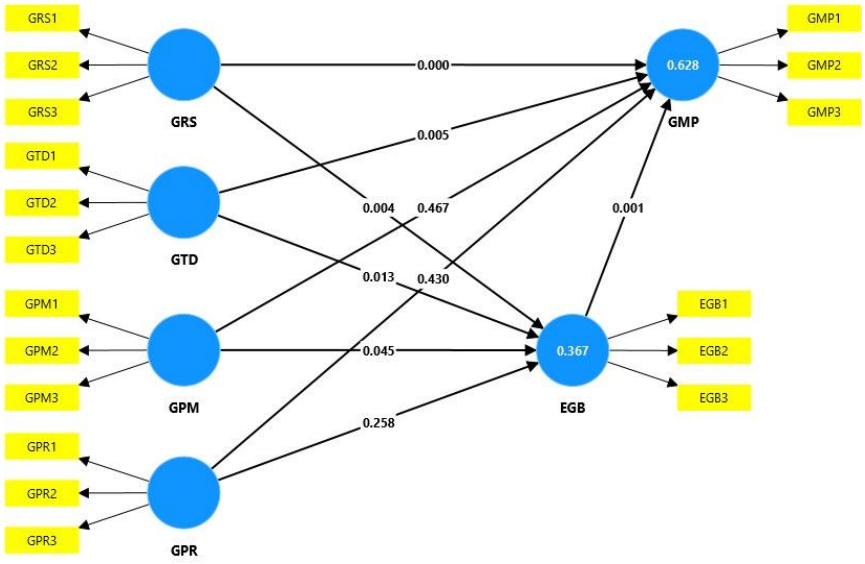


Figure 2: Graphical presentation of the structural equation model

Table 5

Hypothesis results

	Path	Original sample	Standard deviation	t-statistics	P values	Result
H1	GRS -> EGB	0.260	0.096	2.695	0.004	S
H2	GTD -> EGB	0.297	0.134	2.218	0.013	S
H3	GPM -> EGB	0.271	0.160	1.693	0.045	S
H4	GPR -> EGB	-0.088	0.136	0.649	0.258	NS
H5	GRS -> GMP	0.442	0.093	4.755	0.000	S
H6	GTD -> GMP	0.247	0.097	2.548	0.005	S
H7	GPM -> GMP	-0.009	0.108	0.082	0.467	NS
H8	GPR -> GMP	0.016	0.091	0.178	0.430	NS
H9(a)	GRS -> EGB -> GMP	0.072	0.042	1.728	0.042	S
H9(b)	GTD -> EGB -> GMP	0.083	0.044	1.874	0.031	S
H9(c)	GPM -> EGB -> GMP	0.076	0.045	1.687	0.046	S
H9(d)	GPR -> EGB -> GMP	-0.025	0.036	0.691	0.245	NS
H10	EGB -> GMP	0.279	0.089	3.128	0.001	S

Legend: GRS- Green Recruitment and Selection; GTD- Green Training and Development; GPM- Green Performance Management; GPR- Green Pay and Reward; EGB- Employee Green Behavior; GMP- Green Management Practice.

- *p-value < 0.05 → Supported*
- *p-value ≥ 0.05 → Not supported*

The study applied a bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples to test the hypotheses. Table 5 presents the results. The results indicate that GRS, GTD, and GPM are significantly positively associated with EGB ($\beta = 0.260$, $p = 0.004$; $\beta = 0.297$, $p = 0.013$; and $\beta = 0.271$, $p = 0.045$, respectively). A similar positive, significant result is also found between EGB and GMP ($\beta = 0.279$, $p = 0.001$). However, the study analysis could not confirm a significant influence of GPR on EGB and GMP ($\beta = -0.088$, $p = 0.258$; and $\beta = 0.016$, $p = 0.430$). No direct association is also observed in terms of the relationship between GPM and GMP ($\beta = -0.009$, $p = 0.467$). Though there is no direct linkage between GPM and GMP, when EGB mediates this relationship, it becomes significant, with a p-value of 0.046 and a beta value of 0.076, indicating a strong influence of EGB on improving GMP. EGB also successfully mediates the relationships between GRS and GTD and GMP ($\beta = 0.072$, $p = 0.042$; and $\beta = 0.083$, $p = 0.031$) favorably. On the other hand, EGB also failed to establish a significant mediating effect of GPR on GMP ($\beta = -0.025$, $p = 0.245$). In general, the findings make a significant contribution to the roles of GRS and GTD in promoting EGB and GMP. Meanwhile, GPR did not show a meaningful impact; therefore, it is questionable whether financial incentives are enough to encourage employees to adopt environmentally friendly practices.

Discussion

The core purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of various aspects of GHRM on GMP, which were GRS, GTD, GPM, and GPR. The mediation role of EGB between GHRM practices and GMP was also studied. GHRM was theorized as a multidimensional construct, with its key practices serving as lower-order factors that comprise a comprehensive GHRM system (Mahi Uddin, 2022; Shah & Soomro, 2023).

The results imply that EGB has a remarkably positive impact on GMP, which shows that employees' environmentally responsible behavior can directly influence corporate green performance. This aligns with findings from previous studies that concluded that employees' green behavior is pertinent to achieving the organization's sustainability goals (Kuo et al., 2022; Miah, Rahman, et al., 2024; Munawar et al., 2022). GPM directly influences EGB, suggesting that a KPI system integrating eco-conscious metrics could foster employees' sustainability awareness and attitudes in their daily work (Hameed et al., 2022; Kuo et al., 2022; Malik et al., 2021).

GRS and GTD have also been strong predictors of EGB and GMP. Thus, based on prior studies, it can be inferred that emphasizing green recruitment, selection, and training is more likely to yield employees who are environmentally responsible and voluntarily participate in sustainability initiatives. (Jamal et al., 2021; Shah & Soomro, 2023; Veerasamy et al., 2024; Yafi et al., 2021). The strong predictive power of GRS and GTD aligns with the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework, suggesting that "Ability" must first be established through green-conscious hiring and skill enhancement before organizational sustainability outcomes can be realized.

GPR, however, did not correlate significantly with EGB or GMP. This finding indicates that the incentives for green performance are insufficient to encourage employee environmental behaviors. Similarly, previous authors have reported comparable outcomes and suggested that monetary or symbolic rewards may not be sufficient to sustain a

sustainable pro-environmental pledge without a deep-rooted organizational value. (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021; Faisal, 2023; Jamal et al., 2021). Theoretically, this lack of impact can be analyzed through Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that extrinsic rewards, such as monetary incentives, can crowd out intrinsic motivation. In the RMG industry, when green behavior is traded for monetary gains, workers may not internalize a sustainable culture; as a result, they may show little commitment to the environment. Additionally, following Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, financial pay-outs often act as a "hygiene factor". Thus, its absence causes dissatisfaction; its presence does not necessarily drive the extraordinary proactive behavior in employees. It is essential to consider that the low GPR results may also be due to other contextual factors. In particular, many organizations may not yet have established a substantial reward system dedicated to environmental performance. (Faisal, 2023). Furthermore, employees might view these rewards as merely symbolic, thereby reducing their motivation to engage in green behavior.

In terms of mediation, GPM's mediating role was vital in the relationships between EGB and GPM, GRS, and GTD. It therefore follows that employee behavioral participation plays an essential role in linking HRM activities to environmental performance outcomes. (Farrukh et al., 2022; Miah, Rahman, et al., 2024). However, multiple studies failed to demonstrate an effect of EGB as a mediator between GPR and GMP. Therefore, it is evident that reward-based systems might not improve environmental behavior unless there is adequate support from top management (Abbas et al., 2022; Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021).

It is essential to consider that the low GPR results may also be due to other contextual factors. In particular, many organizations may not yet have established a substantial reward system dedicated to environmental performance. (Faisal, 2023). Furthermore, employees might view these rewards as merely symbolic, thereby reducing their motivation to engage in green behavior. However, the role of culture and organizational norms may also be activated, as employees are more inclined to follow organizational regulations than to engage in voluntary environmental behavior. (Khatoon et al., 2022). These findings suggest that although organizations are developing their GHRM practices, insufficient effort has been dedicated to developing reward systems that are intrinsically motivating and enable a pro-environmental culture, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of GHRM in sponsoring sustainable behavior. (S. R. Ali et al., 2024; Miah, Szabó-Szentgróti, et al., 2024).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The main goal of this study was to examine the influence of various GHM practices, i.e., GRS, GTD, GPM, and GPR, on GMP through EGB as a mediator. The findings of this study are based on a survey of employees from the RMG sectors in Bangladesh. The research shows that GHRM practices have a meaningful impact on employees' green attitudes and behaviors, ultimately enhancing the organization's environmental performance. However, not every maneuver exhibited a comparable influence. The results showed that GRS, GTD, and GPM positively and significantly influenced EGB and GMP, indicating that environmentally friendly recruitment, development, and

performance management practices could motivate employees to engage in environmentally friendly workplace behavior. On the other hand, GPR was not significantly associated with EGB or GMP. This suggests that reward systems may fail to motivate employees toward sustainability. These outcomes open new avenues for research into the influence of relevant incentives on employee engagement in green initiatives.

Based on the analyses, it is clear that GHRM initiatives depend on employees' environmental consciousness and the level of integration of sustainability practices into day-to-day HR activities. By creating and maintaining an eco-conscious work environment through initiatives such as green recruitment, training, and performance management systems, institutions will be more likely to nurture a lasting sense of environmental concern among their workforce, who will support their overall organization-wide sustainability initiatives.

Theoretical and Conceptual Implications

This study adds to the growing GHRM literature by introducing the AMO framework and SCT in labor-intensive manufacturing sectors of developing economies. The results indicate that ability-motivation and opportunity-enhancing GHRM practices, especially green training, recruitment, and performance management, have stronger effects on employees' green behavior compared to extrinsic reward-based mechanisms. The trivial role of green pay and rewards partly contradicts traditional AMO assumptions regarding motivational mechanisms being adequate to encourage pro-environmental behavior. The findings of this study validate an extension of AMO theory. In these labor-intensive manufacturing contexts, motivational mechanisms grounded solely in financial incentives may not be sufficient to drive environmental behavior.

On the contrary, our findings corroborate SCT by identifying that environmental cognition, behavioral learning, and organizational context play a key role in employees' green behavior. The implications also extend Social Cognitive Theory by suggesting that organizational environmental learning and behavioral reinforcement may have a greater impact on employee green behavior than extrinsic incentive systems.

In addition, the research enriches RBV by proposing that environmentally focused human capital and green behavioral capabilities serve as strategic intangible resources that form a foundation for long-term environmental sustainability and firm competitiveness in export-oriented manufacturing organizations. Hence, this study advances the RBV literature by developing a relevant theory: that eco-oriented employee behavior constitutes a firm-specific intangible resource capability that bolsters sustainable operational performance in export-based manufacturing sectors.

Practical Implications

According to this paper's findings, HR practitioners in the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry should implement green recruitment strategies to attract employees with pro-green values and eco-commitment. This approach formalizes the organization's commitment to sustainability projects and promotes employee involvement in environmental sustainability issues. Furthermore, organizations must incorporate

sustainability principles into their training and development practices to help employees acquire knowledge of green operations, environmental awareness, and the ability to act sustainably. It can inspire employees to become more involved in sustainability-related activities at work and to deepen their understanding of their responsibilities towards the environment. HR executives should then build systems that integrate environmental performance indicators into the employee evaluation process, aligned with articulated sustainability goals. Green pay and reward systems have not had a big impact on employee green behavior. Organizations must revisit their incentive structures, adopting non-monetary recognition programs, career visibility, and appreciation for sustainable actions over monetary values. Finally, it is the responsibility of HR professionals to create a workplace culture that values ecological sustainability and organizational principles. Sustaining an organizational commitment to sustainability involves ongoing communication, employee engagement, top management support for sustainable environmental practices, and participation in sustainable initiatives.

The results indicate that GHRM practices, when implemented properly at the firm level, may yield sustainable economic gains for export-oriented RMG firms by boosting operational performance, reducing pollution incidence, lowering compliance-related risks, and enhancing buyer confidence. Green recruitment and training may also reduce employee turnover and improve workforce productivity by strengthening employee engagement and organizational commitment toward sustainability initiatives. While green systems and personnel will lead to higher operating costs in the short term, companies that can discount international market access, adhere to ESG standards, and avoid significant reputational damage (incl. legal issues) should be able to recoup upfront investments over time. On the other hand, small- and medium-sized firms face immediate cash constraints due to these measures, thereby finding it difficult to balance sustainability investments (in environmental management practices) with long-term performance goals to sustain the industry's competitiveness in the future.

Since the Bangladesh RMG industry is labor-intensive and employs a huge female workforce, GHRM practices may have an important role in ensuring employee well-being, workplace safety, and decent working conditions. An organization can enhance employees' attachment to the community, environmental concern, and sense of belonging by providing them with knowledge through green training, a green participation environment, and a responsible organizational workplace system. Moreover, Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) may be seen as limited in its capacity to drive social sustainability objectives directly; GHRM can support or promote objective targets within this arena as well, through addressing labor and employment practices supporting employee empowerment, occupational health, and workplace development towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for Export-oriented manufacturing environments.

Policy Implications

Based on the above findings, our results also have important implications for government agencies, industry associations, and regulatory authorities in Bangladesh. Environmental compliance is a key area where policymakers can support export-oriented manufacturing

sectors through incentives to adopt GHRM practices, the development of sustainability certification programs, and financial support for such programs, as well as green workforce development initiatives. For instance, Industry bodies like BGMEA might also incorporate environmental HR standards into factory compliance and training programs. Implementing such policy interventions may enhance Bangladesh's global competitiveness and support national sustainability and the achievement of SDG targets.

Contributions to Theory and Practice

The theoretical and practical impacts of this research for GHRM management are significant. It highlights that employees' green behavior is not a product of HRM policy but is engendered by HR interventions that induce employee behaviors. The study at hand has significant implications for GHRM from both a theoretical and practical perspective. It signifies that green behavior within any workforce is not just an outcome of HRM policies; it is practically fostered into employee culture through HR interventions that shape employee behavior. The theories tested in previous GHRM studies serve as a foundation for establishing new research boundaries by including EGB as a mediator and by clearly connecting individual employee behavior to the overall organizational outcomes of environmental initiatives.

The outcomes also offer an alternative perspective to the conventional reliance on monetary incentives, suggesting that motivation rooted in values and management commitment plays a more significant role in maintaining employees' green behaviors. Based on the results of this study, it is suggested that an alternative to monetary incentives be considered, as in today's age, to instill deep-rooted motivational values in employees' consciences. Thus, substitutes for conventional compensation and reward frameworks should be explored. Overall, the study provides a framework to facilitate alignment of HR practices with the successful pursuit of sustainability objectives.

Future Research Directions and Limitations.

The research at hand offers unique perspectives through its analyses. However, it also has certain limitations that provide opportunities for future studies. Since the scope of this study was limited to Bangladesh's ready-made garment sector, this may have reduced its broader relevance. The associations examined demand further analysis due to their significance from a GHRM perspective in other service or production industries where standardized rules are commonly in practice.

Mediating variables, such as organizational culture, structure, employee motivation, or leadership principles, were not considered in the study, which inhibited further analysis of associations, such as GHRM->EGB->GMP. This again opens avenues for further research that could focus on these constructs to enhance a comprehensive understanding of green behavior. Tirno and Qurishy (2023) highlighted in their findings that organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) positively influences improved employee performance, suggesting a relevant avenue for investigating how GHRM practices may foster environmentally responsible employee behaviors and support sustainable performance. Future studies can explore how GHRM can influence employee performance and whether OCB can strengthen their association.

Perhaps such understanding could come from a gender-based analysis, cross-cultural comparisons, or a longitudinal study to unearth unobserved demographic and progressive influences on GHRM effectiveness. In addition, the study used non-probability snowball sampling due to limited funding and the absence of a structured sampling frame. With time, more and more institutions are inclining towards minimizing environmental footprints. Sustainability-driven innovation and green organizational citizenship behavior are no longer distant visions but are now considered urgent needs. Thus, green transformation in both digital and conventional settings should be explored further to solidify and implement the conceptual practices of GHRM in both developing and developed countries.

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