

Theoretical foundations and empirical evidence: A systematic review of employee-level responses to green human resource management (HRM) practices

Jonathan William Omolo

jonathanomolo1968@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6250-5787>

Rongo University, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This systematic review examines the evolution of environmental sustainability from a macro-level organizational mandate to its current emphasis on the psychological micro-foundations of employee behavior. Historically focused on institutional metrics such as ISO 14001 compliance, the scholarly landscape of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has transitioned toward understanding how individual responses—specifically Green Work Engagement (GWE) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE)—underpin the success of corporate ecological objectives. Synthesizing high-impact research from 2015 to 2026, the study employs the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework, Social Exchange Theory (SET), and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to map the causal links between green HR practices and individual performance. The findings indicate that while ability-enhancing initiatives like green training directly improve technical proficiency, the transition to discretionary, extra-role effort is heavily mediated by the "Green Psychological Climate." However, the review identifies an emerging "green performance paradox," in which intensive monitoring and complex reporting requirements trigger "green fatigue," potentially undermining core task performance. Furthermore, the study exposes significant geographical and sectoral imbalances, highlighting a critical scarcity of data within the public and service sectors of developing economies, such as Kenya. By reconciling these diverging strands, the research proposes a localized approach to GHRM that prioritizes institutional authenticity over superficial "greenwashing," ultimately providing a roadmap for developing resilient, purpose-driven green human capital.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Green Work Engagement (GWE), Greenwashing, Micro-level Sustainability, Organizational Citizenship Behavior

I INTRODUCTION

The transition toward environmental sustainability has fundamentally transformed modern management, pivoting from a singular focus on economic output to a Triple Bottom Line that balances social, environmental, and financial goals. Central to this shift is Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), a strategic framework that embeds ecological objectives into the complete HR lifecycle—from recruitment and training to performance appraisal and compensation (Renwick et al., 2013). Pioneering studies in this field, led by scholars such as Jabbour and Santos (2008) and Jackson et al. (2011), dealt largely on organizational-level wins like ISO 14001 compliance and Environmental Conformity. In contrast, recent research has pivoted toward exploring internal, employee-level responses, arguing that environmental policies remain operationally stagnant without the subjective buy-in and active engagement of individual employees (Mousa & Othman, 2020).

The fundamental justification for this inquiry is found in the vital distinction between intended GHRM and perceived GHRM. Preliminary research findings indicate that when Employees acknowledge a transparent organizational investment in environmental care, their level of organizational identification increases (Ones & Dilchert, 2012). Current empirical evidence from 2024 and 2025 further identifies Employee Engagement as the vital bridge linking these two variables. This "Green Work Engagement" (GWE) represents a state of vigor and dedication specifically directed toward ecological goals (Ahmed et al., 2024). When staff recognizes GHRM as a genuine institutional commitment, they satisfy psychological needs for autonomy and relatedness, creating a sense of purpose that extends beyond standard job descriptions.

Theoretically, the integration of green HR into engagement is driven by two central mechanisms: the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework and Social Exchange Theory (SET). According to AMO theory, GHRM strengthens employee Ability through green training, drives "Motivation" via eco-centered rewards, and offers the Opportunity to participate in green decision-making (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Batool et al., 2025). Concurrently, SET describes a reciprocal relationship where employees internalize environmental stewardship as a psychological gain, which is manifested through elevated organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) (Siraj et al., 2022). Nevertheless, by

2026, researchers have delineated several essential 'boundary conditions.' If employees perceive these initiatives as "greenwashing" or superficial branding, the positive impact is neutralized, setting the stage for "Green Stress" or cynicism (Tahir et al., 2020).

While research has spanned over a decade, empirical results are still characterized by inconsistencies despite the positive link between green education and engagement, studies suggest that financial green incentives can negate an employee's natural passion (Singh & Pandey, 2021). In addition, whether Green Transformational Leadership is a mandatory requirement for success remains an open question across different cultures and industries (Jamil et al., 2025). This systematic review is necessitated by the need to synthesize these diverging strands and map the evolution of employee-level responses to GHRM. By pinpointing the underdeveloped dimensions of GHRM theory such as the lack of longitudinal data and the emergence of "green fatigue." This research intends to pioneer a robust theoretical model for the emerging landscape of green labor relations.

1.1 Research Objectives

- i. To review the theoretical links between green workplace practices and individual performance.
- ii. To examine how green HR practices, affect staff and identify missing or inconsistent data.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 The Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) Framework

The structural foundation of this inquiry is rooted in the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) Theory. Originally popularized in HRM by Appelbaum et al. (2000), AMO posits that organizational performance is a function of three interconnected employee-level dimensions. In the context of GHRM, Renwick et al. (2013) suggest that "Green Ability" is established through selective recruitment and environmental training, ensuring employees possess the technical literacy to identify ecological waste. This capacity is activated by "Green Motivation," where performance-linked incentives and appraisals align personal goals with the firm's sustainability targets. Finally, "Green Opportunity" provides the platform for employees to exercise these competencies through participatory decision-making and eco-innovation circles. By integrating these three pillars, organizations provide the functional infrastructure required for employees to transition from passive compliance to active environmental proficiency.

2.1.2 Social Exchange Theory (SET)

While the AMO framework provides the structure for performance, Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the associated norm of reciprocity provide the psychological mechanism for voluntary behaviors. According to Blau (1964), organizational relationships are built on a series of mutual investments and symbolic obligations. When an organization adopts GHRM practices, employees perceive this as a discretionary, pro-social commitment that transcends purely economic motives. This perception creates a psychological obligation for the employee to reciprocate the organization's "benevolence." As noted by Paillé et al. (2014), SET explains why GHRM is a primary driver of Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE). Because employees perceive the green climate as a sign of institutional integrity, they are more likely to "pay back" the firm through voluntary, discretionary efforts that are not captured in a formal job description but are essential for long-term sustainability.

2.1.3 Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Complementing the reciprocal nature of SET is Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which addresses the quality of employee motivation and the satisfaction of basic psychological needs. As detailed by Deci and Ryan (2000), SDT is instrumental in explaining the transition from extrinsic, paycheck-driven compliance to autonomous, intrinsic environmental commitment. The theory suggests that GHRM practices are most effective when they satisfy three core needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When employees feel they have the autonomy to suggest green solutions and the competence to implement them, their work becomes a source of personal meaning. This "meaningful work" fosters a state of Green Work Engagement (GWE), characterized by a sense of vigor and dedication that is self-sustaining. This theoretical lens allows the study to explore why monetary incentives alone often fail to sustain green passion and why psychological fulfillment is a more resilient predictor of long-term employee-level responses.

2.1.4 The Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV)

Finally, the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) situates these individual behaviors within the broader strategic goal of competitive advantage. Hart (1995) extended the traditional resource-based view by arguing that a firm's competitive edge is increasingly derived from its strategic relationship with the natural environment. In this study, NRBV informs the concept of Green Human Capital—a specialized workforce that is valuable, rare, inimitable, and

non-substitutable. By fostering a workforce that has internalized green values through the mechanisms of AMO, SET, and SDT, an organization develops a unique organizational capability. This "green habitus" becomes a strategic asset that competitors cannot easily replicate through technology or capital alone, ultimately linking individual employee-level responses to the overarching financial and environmental resilience of the firm.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Theoretical Links between Green Workplace Practices and Individual Performance.

Modern Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) increasingly recognizes green workplace practices as a vital driver of human capital efficiency and individual excellence. This relationship is structurally grounded in the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework, which asserts that employee effectiveness is a systemic output of three interconnected pillars: green competencies developed through training, performance incentives that provide motivation, and structural enablement that offers the opportunity for participatory management. When these pillars are integrated, employees do not merely perform "green" tasks but achieve greater functional mastery and operational efficiency, transforming sustainability from a secondary mandate into a core component of high-performance output (Renwick et al., 2013). This synergy ensures that individual performance is not just a technical requirement but a holistic contribution to institutional sustainability.

Beyond technical skill acquisition, Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the norm of reciprocity provide a psychological explanation for these performance gains. When an organization integrates sustainability into its core identity, it acts as a catalyst for trust and psychological safety, prompting employees to perceive the firm as ethically grounded. This perception creates a psychological obligation for staff to "pay back" the organization through increased discretionary effort (Paillé et al., 2014). This frequently manifests as Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE), where employees voluntarily exceed their formal functional roles, thereby elevating the collective performance and innovation capacity of their unit. This reciprocal bond is foundational in building a Green Psychological Climate that aligns individual ethics with corporate missions.

The performance dividends of a green workplace are further sustained by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which transitions employee drive from extrinsic, paycheck-driven motivation to autonomous, intrinsic satisfaction (Ahmed et al., 2024; Khaskhely et al., 2022). By situating daily responsibilities within the broader context of global ecological preservation, green initiatives satisfy the core human needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, leading to higher persistence and more adaptive work behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This intrinsic drive is essential for creating "meaningful work," which has been shown to reduce burnout and turnover intentions while fostering a state of Green Work Engagement.

Expanding upon these behavioral foundations, recent scholarship identifies the "Green Psychological Climate" as a critical boundary condition that determines the efficacy of the GHRM lifecycle. If employees suspect that environmental initiatives are driven by impression management rather than genuine conviction, a state of "Green Cynicism" emerges, which effectively neutralizes the reciprocal benefits promised by Social Exchange Theory (Lawter & Garnjost, 2025). To prevent this, organizations must employ Green Transformational Leadership to serve as a moral compass, ensuring that green values are consistently articulated and modeled from the top down. When leaders demonstrate authentic commitment, they enhance the perceived value of green tasks, thereby strengthening the link between "Green Ability" and individual output. This leadership influence is particularly vital in mitigating the emerging "Green Performance Paradox," where intensive environmental monitoring and rigorous reporting requirements can trigger "green fatigue" and cognitive overload (Liu & Zhang, 2022). By providing the necessary emotional and structural support, leaders help staff navigate these high-accountability environments without compromising their primary functional performance.

Furthermore, the integration of GHRM practices must be localized to account for specific institutional and legal pressures that vary by region and sector. In developing economies, the influence of national governance frameworks—such as the Universities Act or IHRM directives in Kenya—often creates a unique set of compliance requirements that shape employee perceptions of "Green Opportunity" differently than in Western contexts (Olouch & Kanya, 2022). For instance, in the Kenyan public sector, the drive for GHRM is frequently viewed through the lens of institutional reform and public service excellence, making the satisfaction of the need for "relatedness" more significant as employees work toward shared national sustainability goals. However, the literature currently suffers from a significant geographical imbalance, with a persistent lack of longitudinal data to verify if these pro-environmental behavioral shifts are sustained over long-term career trajectories. Until research moves beyond temporary snapshots to explore the "black box" of these localized mediating mechanisms, the universal applicability of GHRM remains a subject of active empirical investigation.

Ultimately, the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) suggests that this alignment creates Green Human Capital—a unique, inimitable resource. This specialized workforce is more adept at identifying latent efficiencies and solving complex problems, ensuring that environmental stewardship directly reinforces the organization's primary economic and operational objectives (Hart, 1995). In developing economies, particularly within the public and service

sectors, this specialized capital becomes a strategic asset capable of navigating complex regulatory landscapes while maintaining a competitive edge through superior innovative capacity (Oluoch & Kanya, 2022). By fostering a "green habitus" that is rare and difficult for competitors to replicate, organizations secure long-term institutional resilience, turning environmental responsibility into a definitive driver of both individual excellence and overarching financial stability.

2.2.2 Green HR Practices Affect Staff and Identify Missing or Inconsistent Data.

The evolving scholarly landscape shifts the focus from organizational compliance to the psychological micro-foundations of sustainability, primarily through the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework. According to this model, green recruitment and training build the "Ability" for eco-efficiency, while green rewards provide the "Motivation" to align personal efforts with corporate goals; finally, green involvement policies create the "Opportunity" for employees to engage in eco-innovation (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Renwick et al., 2013). This systemic integration transforms individual performance from a mere technical skill into a holistic output, where structured training and involvement act as primary drivers of Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE) (Paillé et al., 2014).

Beyond mere skill acquisition, the internal mechanisms of Green HRM are increasingly understood through the lens of cognitive and emotional alignment. Theoretical foundations such as Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) explain how these practices foster a Green Psychological Climate, signaling institutional integrity to the workforce. When employees perceive authentic environmental stewardship, they experience a "norm of reciprocity," responding with increased discretionary effort, heightened job satisfaction, and a stronger sense of "meaningful work" (Blau, 1964; Deci & Ryan, 2000). This alignment between personal values and organizational actions builds Green Human Capital, creating a workforce that is not only highly engaged but also capable of pivoting in response to emerging environmental mandates, ultimately reducing turnover intentions (Hart, 1995). This state of "Environmental Passion" ensures that staff do not view green directives as top-down mandates but as an extension of their professional identity, thereby enhancing both in-role and extra-role performance dimensions.

The effectiveness of these practices, however, is significantly contingent upon the perceived authenticity of the organization's green signals. Recent scholarly discourse highlights that the "Green Psychological Climate" acts as a vital mediator; if employees suspect that environmental initiatives are purely for external branding, a state of "Green Cynicism" emerges, which can actively dismantle the trust established through traditional HRM practices (McAnally & Hagger, 2024). This highlights a critical need for leadership consistency, specifically through Green Transformational Leadership, which provides the moral compass necessary to sustain long-term engagement (PMC, 2026). When leaders articulate a clear environmental vision, it reduces role ambiguity and provides the psychological safety required for employees to suggest eco-innovations without fear of disrupting core operational workflows.

Despite these positive correlations, the literature reveals a "Green Performance Paradox" where intensive monitoring and complex reporting can trigger "green fatigue," potentially increasing cognitive load and detracting from core task performance (Rizvi, 2021). This phenomenon suggests that there is a tipping point at which the administrative burden of sustainability begins to yield diminishing returns on employee productivity. Furthermore, the field suffers from a lack of longitudinal data and a significant geographical imbalance, with a scarcity of research focused on the public sector and service industries in developing economies (Oluoch & Kanya, 2022). In regions like East Africa, the influence of localized regulatory frameworks—such as the Universities Act or specific IHRM directives—presents a unique set of institutional pressures that are rarely captured in Western-centric models. Until the "black box" of these specific mediating mechanisms and localized environmental stressors is further explored through multi-level modeling, the long-term resilience and universal efficacy of GHRM remain vital subjects for empirical investigation. Research must now shift toward identifying how digital automation and simplified feedback loops can mitigate cognitive exhaustion while maintaining high levels of environmental accountability.

III. METHODOLOGY

Five major electronic repositories were systematically searched to identify the core literature for this review, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, to target the most consequential research findings. The search strategy was constrained to articles appearing between 2015 and 2026 to ensure the inclusion of the most recent discoveries in the field. To maintain high quality and trustworthiness, the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) was used as a standard checklist. The implementation of these rigorous eligibility criteria served to eliminate studies with insufficient rigor, thereby safeguarding the evidentiary quality of the final sample. A Thematic Narrative Synthesis was adopted to organize the results into meaningful categories, ensuring a transparent and comprehensive summary of the diverse literature.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Theoretical links between Green Workplace Practices and Individual Performance.

The systematic analysis of current literature reveals a sophisticated interplay between institutional signals and individual psychological states, where Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices—ranging from recruitment to compensation—serve as structural inputs reflecting an organization's ethical orientation. These independent variables drive essential dependent outcomes, specifically Green Work Engagement (GWE), in-role task performance, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE). A critical finding is that while ability-enhancing practices like training directly predict technical proficiency, the transition to discretionary, extra-role effort is heavily mediated by the Green Psychological Climate. When employees perceive these initiatives as authentic rather than superficial "greenwashing," it triggers a norm of reciprocity and satisfies core psychological needs for autonomy and relatedness, fostering a resilient form of Green Human Capital characterized by Environmental Passion.

A comparative analysis with earlier scholarship highlights a decisive "micro-turn" in the field, shifting the focus from the macro-level organizational compliance and ISO standards championed by pioneers like Jabbour and Santos (2008) toward the subjective investment of individual employees. This evolution suggests that modern sustainability goals are functionally inert without a strategic, value-based partnership between the employer and the workforce. However, recent evidence from 2024–2026 introduces a "Green Performance Paradox," noting that excessive environmental monitoring and complex reporting can trigger "green fatigue." This cognitive overload potentially negates the benefits of green training and diminishes traditional task performance, marking a departure from the purely optimistic views held in earlier Strategic HRM models.

Furthermore, the findings underscore a persistent geographical and sectoral imbalance in existing research, which remains heavily skewed toward the manufacturing sectors of developed and emerging Asian economies. This review identifies a significant gap in data concerning the public and service sectors within developing economies like Kenya. Unlike Western-centric studies that prioritize intrinsic motivation, research in the Global South indicates that external regulatory factors, such as the Universities Act or IHRM directives, play a more dominant role in shaping employee perceptions. Consequently, while the theoretical pillars of Social Exchange Theory and the AMO framework remain relevant, their application must be localized to address the unique industrial relations and socio-economic realities of different regions.

4.1.2 Green HR Practices Affect Staff and Identify Missing or Inconsistent Data.

The systematic analysis of current literature reveals a sophisticated interplay between institutional signals and individual psychological states, where Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) lifecycle practices such as green recruitment, training, and eco-centered compensation—serve as the structural independent variables that signal an organization's ethical orientation. These inputs drive critical dependent variables centered on staff performance micro-foundations, including Green Work Engagement (GWE), in-role task proficiency, and extra-role behaviors like Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE).

A recurring finding is that while ability-enhancing practices directly predict technical proficiency, the transition to discretionary effort is non-linear and significantly mediated by the Green Psychological Climate. When staffs perceive green practices as authentic institutional commitments rather than superficial branding, they experience a "norm of reciprocity" and satisfaction of psychological needs for autonomy and relatedness, fostering a resilient form of Green Human Capital characterized by "Environmental Passion" and reduced turnover intentions.

A comparative analysis with pioneering studies highlights a decisive "micro-turn" in scholarly focus, shifting from the macro-level organizational compliance and ISO standards prioritized by early researchers toward the active, subjective investment of individual staff members (Siraj et al., 2022). This evolution marks a transition from transactional mandates to strategic, value-based partnerships, yet contemporary evidence also identifies an emerging "Green Performance Paradox" characterized by "green fatigue." This phenomenon suggests that intensive environmental monitoring and complex reporting can trigger cognitive overload and "Green Stress," potentially negating the benefits of green training and detracting from core task performance (Radulescu et al., 2024). Furthermore, the findings expose persistent inconsistencies and missing data in the current literature, which remains heavily skewed toward manufacturing in the Global North. There is a notable scarcity of research concerning the public and service sectors in developing economies like Kenya, where external regulatory factors such as the Universities Act or IHRM directives—often play a more dominant role than the intrinsic motivators emphasized in Western-centric models, highlighting a critical need for localized research and longitudinal data to assess the long-term resilience of these behavioral shifts.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework offers a robust structural explanation for GHRM's success, suggesting that green practices do not merely increase workloads but provide the technical competencies and systemic incentives essential for broader corporate efficiency. When integrated with involvement-oriented practices, these initiatives cultivate an organizational environment where eco-innovation transcends basic compliance. Consequently, sustainable problem-solving becomes a natural, high-performance output of daily operations rather than an additional administrative burden. The research confirms that the link between green initiatives and performance is deeply rooted in Social Exchange Theory and Self-Determination Theory, where a transition toward sustainable practices signals genuine institutional integrity. This alignment triggers a "norm of reciprocity" among staff, resulting in heightened Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and a pivotal shift toward autonomous, intrinsic motivation. By satisfying the fundamental human need for meaningful work, green workplace practices transform a standard functional role into a purpose-driven contribution, serving as a definitive precursor to sustained individual performance and long-term organizational loyalty.

Ultimately, the theoretical evidence suggests that successfully integrating these practices into core HR functions develops a unique and resilient form of Green Human Capital. This capital is characterized by lower levels of value conflict and significantly higher engagement, providing a sustainable competitive advantage. Organizations that foster this alignment create a workforce that is difficult for less environmentally conscious competitors to replicate, ensuring long-term resilience and superior operational innovation. The examination of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) concludes that environmental sustainability serves as a profound psychological catalyst, transforming the traditional employee-employer relationship into a strategic partnership. By stimulating Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE), these practices encourage staff to reciprocate organizational green investments with increased discretionary effort and commitment. This transition is deeply anchored in Social Exchange Theory, where a firm's ethical posture fosters a climate of trust and aligns corporate actions with individual employee values.

Furthermore, GHRM significantly enhances employee engagement by imbuing daily tasks with a sense of "meaningful work," satisfying the psychological need for a higher purpose. This shift moves staff from extrinsic, paycheck-driven motivation toward an autonomous, intrinsic drive, fostering a Green Psychological Climate that effectively reduces burnout and turnover intentions. However, the research emphasizes that these benefits are not automatic; they depend heavily on the perceived authenticity of the initiatives, as any hint of superficial "greenwashing" can quickly trigger employee cynicism and undermine the development of resilient Green Human Capital. Finally, the study identifies critical gaps in current knowledge, specifically regarding the "Green Performance Paradox," where the cognitive load of environmental compliance may occasionally lead to "green fatigue" and a decline in traditional task performance. There is also a significant lack of longitudinal data to verify if these behavioral changes are sustained over time. Moreover, the current geographical and sectoral imbalance—marked by a scarcity of research in the public sector and service industries within developing economies—indicates that the universal efficacy of GHRM remains a vital subject for further empirical investigation.

5.2 Recommendations

To bridge the gap between green initiatives and individual output, organizations should operationalize the AMO framework by replacing generic awareness with department-specific technical training. This skill-building must be reinforced by integrating environmental KPIs into formal appraisals, providing the necessary motivation to align with sustainability targets. By institutionalizing "green voice" mechanisms like eco-innovation circles, management grants employees the opportunity to exercise autonomy, directly boosting task efficiency and creative problem-solving. Building on Self-Determination Theory, leadership should emphasize the psychological "why" behind sustainability to foster "meaningful work" over mere compliance. By linking daily conservation tasks to a larger global purpose, communication strategies help employees transition from extrinsic motivation to an autonomous commitment that increases persistence and reduces error rates. To sustain this engagement, organizations must utilize digital automation for environmental reporting to prevent "green fatigue," ensuring that the cognitive demands of sustainability do not interfere with an employee's primary functional responsibilities.

Sustaining long-term performance and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) requires total organizational authenticity to satisfy the "norm of reciprocity" inherent in Social Exchange Theory. Any perceived gap between internal green policies and external actions can trigger employee cynicism, making "Green-from-the-Start" recruitment strategies essential for ensuring a strong Person-Organization Fit. By using value-based interviewing to align individual ethics with corporate missions, firms build a resilient form of Green Human Capital naturally inclined toward innovation and loyalty. This proactive approach ultimately secures a competitive advantage rooted in a deeply purpose-driven workforce. To maximize behavioral impact, organizations must move beyond surface-level policies by authentically embedding environmental values into the recruitment and onboarding process. By selecting candidates whose personal

ethics align with the corporate mission, management cultivates a strong Person-Organization Fit that naturally fosters eco-friendly behaviors. This strategy leverages the norm of reciprocity rather than top-down monitoring, ultimately inspiring a higher level of voluntary environmental commitment and genuine staff loyalty.

To sustain long-term engagement, leadership must bridge the gap between routine tasks and global impact, framing daily conservation efforts as purposeful contributions to a larger cause. This strategic shift moves employee motivation beyond mere compliance toward a state of genuine, autonomous engagement. To safeguard against "green fatigue" and the potential for cognitive overload, the integration of digital GHRM tools is essential. By utilizing automated feedback loops and intuitive dashboards, organizations can provide real-time sustainability data without the weight of burdensome reporting, ensuring that environmental goals complement rather than compromise primary job responsibilities. Ultimately, the future of the field rests on transitioning from temporary snapshots toward longitudinal, multi-year studies that determine whether these behavioral shifts are truly sustainable. Research must also expand its scope beyond traditional manufacturing to include the public sector and service industries, particularly within the context of developing economies where these dynamics may differ. By investigating more nuanced mediating factors—such as employee resilience and perceived organizational support—scholars can build a more comprehensive map of how green policies translate into long-term staff loyalty and holistic well-being.

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