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## **Enhancing Environmental Performance through Green HRM and Employee Green Behavior: Evidence from Hospitality Industry**

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*Received: 12-02-2025*

*Reviewed: 10-03-2025*

*Accepted: 17-04-2025*

### **Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the impact of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) on Environmental Performance, with Employee Green Behavior acting as a mediating variable within the hospitality industry in Semarang. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 200 permanent hotel employees selected using purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS 24 software. The findings reveal that: (1) GHRM has a positive and significant effect on Environmental Performance ( $\beta = 0.386$ ; C.R. = 4.725;  $p < 0.05$ ); (2) GHRM positively and significantly influences Employee Green Behavior ( $\beta = 0.452$ ; C.R. = 5.138;  $p < 0.05$ ); (3) Employee Green Behavior exerts a positive and significant effect on Environmental Performance ( $\beta = 0.394$ ; C.R. = 4.892;  $p < 0.05$ ); and (4) Employee Green Behavior partially mediates the relationship between GHRM and Environmental Performance (indirect effect = 0.178; C.R. = 3.967;  $p < 0.05$ ). The research model competes well with empirical data (CMIN/DF = 2.341; GFI = 0.921; AGFI = 0.903; CFI = 0.947; TLI = 0.938; RMSEA = 0.067). These findings underscore the critical role of integrating environmental considerations into human resource management practices to enhance hotels' environmental performance by fostering pro-environmental behavior among employees.

**Keywords:** Employee Green Behavior, Environmental Performance, Hospitality Industry, Green Human Resource Management.

### **Introduction**

The hospitality industry is rapidly expanding and is crucial to global economic growth. However, this growth is accompanied by increasing environmental challenges, including high energy consumption, excessive water use, significant waste generation, and greenhouse gas emissions (Trang et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2019). As a key tourist destination in Indonesia, Semarang has witnessed a notable rise in the number of hotels over the past few years.

According to the Central Statistics Agency of Semarang City (2020), the number of hotels increased from 127 in 2015 to 152 in 2019. Despite this expansion, many hotels in Semarang have yet to implement environmentally sustainable practices. This is evident from the limited number of hotels that have obtained environmental management certifications or awards, such as EarthCheck or the Green Hotel Award. (Dinas Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata Kota Semarang, 2020).

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is increasingly recognized as a strategic approach to mitigating environmental challenges in the hospitality industry (Dyah Palupiningtyas & Sri Mulyani Wahono, 2023). GHRM encompasses human resource practices aimed at fostering employees' environmental awareness, skills, and behavior (Ren et al., 2018). Some key GHRM initiatives in the hospitality sector include environmentally conscious recruitment and selection, employee training on sustainability issues, performance evaluations and compensation systems that incorporate environmental criteria, and employee participation in green initiatives (Yong et al., 2020; Utami & Palupiningtyas, 2024). By adopting GHRM, hotels can encourage employees to engage in environmentally responsible behavior (Employee Green Behavior), ultimately contributing to improved environmental performance.

Prior studies have established a positive link between GHRM and Environmental Performance (Pham et al., 2019; Yong et al., 2020). However, the underlying mechanism of this relationship remains insufficiently explored. Employee Green Behavior, which refers to employees' voluntary actions to support environmental sustainability—such as conserving energy, reducing waste, and participating in recycling programs (Ones & Dilchert, 2012)—is suspected to mediate the relationship between GHRM and Environmental Performance. Despite this, research examining Employee Green Behavior as a mediating factor within this context remains limited, particularly in the hospitality industry in Semarang.

Although existing research has explored the effects of GHRM on Environmental Performance, findings have been inconsistent. Some studies report a significant positive impact (Pham et al., 2019; Yong et al., 2020), while others suggest that the influence of GHRM on Environmental Performance is either insignificant (Guerce et al., 2016) or limited to specific environmental aspects such as energy and water management (Kim et al., 2019). These inconsistencies highlight the need for further investigation to clarify the relationship between GHRM and Environmental Performance. Moreover, studies integrating Employee Green Behavior as a mediating variable in this relationship remain scarce, especially in the hospitality sector. While some research has examined the effect of GHRM on Employee Green Behavior (Dumont et al., 2017; Saeed et al., 2019) and the impact of Employee Green Behavior on Environmental Performance (Paillé et al., 2014; Tian et al., 2020; Dyah Palupiningtyas et al., 2024), few studies have incorporated all three variables into a comprehensive model. A deeper understanding of the mediating role of Employee Green Behavior can provide valuable insights into how GHRM practices contribute to enhancing hotels' environmental sustainability.

Given these research gaps and the growing importance of sustainability in the hospitality industry, this study aims to address the following research questions:

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1. Does Green Human Resource Management influence Environmental Performance in the hospitality industry in Semarang?
2. Does Green Human Resource Management influence Employee Green Behavior in the hospitality industry in Semarang?
3. Does Employee Green Behavior influence Environmental Performance in the hospitality industry in Semarang?
4. Does Employee Green Behavior mediate the effect of Green Human Resource Management on Environmental Performance in the hospitality industry in Semarang?

### **Literature Review**

#### ***Green Human Resource Management (GHRM)***

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) refers to human resource management practices that enhance an organization's environmental performance by increasing employees' awareness, competencies, and behaviors toward environmental sustainability (Renwick et al., 2013; Utami & Palupiningtyas, 2024). GHRM encompasses various practices, including environmentally conscious recruitment and selection, training and development on environmental issues, performance evaluation and compensation integrating environmental criteria, and employee involvement in environmental initiatives (Jabbour & Jabbour, 2016).

#### ***Employee Green Behavior (EGB)***

Employee Green Behavior (EGB) is defined as voluntary actions taken by employees to contribute to environmental sustainability, both within and outside the workplace (Ones & Dilchert, 2012). EGB includes various behaviors such as energy conservation, waste minimization, recycling initiatives, the use of eco-friendly transportation, and participation in environmental activities (Norton et al., 2015). EGB is considered a crucial factor in improving an organization's environmental performance (Paillé et al., 2014).

#### ***Environmental Performance***

Environmental Performance refers to an organization's ability to manage the environmental impact of its operational activities (Lankoski, 2000). It encompasses various aspects, such as energy efficiency, water management, waste management, greenhouse gas emission reduction, and biodiversity protection (Trumpp et al., 2015). Enhancing Environmental Performance is regarded as one of the key indicators of an organization's success in implementing sustainability practices (Albertini, 2013).

#### ***The Relationship Between GHRM, EGB, and Environmental Performance***

Previous studies suggest that GHRM can enhance EGB through several mechanisms, such as increasing employee awareness of environmental issues, providing knowledge and skills related to eco-friendly practices, and fostering an organizational climate that supports pro-environmental behavior (Dumont et al., 2017; Saeed et al., 2019). Furthermore, EGB contributes to improving Environmental Performance by reducing resource consumption,

minimizing waste, and encouraging employee participation in environmental initiatives (Paillé et al., 2014; Tian et al., 2020).

## **Research Method**

This study employs a quantitative research approach with an explanatory design. Explanatory research aims to explain causal relationships between variables through hypothesis testing (Sugiyono, 2017). In this study, the variables examined include Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) as the independent variable, Employee Green Behavior (EGB) as the mediating variable, and Environmental Performance as the dependent variable.

The population of this study consists of all hotel employees in Semarang City. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, with the following criteria:

1. Permanent hotel employees
2. Employed for at least one year
3. Involved in hotel operational activities related to environmental aspects

The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a minimum required sample of 200 respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed directly to respondents. The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS 24 software.

## **Hypothesis Testing**

The hypotheses tested in this study include:

**H1:** GHRM has a positive effect on Environmental Performance

**H2:** GHRM has a positive effect on EGB

**H3:** EGB has a positive effect on Environmental Performance

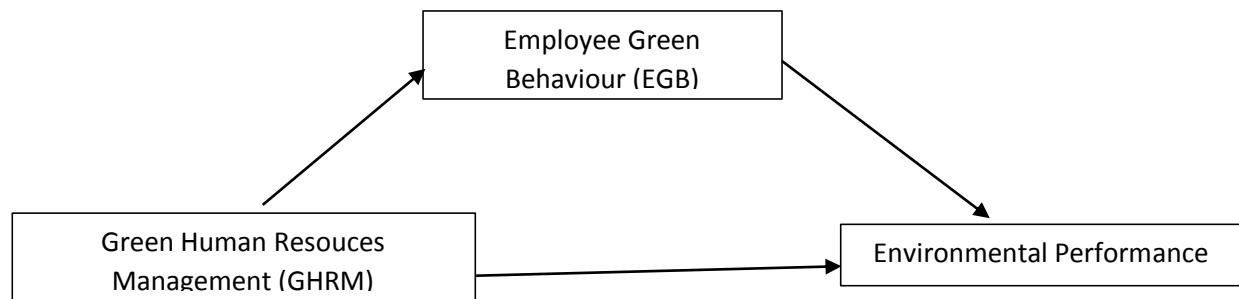
**H4:** EGB mediates the effect of GHRM on Environmental Performance

## **Hypothesis Testing Criteria**

If the C.R. value  $> 1.96$  and the p-value  $< 0.05$ , the hypothesis is accepted.

If the C.R. value  $\leq 1.96$  and the p-value  $\geq 0.05$ , the hypothesis is rejected.

**Figure 1. Theoretical Framework**



The theoretical framework outlines the relationship between GHRM, EGB, and Environmental Performance. GHRM is regarded as a precursor to EGB, indicating that implementing GHRM practices can foster EGB among employees. Moreover, EGB is recognized as a key contributor to enhancing Environmental Performance. In addition, GHRM is believed to have a direct influence on Environmental Performance, independent of EGB's mediation.

## **Result**

### **Respondent Characteristics**

#### **1. Gender**

Based on the collected data, the majority of respondents are male, totaling 112 individuals (56%), while female respondents account for 88 individuals (44%). This indicates that the composition of hotel employees in Semarang City is relatively balanced between male and female employees, although there is a slight dominance of male employees.

#### **2. Age**

The age distribution of respondents shows that the majority are in the 20-30 age group, with 84 individuals (42%), followed by the 31-40 age group with 76 individuals (38%), the 41-50 age group with 28 individuals (14%), and the >50 age group with 12 individuals (6%). This data suggests that hotel employees in Semarang City are predominantly young adults, who generally have high adaptability and openness to new practices, including environmentally friendly initiatives.

#### **3. Education**

The respondents' education levels are dominated by diploma graduates, totaling 88 individuals (44%), followed by bachelor's degree holders with 64 individuals (32%), high school/vocational school graduates with 42 individuals (21%), and master's degree holders with 6 individuals (3%). This composition indicates that most hotel employees have a relatively high educational background, which can support their understanding and implementation of GHRM practices.

#### **4. Work Experience**

In terms of work experience, the majority of respondents have been working for 1-5 years, totaling 96 individuals (48%), followed by 6-10 years with 64 individuals (32%), 11-15 years with 28 individuals (14%), and >15 years with 12 individuals (6%). This data suggests that most employees have sufficient work experience to understand hotel operations and contribute to the implementation of environmentally friendly practices.

#### **Descriptive Analysis of Variables**

##### **1. Green Human Resource Management (GHRM)**

The GHRM variable has a mean value of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 0.72. The minimum value is 1.00, and the maximum value is 5.00. The mean value, which falls into the high category (>3.40), indicates that hotels in Semarang City have effectively implemented GHRM practices. The relatively small standard deviation suggests that respondents' answers are fairly homogeneous.

##### **2. Employee Green Behavior (EGB)**

The EGB variable has a mean value of 3.92 with a standard deviation of 0.68. The minimum value is 1.00, and the maximum value is 5.00. The high mean value indicates that hotel employees in Semarang City exhibit strong awareness and pro-environmental behavior. The small standard deviation reflects consistency in pro-environmental behavior among employees.

##### **3. Environmental Performance**

The Environmental Performance variable has a mean value of 3.78 with a standard deviation of 0.75. The minimum value is 1.00, and the maximum value is 5.00. The high mean value suggests that hotels in Semarang City demonstrate good environmental performance. The relatively small standard deviation indicates uniformity in environmental performance achievements across hotels.

Based on the descriptive analysis above, it can be concluded that hotels in Semarang City have successfully implemented GHRM practices, as reflected in the high mean values for all research variables. The respondent characteristics, which are dominated by young employees with adequate educational backgrounds, also support the successful implementation of environmentally friendly practices in the hospitality industry of Semarang City.

#### **Hypothesis Testing Results**

Table 1. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypotesis	Estimate	C.R	P-Value	Decision
H1 : GHRM → Environmental Performance	0.386	4.725	***	Accepted
H2 : GHRM → Employee Green Behaviour	0.452	5.138	***	Accepted
H3 : EGB → Environmental Performance	0.394	4.892	***	Accepted
H4 : GHRM → EGB → Environmental Performance	0.178	3.967	***	Accepted

Table 2. Goodness Of Fit Model

Index	Value	Cut-off Value
CMIN/DF	2.341	$\leq 3.00$
GFI	0.921	$\geq 0.90$
AGFI	0.903	$\geq 0.90$
CFI	0.947	$\geq 0.95$
TLI	0.938	$\geq 0.90$
RMSEA	0.067	$\leq 0.08$

## Discussion

### 1. The Influence of Green Human Resource Management on Environmental Performance

The study results indicate a positive and significant influence of GHRM on Environmental Performance ( $\beta = 0.386$ ; C.R. = 4.725;  $p < 0.05$ ), which can be explained through several theoretical and empirical perspectives:

#### a) Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) Theory Perspective:

**Ability:** GHRM practices such as green recruitment and green training develop employees' environmental competencies. Training on energy conservation, waste management, and water conservation enhances employees' knowledge and technical skills in managing environmental aspects. This aligns with the findings of Renwick et al. (2013), who emphasized the importance of developing green competencies through GHRM practices.

**Motivation:** Performance appraisal and reward systems that integrate environmental criteria create both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Financial and non-financial rewards for environmental initiatives encourage employees to contribute to environmental performance. The study by Jabbour & Jabbour (2016) demonstrated the effectiveness of green performance management in motivating pro-environmental behavior.

**Opportunity:** Employee involvement in environmental programs and empowerment to make environmentally related decisions provide a platform for employees to apply their competencies and motivation. This supports the findings of Ren et al. (2018) on the importance of employee green involvement in enhancing environmental performance.

#### b) Resource-Based View and Dynamic Capabilities:

GHRM builds green human capital as a valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resource. The environmental competencies developed through GHRM are difficult to imitate as they are embedded in organizational routines and complex social contexts.

GHRM practices also develop dynamic green capabilities, allowing hotels to adapt to changing environmental demands. This aligns with the research by Yong et al. (2020), which found that GHRM plays a role in building green intellectual capital.

**c) Institutional Theory:**

The implementation of GHRM is a response to institutional pressures (coercive, normative, mimetic) to adopt environmentally friendly practices. Environmental certifications and regulations encourage hotels to integrate environmental aspects into HRM practices.

GHRM helps organizations gain legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders by demonstrating a genuine commitment to environmental sustainability. This supports the findings of Guerci et al. (2016) on the role of GHRM in responding to stakeholder pressures.

**2. The Influence of Green Human Resource Management on Employee Green Behavior**

The positive and significant influence of GHRM on Employee Green Behavior ( $\beta = 0.452$ ; C.R. = 5.138;  $p < 0.05$ ) can be further explained through:

**a) Social Exchange Theory and Psychological Contract:**

GHRM creates **perceived organizational support for the environment (POSE)**, encouraging reciprocity in the form of pro-environmental behavior. Organizational investment in green training and development is perceived as a form of concern for employees and the environment.

A **green psychological contract** is formed when employees perceive an obligation to engage in pro-environmental behavior as a response to GHRM practices. This supports the findings of Dumont et al. (2017) on the role of psychological mechanisms in the GHRM-EGB relationship.

**b) Social Learning Theory:**

GHRM creates **role models** through green leadership and mentoring. Employees learn pro-environmental behavior through observation and imitation.

Green training and development facilitate **vicarious learning** about environmentally friendly practices. This aligns with the study by Saeed et al. (2019), which emphasized the role of social learning in shaping pro-environmental behavior.

**c) Self-Determination Theory:**

GHRM fulfills basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) that drive intrinsic motivation for pro-environmental behavior.

Green empowerment and participation support **autonomy**, green training enhances **competence**, and **team green projects** fulfill the need for **relatedness**.

**3. The Influence of Employee Green Behavior on Environmental Performance**

The positive and significant influence of Employee Green Behavior on Environmental Performance ( $\beta = 0.394$ ; C.R. = 4.892;  $p < 0.05$ ) can be elaborated through:



**a) Micro-Foundations Perspective:**

EGB serves as the **micro-foundation** for building an organization's environmental capabilities. The accumulation of individual pro-environmental behaviors contributes to collective environmental performance.

Interaction among employees displaying EGB creates **organizational routines** that support environmental performance. This supports the findings of Paillé et al., (2014) on micro-macro linkage mechanisms.

**b) Organizational Learning Theory:**

EGB facilitates **organizational learning** about environmentally friendly practices through experiential learning and knowledge sharing.

Tacit knowledge about environmentally friendly practices accumulates through EGB and transforms into **organizational knowledge**. This aligns with the research by Tian et al. (2020) on the role of learning in environmental performance.

**c) Systems Theory:**

EGB at various levels and departments creates **synergies** that systematically enhance environmental performance.

The interaction between system components (employees, technology, procedures) is strengthened by EGB, creating an **effective environmental management system**.

**4. The Mediating Role of Employee Green Behavior**

The partial mediation of Employee Green Behavior in the GHRM-Environmental Performance relationship (indirect effect = 0.178; C.R. = 3.967;  $p < 0.05$ ) can be further explained through:

**a) Multi-Level Perspective:**

GHRM (**organizational level**) influences EGB (**individual level**), which then contributes to Environmental Performance (**organizational level**).

**Cross-level effects** demonstrate the complexity of mechanisms where organizational practices translate into outcomes through individual behavior.

**b) Conservation of Resources Theory:**

GHRM provides **resources** (knowledge, skills, support) that enable employees to exhibit EGB without experiencing resource depletion.

**Resource investment** in the form of EGB contributes to environmental performance through **resource gain spirals**.

**c) Attribution Theory:**

Employees attribute GHRM practices as a signal of the organization's environmental commitment, encouraging **internal attribution** that strengthens the GHRM-EGB relationship.

**Attribution alignment** between the organization and employees enhances the effectiveness of GHRM in improving environmental performance.

**Conclusion**

The findings of this study demonstrate that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) exerts a positive and significant influence on Environmental Performance within the hospitality sector in Semarang, both directly and indirectly through the mediation of Employee Green Behavior (EGB). The implementation of GHRM practices, including green recruitment, green training, green performance management, and green reward systems, has been empirically validated as an effective strategy for fostering employees' environmental awareness and pro-environmental behavior, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of hotels' environmental performance. The partial mediation effect of EGB underscores the complexity of the mechanisms through which GHRM practices are translated into organizational outcomes.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the reliance on a cross-sectional research design restricts the ability to establish definitive causal relationships. Second, the use of self-reported data may introduce common method bias, potentially affecting the validity of the findings. Third, the study is confined to hotels in Semarang, with a moderate sample size, which may limit its generalizability. Fourth, Environmental Performance was assessed based on employees' perceptions, rather than through objective performance indicators. Fifth, the research model incorporates only one mediating variable and does not consider potential moderating factors that may influence the relationship between GHRM and Environmental Performance.

Given these limitations, future research is encouraged to adopt a more comprehensive methodological approach. First, employing a longitudinal and multi-source design would enable a deeper understanding of temporal dynamics while mitigating potential biases. Second, future studies should explore moderating variables, such as organizational culture and leadership styles, as well as additional mediators, such as green psychological climate, to provide a more nuanced understanding of the relationships among GHRM, EGB, and Environmental Performance. Third, incorporating objective environmental performance metrics and developing more sophisticated measurement tools for assessing GHRM implementation quality would enhance the robustness of empirical findings. Fourth, replicating the study in different industrial and cultural contexts, as well as conducting comparative analyses across sectors, could enhance the external validity of the findings. Fifth, future research should explore the micro-foundations and sustainability of behavioral changes resulting from GHRM implementation.

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From a managerial perspective, the study underscores the importance of integrating environmental considerations into all aspects of HRM practices, establishing organizational support mechanisms to foster EGB, and developing comprehensive evaluation metrics to assess the effectiveness of GHRM initiatives. Furthermore, the development of clear implementation guidelines and the identification of best practices for aligning GHRM with environmental management systems are essential for optimizing sustainability outcomes. By addressing these considerations, future research can contribute to a more profound understanding of the role of GHRM in fostering organizational environmental sustainability.

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