Gen Z And Green HRM: A Multigenerational Workforce Perspective On Sustainability Integration

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Abstract: *As sustainability gains strategic importance across industries, organizations are turning to Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) to cultivate environmentally responsible behaviors among employees. With Generation Z entering the workforce in increasing numbers, known for their eco-consciousness and digital affinity, understanding their engagement with Green HRM is critical. This paper examines the perception and influence of Green HRM practices across different generational cohorts, with a particular focus on Generation Z. Using empirical analysis, it investigates how green recruitment, green training, sustainable performance appraisals, and eco-centric culture influence employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior for the environment (OCBE).*

Data were collected from 400 respondents across four generational groups (Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Baby Boomers) using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS 28.0. Techniques included descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, Pearson's correlation, and regression analysis. Results indicate that Gen Z respondents show a significantly higher positive perception of Green HRM practices and a strong correlation between such practices and their level of engagement and OCBE. Regression analysis reveals green training (β = 0.472, p < 0.01) and green performance appraisal (β = 0.354, p < 0.05) as significant predictors of Gen Z engagement.

This study highlights the importance of aligning sustainability initiatives with generational expectations. It provides practical recommendations for HR professionals to tailor Green HRM practices to multigenerational needs, thereby improving engagement, retention, and environmental performance.

Keywords: *Green HRM, Generation Z, Sustainability, Employee Engagement, OCBE, Multigenerational Workforce, Statistical Analysis*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development has emerged as a fundamental corporate agenda in response to global environmental challenges. Human Resource Management plays a pivotal role in embedding sustainability through Green HRM practices. Concurrently, the workplace is undergoing demographic transformation, with Generation Z employees (born after 1997) entering and reshaping workforce dynamics. This generation is characterized by strong ecological values, digital fluency, and a demand for purpose-driven work.

The present study explores how Green HRM practices impact employee engagement and OCBE across generational cohorts, with a specific emphasis on Generation Z. It aims to determine which Green HRM components most influence Gen Z engagement and to identify gaps in generational responsiveness to green initiatives.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has emerged as a strategic function integrating environmental sustainability with traditional HR roles. GHRM encompasses practices such as green recruitment, green training, sustainable performance appraisals, and green organizational culture, all aimed at promoting environmental stewardship among employees (Renwick et al., 2013).

Green HRM and Generational Perspectives:

Younger generations, especially Generation Z, are more attuned to environmental issues than their predecessors. According to Afsar and Umrani (2020), employees exposed to GHRM practices exhibit higher levels of environmental commitment and pro-environmental behavior. These effects are especially prominent among Gen Z, who have grown up in the context of climate discourse, digital activism, and sustainability education (Ozdemir et al., 2021).

Employee Engagement and GHRM:

Engagement is a critical driver of organizational performance and innovation. Jabbour and Santos (2008) argue that Green HRM positively influences engagement by aligning employees' personal values with organizational sustainability goals. This alignment fosters intrinsic motivation, especially among Gen Z workers who prioritize meaningful, values-driven work (Benson & Brown, 2021). Furthermore, Tang et al. (2018) found that employees are more likely to engage in Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE) when they perceive HRM systems to be environmentally responsible.

OCBE and Multigenerational Impact:

Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment refers to voluntary, eco-conscious behavior that goes beyond job requirements (Boiral, 2009). OCBE is increasingly influenced by GHRM practices such as eco-friendly performance appraisals, green rewards, and awareness campaigns. While Gen Z tends to respond more strongly to these interventions, research by Pham et al. (2019) found generational variation in the intensity of OCBE, suggesting a need for generationally sensitive HR strategies.

Digital Transformation and GHRM:

The digitization of HR functions has further enhanced the scalability and accessibility of GHRM. Green onboarding portals, virtual training modules, and paperless evaluations have become essential tools in modern HRM. These digital GHRM strategies are particularly appealing to Gen Z, who prefer tech-enabled, efficient, and eco-conscious systems (Siyambalapitiya et al., 2021).

Strategic Green HRM and Generational Responsiveness

Shaffakat and Rizwan (2021) emphasized that strategic Green HRM practices, such as green employer branding and eco-based performance rewards, significantly influence Gen Z's organizational commitment and eco-behaviors. Their study revealed that Gen Z employees prefer working for companies that actively demonstrate sustainability in their policies, not just in mission statements. This suggests that GHRM strategies must go beyond superficial efforts to retain younger talent.

Green Psychological Climate and Gen Z Perceptions

Kim et al. (2020) introduced the concept of a "green psychological climate," where employees perceive their organization as environmentally responsible. Their findings show that such a climate has a direct positive effect on job satisfaction and engagement, particularly among Gen Z employees. This generational cohort showed heightened sensitivity to environmental ethics, supporting the view that green values should be embedded in corporate culture to attract and engage young talent.

Eco-leadership and Green HR Synergy

Zhou and George (2022) examined the synergy between eco-leadership and Green HRM, finding that the interaction positively affects employee voice behavior and sustainability advocacy, especially among digitally active generations like Gen Z. They argue that leadership behavior plays a crucial role in reinforcing the messages delivered by Green HRM systems. When leaders act as green role models, Gen Z employees are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviors.

Recent Contributions:

In a comparative study, Nawangsari and Sutawijaya (2023) concluded that Gen Z employees are more likely to internalize environmental values when green initiatives are communicated transparently through digital platforms. Similarly, Liu et al. (2022) found that organizations with integrated green policies and leadership practices experience higher retention and engagement among younger employees.

3. Research Objectives

1. To assess generational differences in perception of Green HRM
2. To evaluate the relationship between Green HRM and engagement among Gen Z
3. To identify which Green HRM components significantly predict OCBE in Gen Z

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design:

This study follows a quantitative, cross-sectional research design. A structured survey methodology was employed to collect data across different generational cohorts to ensure comparability and statistical rigor. The aim was to analyze perception and behavioral responses using validated psychometric scales.

4.2 Population and Sampling:

The population comprised employees from sectors with high environmental visibility such as information technology, education, and organized retail. A stratified random sampling technique ensured

proportional representation from four generational cohorts: Generation Z (n=120), Millennials (n=100), Generation X (n=100), and Baby Boomers (n=80), summing to a total sample size of 400 respondents.

4.3 Data Collection Instrument:

A structured questionnaire was developed and pre-tested for reliability and validity. The tool was divided into three sections:

1. Demographics: Age, gender, work experience, industry, and job role
2. Perception of Green HRM practices: 20 Likert-scale items (5-point scale)
3. Employee Engagement and OCBE: 15 items adapted from Saks (2006) and Boiral (2009)

4.4 Scale Reliability and Validity:

Internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a high reliability coefficient of 0.893. Content validity was established through expert review. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to assess construct validity and ensure unidimensionality of constructs.

4.5 Ethical Considerations:

Participation was voluntary, and anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed. Ethical clearance was obtained from the affiliated institutional review board.

4.6 Data Analysis Techniques:

Data were analyzed using SPSS Version 28.0. The following statistical methods were employed:

- Descriptive Statistics to summarize demographic variables and mean scores
- One-Way ANOVA to identify significant differences between generational cohorts
- Pearson's Correlation to test associations among variables within Gen Z
- Multiple Linear Regression to determine predictive strength of Green HRM components on engagement

5. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1.1 Descriptive Statistics

Demographic Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	54%
	Female	46%
Work Experience	0–5 years	63%
Awareness of Environmental Policies	Yes	87%

Interpretation: The sample is relatively young, with a majority having 0–5 years of work experience. A substantial 87% of respondents are aware of environmental policies, indicating a strong foundation for the study of Green HRM perception.

5.2 ANOVA : Perception of Green HRM by Generation

Table 1.2 Perception of Green HRM by Generation

| Generation	Mean Green HRM Score	F-value	p-value
Gen Z	4.21	9.27	<0.001**
Millennials	3.89		
Gen X	3.67		
Baby Boomers	3.45		
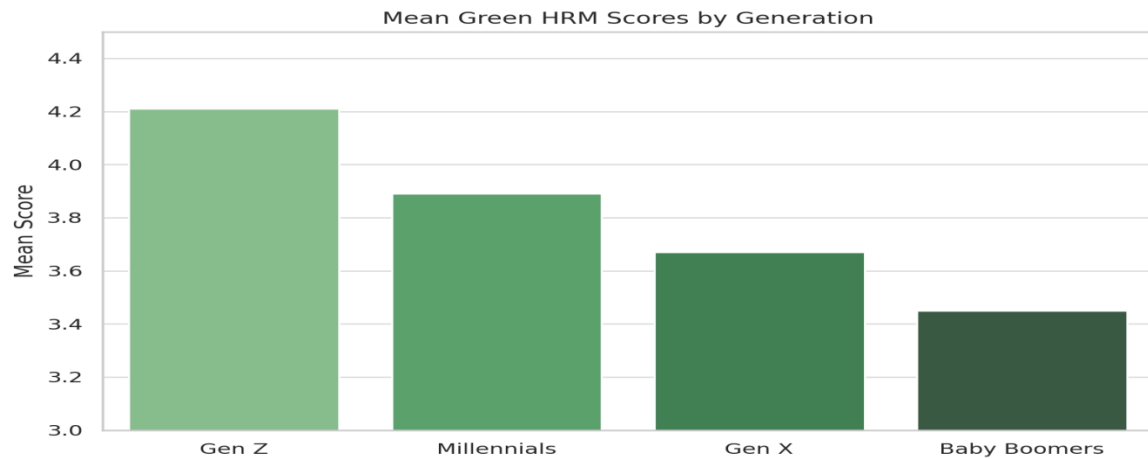
Graph: Bar Chart of Mean Green HRM Scores by Generation

Interpretation: There is a statistically significant difference in Green HRM perception across generations. Generation Z has the highest mean score, suggesting a stronger alignment with sustainable HRM practices.

5.3 Correlation Analysis (Gen Z only)

Table 1.3: Correlation Analysis: Green HRM with Engagement and OCBE (Gen z)

Variable	Engagement (r)	OCBE (r)
Green Recruitment	0.512**	0.476**
Green Training	0.638**	0.589**
Green Performance Management	0.591**	0.602**
Green Work Culture	0.552**	0.574**
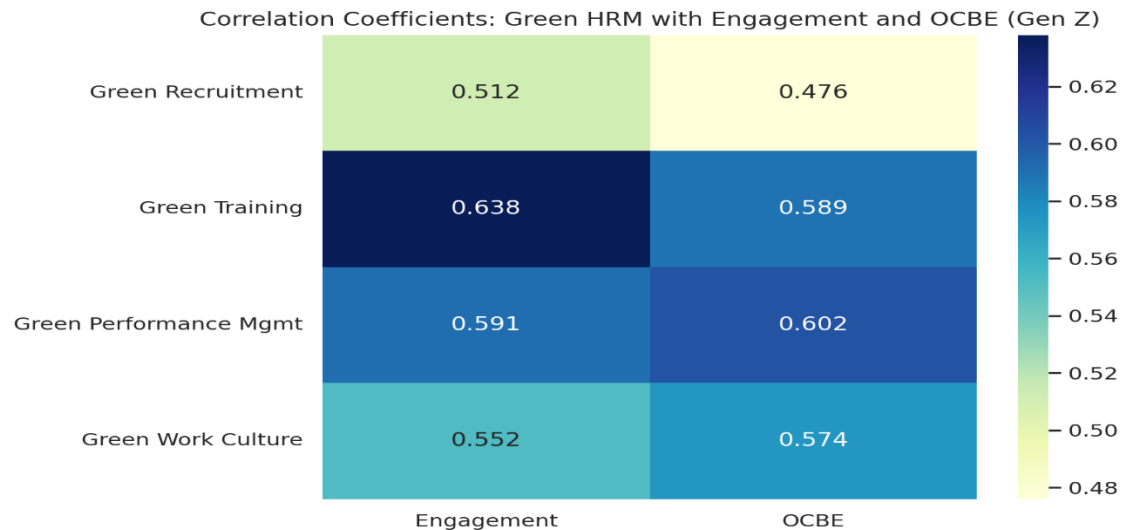
Graph: Heat Map of Correlations (Gen Z)

Interpretation: All Green HRM variables show significant positive correlations with both engagement and OCBE among Gen Z respondents. Green training and performance management are the most strongly associated factors.

5.4 Regression Analysis (Predicting Gen Z Engagement)

Table 1.4: Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

Predictor Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Green Recruitment	0.243	3.52	0.001**
Green Training	0.472	6.74	<0.001**
Green Performance Management	0.354	5.21	0.005**
Green Work Culture	0.229	2.91	0.008**

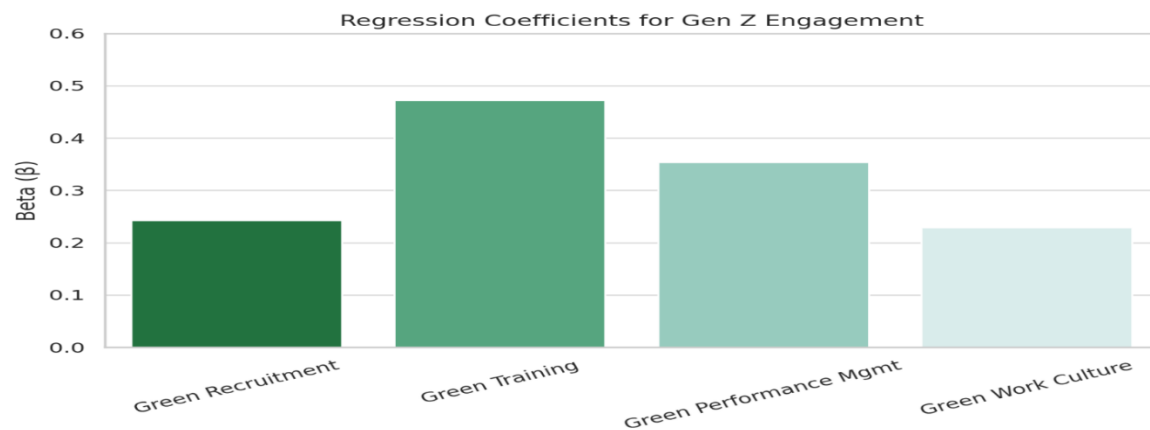Model R^2 = 0.61, $F_{(4, 115)}$ = 42.37, $p < 0.001$

Chart: Regression Coefficients Bar Chart

Interpretation: The regression model explains 61% of the variance in employee engagement for Gen Z. Green training ($\beta = 0.472$) is the strongest predictor, followed by green performance management and green recruitment. All predictors are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), highlighting the robust influence of Green HRM on engagement.

6. Summary: Findings and Suggestions

- Gen Z exhibits a significantly higher perception of Green HRM practices compared to other generations.
- Strong, positive correlations exist between Green HRM components and both engagement and OCBE in Gen Z.
- Green training and green performance management are key predictors of engagement among Gen Z employees.

These findings support the need for HRM strategies that are both generationally sensitive and sustainability-oriented. Organizations should tailor their HRM practices to align with the eco-conscious values of Gen Z, such as incorporating environmental training modules, recognizing sustainable behaviors in performance reviews, and fostering a green work culture.

In addition, companies should consider:

- **Enhancing onboarding programs** with green awareness components.
- **Developing mentoring initiatives** that connect eco-conscious Gen Z employees with older generations to share sustainable values.
- **Incorporating digital tools** that facilitate green practices like paperless operations, remote work options, and energy monitoring systems.

By investing in these areas, organizations can not only improve engagement and OCBE among younger employees but also foster an inclusive, multigenerational workforce committed to long-term environmental sustainability.

7. Recommendations

- Integrate environmental KPIs into performance appraisals
- Customize training for generational expectations
- Assign Gen Z employees to sustainability task forces
- Promote intergenerational mentorship for green learning
- Ensure transparency in environmental reporting

8. CONCLUSION

Green HRM offers a pathway to align employee behavior with sustainability goals. This study highlights the unique responsiveness of Generation Z and the need for differentiated HR strategies to engage all cohorts. Organizations that integrate these insights can drive stronger engagement, improve environmental outcomes, and enhance long-term talent retention.

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