

Exploring the Influence of Green HRM Practices on Organizational Sustainability in the Apparel Industry of Sri Lanka: A Pathway to Environmental and Organizational Excellence

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Abstract

The apparel industry, which contributes over 40% of Sri Lanka's export earnings, is simultaneously a major source of environmental challenges, including excessive water use, energy consumption, and waste generation. Globally, the fashion industry accounts for nearly 10% of carbon emissions, reinforcing the urgency of adopting sustainable practices. Within this context, the present study, grounded in Social Learning Theory and Expectancy Theory, examines the influence of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices on organisational sustainability in the apparel sector. The objective is to evaluate how green training, green rewards, and green performance management affect sustainable outcomes. Adopting a positivist philosophy and quantitative approach, the study followed a survey strategy. Data were collected from 162 middle-level employees in the Koggala Export Processing Zone using purposive sampling. Validated instruments with acceptable reliability were used, and analyses were conducted through descriptive statistics and regression in SPSS. The findings reveal that green training has the strongest positive and significant impact on organisational sustainability, followed by green rewards and green performance management. The study concludes that embedding GHRM practices can transform environmental challenges into strategic opportunities, enhancing both environmental responsibility and organisational performance. The research is limited to one export processing zone; future studies should expand to other industries and regions. This study contributes novel insights from a developing economic context, demonstrating how GHRM practices enhance employee eco-friendly behaviours, organisational sustainability, and long-term competitiveness. Importantly, the findings also suggest that green initiatives positively influence employee well-being and engagement, creating healthier workplaces while strengthening corporate reputation with global sustainability standards.

Keywords: apparel industry, expectancy theory, green HRM, organisational sustainability, social learning theory, Sri Lanka