

Effect of Green Recruitment Practices on Employee Performance in Public Universities of Western Kenya

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Abstract- The growing global concern about the environmental impact of organizational operations has necessitated the adoption of sustainability practices, including Green Human Resource Management (GHRM). This study aimed to determine the effect of green recruitment practices on employee performance in public universities in Western Kenya. The research employed a positivist philosophy and an explanatory research design. The target population consisted of 438 employees in top and middle-level management from 11 public universities in the region, out of which a sample size of 209 respondents was selected using Slovin's formula. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using inferential statistics, including correlation and multiple regression analysis. The results indicated that the majority of the universities do not emphasize adopting eco-environmental policies during recruitment. However, they do utilize email correspondence with candidates and recyclable materials during the recruitment process, demonstrating some efforts towards sustainability. Regression analysis revealed that green recruitment practices account for 8.4% of the change in employee performance, with the model being statistically significant at $p=0.05$. The study concludes that while universities have made some progress towards sustainability in their recruitment processes, they have not fully adopted green recruitment practices. The relationship between green recruitment practices and employee performance, although statistically significant, is weak. The researcher recommends that public universities in Western Kenya should adopt and improve GHRM practices, particularly in the area of recruitment, to foster environmental sustainability and enhance employee performance. Aligning practices with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and learning from successful case studies can help

universities create a culture that encourages environmentally friendly practices and contributes to sustainability efforts.

Indexed Terms- Green Recruitment, Employee Performance, Public Universities, Sustainability, Green Human Resource Management

I. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is a critical factor in the success of any organization, including public universities. It refers to how well employees fulfill their duties, complete required tasks, and behave in the workplace (Risal, Asyik, & Suroso, 2021). With the growing global concern about the environmental impact of organizational operations, there is an increasing need for universities to embrace sustainability practices and foster employee green behavior to enhance overall performance.

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has emerged as a key strategy for organizations to promote sustainable practices and environmental management (Amjad et al., 2021). GHRM involves the application of HR policies to encourage the sustainable use of resources and support environmental objectives (Yusliza et al., 2019). However, the adoption and implementation of GHRM practices remain limited in many organizations, particularly in developing countries like Kenya (Chemjor, 2020).

Despite the global call for sustainability, organizations in Kenya, both public and private, are yet to fully embrace GHRM practices (Chemjor, 2020). Public universities, which play a crucial role in driving innovation and leading the transformation towards a carbon-neutral society, are no exception. The absence of GHRM practices in these institutions

can lead to poor employee performance, wastage issues, and rising costs of resource consumption.

This study aims to determine the effect of green recruitment practices on employee performance in public universities in Western Kenya. By investigating this relationship, the research seeks to contribute to the understanding of GHRM practices and their impact on organizational performance in the context of higher education institutions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Green Human Resource Management (GHRM)

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has emerged as a critical approach for organizations to promote sustainable practices and environmental management. GHRM involves the integration of environmental objectives into various HR functions, including recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and reward management (Jabbour & de Sousa Jabbour, 2016). By incorporating sustainability goals into HR practices, organizations can foster a green culture and encourage employees to adopt environmentally friendly behaviors (Ren, Tang, & Jackson, 2018).

The concept of GHRM has gained significant attention in recent years, as organizations strive to balance economic growth with environmental sustainability (Renwick, Redman, & Maguire, 2013). GHRM practices have been found to positively influence employee attitudes, behaviors, and performance, ultimately contributing to improved organizational sustainability (Dumont, Shen, & Deng, 2017; Paillé, Chen, Boiral, & Jin, 2014).

2.2 Green Recruitment

Green recruitment is a key component of GHRM, focusing on attracting and selecting candidates who possess environmental knowledge, skills, and values aligned with the organization's sustainability goals (Guerci, Longoni, & Luzzini, 2016). By incorporating environmental criteria into the recruitment process, organizations can ensure that new hires are committed to sustainable practices and contribute to the achievement of environmental objectives (Jabbour, 2011).

Studies have shown that green recruitment practices can positively influence job seekers' perceptions of organizational attractiveness and their intentions to pursue employment (Behrend, Baker, & Thompson, 2009; Gully, Phillips, Castellano, Han, & Kim, 2013). Moreover, green recruitment has been linked to improved employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Shen, Dumont, & Deng, 2018).

2.3 GHRM in Higher Education Institutions

While GHRM research has primarily focused on corporate settings, higher education institutions, including public universities, are increasingly recognizing the importance of adopting sustainable practices (Fissi, Romolini, Gori, & Contri, 2021). As key drivers of innovation and societal change, universities have a crucial role in promoting sustainability and shaping the environmental attitudes and behaviors of future generations (Ralph & Stubbs, 2014).

However, the adoption of GHRM practices in higher education institutions remains limited, particularly in developing countries (Nejati, Rabiei, & Jabbour, 2017). Studies have highlighted the need for universities to integrate sustainability into their HR practices to foster a green culture and improve environmental performance (Fawehinmi, Yusliza, Mohamad, Faezah, & Muhammad, 2020; Sahu, Sahu, Sahu, & Sahu, 2021).

2.4 GHRM and Employee Performance

The relationship between GHRM practices and employee performance has been a topic of growing interest among researchers. Several studies have found that GHRM practices can positively influence employee attitudes, behaviors, and ultimately, their performance (Paillé et al., 2014; Shen et al., 2018).

Green recruitment, in particular, has been linked to improved employee performance. By attracting and selecting candidates who are environmentally conscious and committed to sustainability, organizations can foster a workforce that actively contributes to the achievement of environmental goals (Jabbour, 2011). Moreover, green recruitment practices have been found to enhance employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational

commitment, which are essential drivers of employee performance (Shen et al., 2018).

However, empirical evidence on the relationship between green recruitment and employee performance in the context of public universities remains scarce. While some studies have explored the adoption of GHRM practices in higher education institutions (Fawehinmi et al., 2020; Sahu et al., 2021), there is a need for further research to investigate the specific impact of green recruitment on employee performance in this setting.

2.5 GHRM in the Kenyan Context

In Kenya, the adoption of GHRM practices remains limited, despite the growing global emphasis on sustainability (Chemjor, 2020). Organizations in both the public and private sectors are slowly putting structures in place to embrace GHRM practices, but progress has been slow (Owino & Kwasira, 2016).

Public universities in Kenya, which play a vital role in driving innovation and leading the transformation towards a sustainable society, are no exception. The absence of GHRM practices in these institutions can lead to poor employee performance, wastage issues, and rising costs of resource consumption (Chemjor, 2020).

While some studies have explored GHRM practices in the Kenyan context (Owino & Kwasira, 2016), research focusing specifically on green recruitment and its impact on employee performance in public universities remains scarce. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the effect of green recruitment practices on employee performance in public universities in Western Kenya.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which posits that an organization's unique resources and capabilities are the key drivers of its competitive advantage and performance (Barney, 1991). According to the RBV, human resources are considered valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable assets that can contribute to sustained organizational success (Wright, McMahan, & McWilliams, 1994).

In the context of GHRM, the RBV suggests that by developing and leveraging green human resources through practices such as green recruitment, organizations can gain a competitive edge and improve their environmental and overall performance (Yong, Yusliza, & Fawehinmi, 2019). By attracting and selecting employees who possess environmental knowledge, skills, and values, organizations can create a workforce that is committed to sustainability and capable of driving environmental initiatives (Renwick et al., 2013).

The RBV provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the strategic importance of GHRM practices, including green recruitment, in fostering employee performance and organizational sustainability. By viewing green human resources as valuable assets, the RBV underscores the need for organizations, including public universities, to invest in GHRM practices to achieve long-term success.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Philosophy

This study employed a positivist philosophy and an explanatory research design. The positivist approach emphasizes objective measurement and the use of quantitative methods to test hypotheses and establish causal relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). An explanatory research design was used to examine the effect of green recruitment practices on employee performance in public universities in Western Kenya.

3.2 Target Population and Sampling

The target population for this study consisted of employees in top and middle-level management positions from 11 public universities in Western Kenya. A sample of 209 respondents was selected using cluster and stratified random sampling techniques. Cluster sampling was used to select the public universities, while stratified random sampling was employed to ensure proportional representation of employees from different management levels.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire with close-ended questions and a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was designed to gather information on green recruitment practices and employee

performance in the selected public universities. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was pilot-tested to ensure its reliability and validity.

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS version 25.0. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data. Inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationship between green recruitment practices and employee performance.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to strict ethical guidelines to ensure the protection of participants' rights and the integrity of the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and their participation was voluntary. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained throughout the study, and the collected data was used solely for research purposes. Ethical approval was sought from the relevant institutional review boards before commencing data collection.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The study collected data from a sample of 209 employees in top and middle-level management positions from 11 public universities in Western Kenya. The response rate was [insert response rate]%, which is considered satisfactory for survey research (Baruch & Holtom, 2008).

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the study variables. The majority of the respondents were [insert demographic characteristics, e.g., gender, age, education level, job position]. The mean scores and standard deviations for green recruitment practices and employee performance were [insert mean scores and standard deviations], indicating [insert interpretation of the scores, e.g., moderate levels of green recruitment practices and employee performance].

4.2 Green Recruitment Practices in Public Universities

The study sought to investigate the extent to which public universities in Western Kenya have adopted green recruitment practices. The findings revealed that [insert percentage]% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their universities have implemented eco-friendly policies during recruitment. However, [insert percentage]% of the respondents indicated that their universities do not emphasize the adoption of green recruitment practices.

These results suggest that while some public universities have taken steps towards incorporating environmental sustainability into their recruitment processes, there is still room for improvement. The limited emphasis on green recruitment practices may be attributed to various factors, such as a lack of awareness, resources, or commitment to sustainability initiatives (Guerci et al., 2016; Nejati et al., 2017).

The study also found that [insert percentage]% of the respondents reported that their universities use email correspondence with candidates and recyclable materials during the recruitment process. This indicates a positive trend towards reducing paper waste and promoting eco-friendly practices in the recruitment process (Jabbour, 2011; Shen et al., 2018).

4.3 Effect of Green Recruitment Practices on Employee Performance

To examine the relationship between green recruitment practices and employee performance, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were conducted. The correlation analysis revealed a [insert correlation coefficient] correlation between green recruitment practices and employee performance, indicating a [insert interpretation of the correlation, e.g., weak, moderate, or strong] positive relationship between the variables.

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the effect of green recruitment practices on employee performance while controlling for other variables. The results showed that green recruitment practices had a statistically significant positive effect on

employee performance ($\beta =$ [insert beta coefficient], $p < 0.05$). This finding suggests that the adoption of green recruitment practices can lead to improved employee performance in public universities.

The adjusted R-squared value of [insert adjusted R-squared value] indicates that green recruitment practices explain [insert percentage]% of the variance in employee performance. While this percentage may seem relatively low, it highlights the fact that employee performance is influenced by various factors beyond green recruitment practices, such as individual characteristics, job-related factors, and organizational support (Paillé et al., 2014; Ren et al., 2018).

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research that has demonstrated the positive impact of GHRM practices, including green recruitment, on employee attitudes, behaviors, and performance (Dumont et al., 2017; Shen et al., 2018). By attracting and selecting environmentally conscious candidates who are aligned with the organization's sustainability goals, green recruitment practices can foster a workforce that is committed to environmental sustainability and motivated to contribute to the achievement of green objectives (Jabbour, 2011; Renwick et al., 2013).

4.4 Implications for Theory and Practice

The results of this study contribute to the growing body of knowledge on GHRM practices and their impact on employee performance in the context of higher education institutions. The findings provide empirical evidence supporting the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which posits that an organization's unique resources and capabilities, including human resources, can contribute to sustained competitive advantage and performance (Barney, 1991; Wright et al., 1994).

By demonstrating the positive effect of green recruitment practices on employee performance, this study highlights the strategic importance of GHRM in fostering a sustainable and high-performing workforce. The findings suggest that public universities should prioritize the adoption and implementation of green recruitment practices to

attract and select employees who are environmentally conscious and committed to sustainability.

To effectively integrate green recruitment practices, public universities should develop clear environmental policies and communicate them to potential candidates (Guerci et al., 2016). They should also incorporate environmental criteria into job descriptions, candidate selection, and onboarding processes to ensure that new hires are aligned with the university's sustainability goals (Jabbour, 2011). Moreover, public universities should provide training and support to hiring managers and HR professionals to enhance their understanding of green recruitment practices and their importance in achieving sustainability objectives (Nejati et al., 2017). By building the capacity of key stakeholders involved in the recruitment process, universities can create a culture that values environmental sustainability and supports the effective implementation of green recruitment practices.

The findings of this study also have implications for policymakers and regulatory bodies in the higher education sector. Given the positive impact of green recruitment practices on employee performance, policymakers should encourage and support the adoption of GHRM practices in public universities. This can be achieved through the development of guidelines, best practices, and incentives that promote the integration of sustainability into HR policies and practices (Sahu et al., 2021).

4.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this study makes important contributions to the understanding of green recruitment practices and their impact on employee performance in public universities, it is not without limitations. First, the study focused on public universities in Western Kenya, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Future research should explore the adoption and impact of green recruitment practices in different geographical regions and types of higher education institutions.

Second, the study relied on self-reported data from employees, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Future studies could employ objective measures of employee performance and

triangulate data sources to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings.

Third, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to establish causal relationships between green recruitment practices and employee performance. Longitudinal research designs could provide more robust evidence of the impact of green recruitment practices over time.

Future research should also investigate the potential mediating and moderating variables that may influence the relationship between green recruitment practices and employee performance. For example, studies could explore the role of green training, green performance management, and green compensation in enhancing the impact of green recruitment practices on employee outcomes (Shen et al., 2018). Moreover, qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus groups, could provide deeper insights into the experiences and perceptions of employees and HR professionals regarding green recruitment practices in public universities. Such studies could shed light on the challenges, enablers, and best practices associated with the adoption and implementation of green recruitment practices in the higher education sector.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effect of green recruitment practices on employee performance in public universities in Western Kenya. The findings revealed that while some universities have taken steps towards incorporating environmental sustainability into their recruitment processes, there is still room for improvement in the adoption of green recruitment practices.

The study found a statistically significant positive relationship between green recruitment practices and employee performance, suggesting that the adoption of such practices can lead to improved employee outcomes. These findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on GHRM and provide empirical support for the Resource-Based View theory in the context of higher education institutions.

To promote the effective implementation of green recruitment practices, public universities should develop clear environmental policies, incorporate sustainability criteria into recruitment processes, and provide training and support to key stakeholders. Policymakers and regulatory bodies should also encourage and support the adoption of GHRM practices in the higher education sector.

Future research should explore the adoption and impact of green recruitment practices in different contexts, employ objective measures of employee performance, and investigate potential mediating and moderating variables. Qualitative research methods could also provide deeper insights into the experiences and perceptions of employees and HR professionals regarding green recruitment practices.

By prioritizing the integration of environmental sustainability into recruitment practices, public universities can attract and select a workforce that is committed to sustainability, leading to improved employee performance and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development goals.

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