

# SUSTAINABILITY DRIVEN HIRING AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT: EXAMINING GREEN RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICES IN PAKISTAN

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## Abstract

This study examines how Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) contributes to organizational commitment within ISO-certified pharmaceutical firms in Pakistan. Growing interest in sustainability-driven human resource practices has increased the need to understand their influence on employees' attachment to organizations. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional design and a purposive sample of employees working in environmentally oriented firms, the study assessed the effects of GRS on affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Validated scales were used to measure GRS and organizational commitment, and temporal separation was adopted to reduce common method bias. Structural equation modelling showed that GRS significantly strengthened affective commitment, suggesting that employees hired through sustainability-focused processes develop stronger emotional ties to their organizations. GRS also enhanced continuance commitment, indicating that employees perceive greater costs associated with leaving environmentally responsible employers. The results further revealed a positive effect of GRS on normative commitment, reflecting a heightened sense of obligation to remain with the organization. These findings highlight the strategic value of embedding sustainability within hiring practices to cultivate a committed workforce. The study contributes empirical evidence from a developing-country context and underscores the importance of integrating green HRM into conventional HR processes to support long-term organizational sustainability.

## INTRODUCTION

The past decade or so has seen the world face serious and urgent issues around climate change, COVID-19, and environmental hazards. As a result, organizations worldwide are prioritizing sustainability as a fundamental need and are looking beyond eco-friendliness and environmental responsibility to formulate, implement, and develop human resource policies and procedures that not only support but also contribute to long-term organizational performance. The objective of green human resource management is to inculcate eco-friendly measures and

environmental policies into conventional human resource protocols and policies, which in turn has an impact on workers' attitudes, behaviors, and, most importantly, organizational commitment. One of the major approaches is Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) plays a pivotal role in attracting, recruiting, and retaining individuals who are in alignment with the company's sustainability goals and objectives.

Despite the ever-growing significance of sustainable human resource practices, empirical research studying the direct impact of green human resource

management on organizational commitment, comprising affective, continuance, and normative, remains rare and sparse, specifically in developing and emerging economies such as Pakistan. Understanding and analyzing this correlation is important. Loyalty and devotion among employees and workers motivate them to be more involved in business sustainability objectives. Through this article, organizations will gain insights into how to develop sustainable and environmentally friendly strategies with the help of theoretical insights and real-world applications.

## 2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS)

Green Recruitment and Selection is the process of recruiting, choosing, and hiring employees based on their commitment to environmental sustainability and the eco-friendly ideas they bring to the table. By using this method of hiring, environmental accountability among employees and workers increases, which leads to businesses achieving more environmental goals and sustainable objectives.

Latest trends show GRS played a key role in sustainable human resource management as it not only follows certifications but also encourages employees to achieve environmental sustainability goals. It impacts the overall behavior of staff as they are more inclined towards achieving business sustainability goals.

According to Jamil et al. (2023), GRS improves a company's sustainability performance by portraying a much more positive take on sustainability and on prospective employees and workers. Ahmed et al. (2024) showed that GHRM increases organizational citizenship behavior (OCBE) for the environment. Employees hired through this process are more committed to environmentally friendly objectives. This behavior within employees leads organizations to achieve their sustainability goals, as published in the *Social Responsibility Journal* (Noor, 2024). Additionally, Shahbaz and Malik (2025) establish that GHRM, when combined with academic capital, increases innovation competence and reinforces strategically positioned advantage in sustainability-focused businesses.

When combined, these results show that laborers hired using green hiring practices are more likely to actively engage in sustainability initiatives, show more corporate association, and adopt environmental ideals. Subsequently, Green Recruitment and Selection is not only a people strategy but a long-term commitment to inculcating an eco-friendly and environmentally responsible organizational culture. Nonetheless, further study is needed to isolate the specific effects of GRS from broader GHRM practices and to investigate its long-term influence on employee engagement and retention.

### 2.2 Organizational Commitment

The term Organizational commitment designates workers' emotional and expressive attachment to their organization and plays a pivotal and critical role in sustaining rendezvous and promoting corporate goals and objectives. In the context of GHRM, a key outcome of ecologically-oriented HR strategies, plans, and policies is Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) that integrates staff and employees' policies and beliefs with organization sustainability objectives (Shoab et al. 2021). Affective commitment (AOC) refers to the extent to which employees feel emotionally attached to and identify with their employer, and empirical evidence shows that GRS can enhance AOC, attracting individuals who value environmental responsibility and deepening their emotional connection to the organization (Shoab et al. 2021). When GRS is coupled with green training objectives, GRS increases the total organizational commitment of workers and employees in the dairy industry (Shoab et al. 2021), which underscores the significance of ecological and environmental configuration on labor force engagement. Correspondingly, GHRM methods critically enhance affective commitment, as shown by Gomes, Sabino, and Antunes (2023). This is particularly true when staff and employees' biospheric values accord with the company's sustainability goals and objectives.

Although there is currently little direct empirical evidence connecting GRS to normative or continuous commitment, theoretical and review research point to possible benefits. Renwick, Redman, and Maguire (2013) and Mustafa et al. (2023) state that workers who think their employers care about the

environment may feel a moral obligation to stick around (normative commitment) or find a tangible reason to stay (continuance commitment). Alshahrani and Iqbal (2024) further show that green HRM practices promote environmental commitment, mediated by corporate pride and identity, demonstrating that green-oriented HRM fosters psychological attachment to sustainability goals.

When considered collectively, these results suggest that GRS develops devoted staff, workers, and draws in ecologically, environmentally conscientious talent, mostly in terms of affective attachment, while it may also have an impact on normative and continuity dimensions. Organizational commitment thus acts as a vital mechanism via which Green Recruitment and Selection can support long-term sustainability outcomes and reinforce employee involvement with organizational environmental objectives.

### 2.3 Theoretical Basis

Social Exchange Theory (SET), first introduced by Blau in 1964 and later expanded by Emerson in 1976, offers a solid framework for understanding how employees' attitudes and behaviors develop through their interactions within organizations. According to SET, when individuals feel they are receiving positive treatment, support, and emotional resources from their organization or leaders, they tend to respond with positive attitudes and a strong commitment. This cycle of reciprocity, rooted in fairness, trust, and mutual obligation, makes SET especially useful for explaining how leadership and HRM practices can impact organizational commitment.

In this study, transformational leadership and green HRM practices like Green Recruitment & Selection, Green Training & Development, and Green Employee Involvement are highlighted as crucial investments that shape how employees perceive support, value, and respect. Previous research indicates that leaders who exhibit integrity, vision, and personalized attention can inspire reciprocal behaviors in employees, as such leadership demonstrates a genuine concern for their well-being (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Likewise, green HRM practices boost employees' sense of purpose and organizational support by aligning company activities with sustainability, ethics, and collective well-being (Renwick et al., 2013). These practices signal that the

organization not only appreciates employees' contributions but also invests in their growth, skill development, and engagement, thereby reinforcing the social exchange relationship.

The three key elements of organizational commitment, affective, normative, and continuance commitment, are closely tied to the principles of social exchange. Affective commitment tends to flourish when employees feel they are receiving emotional rewards and fair treatment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Normative commitment arises when employees sense a duty to give back to the organization for its support and investments. On the other hand, continuance commitment is shaped by the benefits and costs that come from long-term relationships, a concept that Blau (1964) originally highlighted in his work on exchange relationships. This means that Social Exchange Theory (SET) provides a comprehensive understanding of how environmentally friendly HR practices and supportive leadership can enhance employees' emotional ties and sense of obligation to the organization.

Given its solid theoretical basis, extensive empirical support, and broad application in organizational behavior and HRM research, Social Exchange Theory serves as the most coherent and academically sound foundation for this study. It effectively links green HRM, transformational leadership, and the complex nature of organizational commitment.

### 2.4 Hypotheses Development

In light of the theoretical rationale and prior empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed regarding the direct effects of GRS on organizational commitment:

H1: Green Recruitment and Selection has a significant relationship with affective organizational commitment (AOC).

H2: Green Recruitment and Selection has a significant relationship with normative organizational commitment (NOC).

H3: Green Recruitment and Selection has a significant relationship with continuance organizational commitment (COC).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design and Sample

This investigation incorporated a quantitative, cross-sectional research methodology to measure the impact of Green Recruitment and Selection on employee commitment in ISO-certified pharmaceutical enterprises in Pakistan. In view of the fact, the study concentrated on employees, staff members, and workers in companies with well-established sustainability and HR policies and practices, a purposive sample strategy was adopted to ensure that those respondents had relevant exposure to the organizational environment impacted by Green HRM. Through the ability channel, Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) helps find employees who possess green skills and values. It links the organization's sustainability goals and objectives with these people assets. The environmental alignment given by GRS boosts employees' moral drive. Additionally, it increases their emotional commitment to the company. This approach creates a stronger bond between workers and the company. The approach utilized to acquire the data was a temporal split to prevent the usual method bias. (CMB). Predictor and outcome variables were measured at separate dates. Podsakoff et al. (2003) argue that CMB refers to the distortion that can occur when both independent and dependent data are acquired simultaneously from the same source using the same method. Introduction of temporal lags boosts the validity of the findings. It decreases the danger of common technique variance, which can lead to inflated correlations.

#### 3.2 Measures

Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) was derived from Jabbour et al. (2010) and Saeed et al. (2019) scale. These drivers focus more on environmentally oriented hiring practices, such as adopting sustainability concepts, environmental factors during selection, and constant encouragement for sustainability during onboarding. For this investigation, Allen and Meyer's (1996) scale was employed. In the Pakistani context, these have been confirmed and proven to gauge organizational commitment (Shahbaz & Malik, 2025). While normative commitment (NOC) represents a sense of moral obligation to remain, affective commitment

(AOC) evaluates employees' emotional devotion. Continuance commitment (COC) is based on the comparison of the cost of leaving the job with the cost of living. Each issue was rated on a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1, strongly agree = 5) to remain consistent.

#### 3.3 Reliability and Validity

The dependability and validity were thoroughly evaluated to guarantee the robustness of the results. Items from the Jabbour et.al. and Saeed et.al. were modified to assess Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) (2010). The dependent variable, Organizational Commitment (OC), is considered a multidimensional construct, including Affective Commitment (AOC), Continuance Commitment (COC), and Normative Commitment (NOC). AOC represents the emotional attachment and identification with the organization.

Continuance commitment (COC) refers to how much risk and cost an employee perceives about leaving an employer, and normative commitment is the feeling of duty to remain part of the organization. All the subscales of Organizational Commitment were adapted from Allen and Meyer (1996). Each item was measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) to ensure consistency across the constructs. Control variables were demographics such as age, gender, education, and tenure. This approach is consistent with recent studies of Green HRM. Cronbach's alpha and rho\_A scores above 0.92 for each construct indicated high internal consistency. Composite Reliability (CR) values varied from 0.940 to 0.970, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.64, showing the support for Convergent validity, and constructs successfully captured the desired theoretical dimensions. This highlighted the fact that measurements are suitable for further structural equation modeling and hypothesis testing.

### 4. Results

#### 4.1 Measurement Model Assessment

PLS-SEM method was utilized to evaluate the fitness of the measurement model to confirm the reliability and validity of all components before assessing the hypothesized relationships. Core-level consistencies were determined using Cronbach's alpha and rho\_A

(0.924-0.966), which indicates high levels of interdependence among all constructs. Composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) represented convergent validity and resulted in CR (0.940-0.970) and AVE (0.643-0.761), indicating that all constructs are capturing within the true range

(theoretical dimension) that each was developed to represent. The overall evidence supports the validity

of the measurement model and the reliability of the model data in testing the hypotheses.

**Table 1: Measurement Model Reliability and Validity**

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
AOC	0.938	0.945	0.950	0.761
COC	0.940	0.941	0.951	0.736
GTD	0.938	0.941	0.947	0.643
GEI	0.931	0.937	0.944	0.707
GRS	0.966	0.969	0.970	0.711
NOC	0.924	0.926	0.940	0.725
TL	0.966	0.969	0.969	0.694

We analyzed discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which compares the square root of the AVE for each component to its correlations with other constructs (see Table 2); the square root of the AVE for each construct is higher than its correlations with other constructs, which confirms that the

constructs are distinct and measure different theoretical concepts (confidence in the discriminant validity results supports the reliability of the measurement model for further analysis).

**Table 2**

	AOC	COC	GTD	GEI	GRS	NOC	TL
AOC	0.873						
COC	0.483	0.858					
GTD	0.175	0.251	0.802				
GEI	0.203	0.374	0.293	0.841			
GRS	0.115	0.262	0.204	0.252	0.843		
NOC	0.326	0.518	0.383	0.250	0.219	0.851	
TL	0.271	0.373	0.278	0.326	0.301	0.374	0.833

**4.2 Structural Model: Direct Effects**

The structural model examined the hypothesized relationships between Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) and the three components of Organizational Commitment (OC). Results showed that GRS had a significant and positive effect on all proposed dimensions. Path from GRS to Affective Commitment (AOC) was significant ( $\beta = 0.199, t = 2.662, p = 0.008$ ), indicating that sustainability-oriented organizational policies enhance the emotional attachment of employees to the organization. GRS also positively influenced

Continuance Commitment (COC) ( $\beta = 0.195, t = 3.555, p < 0.001$ ). This suggests that employees perceive higher costs or risks of leaving organizations that implement effective green recruitment strategies. Finally, Green Recruitment significantly increased Normative Commitment (NOC) ( $\beta = 0.164, t = 2.913, p = 0.004$ ). This demonstrates how green hiring methods increase workers' sense of obligation to stay with the company.

Taken together, the results indicate that GRS is a strong predictor of organizational commitment. This conclusion provides a theoretical justification for the

investigation. Employees who are hired through environmentally responsible processes are also more likely to develop emotional commitment to the firm and feel a moral obligation to remain and derive value

in remaining. These findings demonstrate the strategic relevance of sustainable HR policies in developing employee commitment and ensuring organizational sustainability.

Table 3

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
GRS -> AOC	0.199	0.188	0.075	2.662	0.008
GRS -> COC	0.195	0.194	0.055	3.555	0.000
GRS -> NOC	0.164	0.165	0.056	2.913	0.004

**5. Discussion**

The study focuses on the impact of GRS on Pakistani employees' commitment to the company. The findings indicate a positive relationship between GRS and AOC ( $\beta = 0.199, p = 0.008$ ), and GRS and COC ( $\beta = 0.195, p < 0.001$ ), and Normative commitment was positively influenced by GRS ( $\beta = 0.164, p = 0.004$ ), which indicates that sustainable practices enhance employees' commitment to their respective organizations, and employees may perceive more risk of leaving organizations that are more focused on the environment. GRS hiring practices are based on previous research (e.g., Jabbour et al., 2010; Saeed et al., 2019) that states that GRS hiring practices are part of the process, and employees are more likely to adopt the green culture of the company and align with the mission of the company.

When all was said and done, findings indicated the strategic value of integrating GHRM into hiring. They may attract environmental employees, who will enhance organizational effectiveness and retention. Taken together, these findings highlight the potential strategic implications of integrating GHRM into HR hiring and selection processes: When HR processes are aligned with sustainability goals, they attract sustainability-oriented employees, enhance psychological engagement, and enhance retention, which in turn will enhance organizational performance. These results add to the growing body of research on GHRM and provide empirical data on green HRM in a developing country (i.e., Pakistan) where little green HRM research has been conducted. In practical terms, the findings of this study provide managers with insights into how to integrate sustainability into regular HR processes.

**6. Limitations and Future Research**

The current research delivers pertinent data about the association of Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) and Organizational Commitment in Pakistan. Like all research studies, the current study had a few limitations. Even though temporal separation was applied to decrease common procedure bias, the study design is focused on still primarily cross-sectional. This makes it more difficult to discern cause-and-effect links. Future study could employ completely longitudinal designs to investigate how GRS practices influence organizational commitment over time. Such designs would also assist in capturing changes in employees' attitudes and behaviors. By doing this, external validity would be increased, and possible cross-national differences in the efficacy of green recruitment strategies might be examined.

Second, the data were obtained from a specified set of ISO-certified pharmaceutical enterprises in Pakistan. This may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research could replicate the findings in other institutional, cultural, and industrial contexts.

Third, our study focused only on Green Recruitment and Selection as a predictor of organizational commitment. Future research could provide a more comprehensive knowledge of the larger HRM-sustainability relationship by including Green HRM approaches, such as employee involvement, performance management, and green training.

**7. Conclusion**

This study studied how Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) affects employees' organizational commitment in Pakistan. It focused on the emotional, continuance, and normative components of

commitment. The findings show that GRS has a favorable impact on each of the three elements.

The data suggest that GRS has a positive relationship with all three components, reflecting the need to integrate sustainability into HR processes, such as hiring and recruiting employees who share an organization's environmental values. It will create an emotional connection, a sense of obligation, and a recognition of the consequences of leaving. In organizations across the globe, HR procedures are being aligned with sustainability goals, and green recruitment and selection may be one of the most significant strategies for long-term performance and employee commitment.

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