

# Factors Influencing Green Human Resource Management: A Study in the Vietnamese Coal Industry

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## ABSTRACT:

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In the context of sustainable development becoming an increasingly urgent requirement, green human resource management plays a crucial role for businesses operating in industries with high environmental impact. This study focuses on analyzing the factors influencing green human resource management in the Vietnamese coal industry. The results show that leadership commitment and a green organizational culture are the two factors with the strongest influence on the implementation of green human resource practices in enterprises. In addition, employees' environmental awareness and institutional pressure also have a positive impact, although to a lesser extent. Based on this, the study emphasizes the need to strengthen leadership, build an environmentally oriented organizational culture, and raise employee awareness to promote green human resource management, contributing to the green transition and sustainable development in the Vietnamese coal industry.

**Keywords:** Green human resource management; Coal industry; Leadership commitment; Green organizational culture; Sustainable development; Vietnam.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of the global community facing serious challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and environmental pollution, businesses are increasingly under pressure to transform towards sustainable development. One important approach to achieving this goal is green human resource management, in which human resource management policies and practices are integrated with environmental protection and sustainable development goals (Renwick et al., 2013; Jabbour & Santos, 2008). This approach not only helps businesses improve environmental performance but also contributes to improving overall operational efficiency and long-term competitiveness (Dumont et al., 2017).

In recent years, green human resource management has become an important research area in organizational management and development, with much empirical evidence showing a positive correlation between green human resource practices and environmental performance as well as organizational performance (Pham et al., 2020; Yong et al., 2020). Accordingly, activities such as green recruitment, green training, performance evaluation linked to env

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However, the application of green human resource management is not uniform across industries and countries, but is influenced by various factors, including both internal factors of the enterprise and external factors such as the institutional environment, social pressure, and market demands (Jabbour et al., 2019). In particular, leadership commitment is considered a decisive factor in strategic direction and resource allocation for green activities (Renwick et al., 2013), while a green organizational culture plays a crucial role in shaping and maintaining environmentally friendly behaviors among employees (Dumont et al., 2017). Simultaneously, employees' environmental awareness is also identified as a factor driving the implementation of green practices within the organization (Pham et al., 2020).

In the context of Vietnam, the need to transition to a green growth and sustainable development model is becoming increasingly urgent, especially for industries with high environmental impact such as the coal industry. As a crucial economic sector contributing significantly to national energy security, the Vietnamese coal industry is also one of the industries with high emission levels and faces significant environmental protection pressures. This necessitates the application of advanced management models, with green human resource management being considered a key solution to balance economic development goals and environmental protection.

However, in practice, the implementation of green human resource management in Vietnam's coal industry still faces many limitations, mainly due to a lack of appropriate incentive mechanisms, insufficient awareness of the role of environmental factors in human resource management, and a lack of consistency in policies and organizational culture. In addition, research on green human resource management in Vietnam in general and in the coal industry in particular is relatively limited, especially empirical studies aimed at clarifying the influencing factors and their mechanisms of impact.

Stemming from the aforementioned research gaps and practical requirements, this paper focuses on analyzing the factors influencing green human resource management in the Vietnamese coal industry. The research not only contributes to supplementing the theoretical basis and empirical evidence for the field of green human resource management in the context of developing economies, but also provides important policy implications to promote green transformation in the coal industry in particular and environmentally impactful industries in general.

## 2. THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

### Green Human Resource Management

Green human resource management is understood as the integration of environmental goals and criteria into human resource management activities to promote environmentally friendly behavior among employees and enhance the sustainable performance of the organization. In a modern approach, green human resource management not only includes environmental-related policies but is also a comprehensive system encompassing functions such as recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and compensation (Renwick et al., 2013).

Numerous studies have shown that green human resource management plays a crucial role in improving the environmental performance of businesses through changing employee awareness and behavior (Jabbour & Santos, 2008). When human resource policies are designed with a green orientation, employees tend to participate more actively in environmental protection activities, thereby contributing to minimizing the negative impact of the business on the natural environment (Dumont et al., 2017).

Furthermore, green human resource management is considered a strategic factor that helps businesses enhance their competitiveness, especially in the context of increasingly stringent environmental standards and the global trend of sustainable development. This shows that green human resource management not only has environmental significance but also long-term economic and social value.

### Internal factors influencing green human resource management.

Internal factors within a business play a crucial role in determining the level of implementation of green human resource management. First and foremost, leadership commitment is considered a core element, capable of guiding strategy and motivating green activities within the organization. When leaders demonstrate concern and priority for environmental issues, green human resource management policies and practices tend to be implemented more effectively (Jabbour et al., 2019).

Furthermore, a green organizational culture reflects the level of shared values and beliefs related to environmental protection within the enterprise. A positive organizational culture creates a favorable environment for environmentally friendly behaviors to be maintained and developed (Dumont et al., 2017). In this context, organizational culture is not only a supporting factor but also a foundation for the sustainable implementation of green human resource management policies.

Furthermore, employees' environmental awareness is also a crucial factor. When employees understand the role and significance of environmental protection, they tend to proactively participate in green activities and comply with organizational policies (Pham et al., 2020). This shows that green human resource management depends not only on policies but also on the awareness and behavior of people within the organization.

#### **External factors influencing green human resource management.**

Besides internal factors, external factors also significantly influence the implementation of green human resource management in businesses. Among these, institutional pressure from the government, customers, and society is considered one of the important drivers encouraging businesses to adopt green practices.

Environmental protection regulations, emission standards, and policies encouraging sustainable development create pressure on businesses to adjust their production and management practices towards environmental friendliness. Simultaneously, increasing consumer awareness of environmental issues also compels businesses to improve their image and social responsibility through the adoption of green governance policies (Yong et al., 2020).

Furthermore, industry competition and globalization trends are also driving businesses to adopt green human resource management as a competitive advantage. In this context, businesses face pressure not only from regulations but also from the market and partners in the supply chain.

#### **The underlying theories explaining green human resource management.**

Green human resource management can be explained through several fundamental theories in management and organization. First, resource theory posits that internal resources, including human resources and organizational capacity, are the determining factors in a company's competitive advantage. In this context, green human resource management is seen as a strategic resource that helps businesses improve efficiency and achieve sustainable development (Barney, 1991).

Furthermore, institutional theory emphasizes the role of external environmental pressures in shaping organizational behavior. Accordingly, businesses tend to comply with regulations and societal expectations in order to achieve legitimacy and maintain their existence (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This explains why factors such as institutional pressure have a significant influence on the implementation of green human resource management.

Furthermore, organizational behavior theory suggests that employees' perceptions and attitudes play a crucial role in shaping their behavior. Therefore, raising employees' environmental awareness will contribute to promoting environmentally friendly behaviors within the organization (Dumont et al., 2017).

These theories provide a scientific basis for building research models and explaining the relationships between factors influencing green human resource management in businesses, especially in the context of industries with high environmental impact such as Vietnam's coal industry.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Approach**

This study employs a quantitative approach to analyze the factors influencing green human resource management in the Vietnamese coal industry. This approach allows for the measurement of the impact between research variables through statistical indicators, thereby ensuring the objectivity and reliability of the research results.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire survey of managers and employees working in coal industry enterprises. Research variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The scale was inherited from previous studies and adapted to the context of the Vietnamese coal industry.

A controlled convenience sampling method was applied to ensure that survey participants had an understanding of the company's governance practices and environmental issues. After eliminating invalid questionnaires, the data used for analysis consisted of 168 observations, meeting the minimum requirements of the linear structural model analysis method.

### **Research model**

Based on theoretical frameworks and previous studies, this research proposes a model comprising five main variables: environmental awareness, leadership commitment, institutional pressure, green organizational culture, and green human resource management.

In this study, green human resource management is the dependent variable, reflecting the extent to which environmentally friendly human resource practices are adopted within the enterprise. The remaining variables act as independent variables, directly impacting green human resource management. Simultaneously, leadership commitment is assumed to indirectly impact green human resource management through the formation and development of a green organizational culture.

The research model was developed to simultaneously examine the direct and indirect impacts of various factors on green human resource management, thereby clarifying the mechanisms of influence within the context of the Vietnamese coal industry.

### **Research hypothesis system**

Based on the proposed research model, the following hypotheses are formulated:

*H1: Environmental awareness has a positive impact on green human resource management in coal industry enterprises.*

*H2: Leadership commitment has a positive impact on green human resource management.*

*H3: Institutional pressure has a positive impact on green human resource management.*

*H4: Green organizational culture has a positive impact on green human resource management.*

*H5: Leadership commitment indirectly impacts green human resource management through a green organizational culture.*

This system of hypotheses fully reflects the core relationships between intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing green human resource management, while ensuring conciseness and clear testability in the research model.

### **Data analysis methods**

The data were analyzed using partial least squares linear structural modeling. The analysis process was carried out through the following main steps.

First, reliability and validity testing of the scale are conducted to ensure the consistency and measurability of the research variables.

Next, the structural model is evaluated using indicators such as the coefficient of determination and the model's goodness of fit to determine the explanatory power of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

Next, the research hypotheses are tested using path coefficients and statistical significance levels to determine the degree of impact between the variables.

Finally, the mediating impact test aims to clarify the role of green organizational culture in the relationship between leadership commitment and green human resource management.

This analytical method is suitable for the research objectives and allows for a comprehensive assessment of the relationships within the model, while ensuring the reliability and scientific validity of the research results.

## **4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Descriptive statistics of research data**

Before proceeding with the validation steps for the measurement model and structural model, the study conducted descriptive statistical analysis to assess the distribution characteristics of the research variables. The results are presented in Table

**Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the research variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Average value</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Minimum value</b>	<b>The greatest value</b>
Environmental awareness	3.78	0.67	2.20	4.90
Commitment from leadership	3.65	0.71	2.10	4.85
Institutional pressure	3.52	0.74	2.00	4.80
Green organizational culture	3.70	0.69	2.30	4.90
Green Human Resource Management	3.60	0.72	2.10	4.85

*(Source: Results of survey data processing by the authors, 2026)*

The results in Table 1 show that the average values of the variables range from 3.52 to 3.78, all higher than the theoretical average of the scale, reflecting that coal industry enterprises have initially recognized and implemented activities related to green human resource management. However, this level is not yet truly high, indicating that there is still significant room for improvement in the current context of green transformation.

Among the research variables, environmental awareness had the highest average value, reaching 3.78, indicating that coal industry workers have a relatively good understanding of environmental issues. This could stem from the fact that the coal industry is one of the industries under significant pressure regarding environmental protection, leading to increased concern among businesses and workers alike regarding related issues.

Conversely, institutional pressure has the lowest average value, at 3.52, reflecting that regulations and external pressures, while having an impact, are not yet truly strong. This is consistent with the practice in Vietnam, where policies and mechanisms promoting green development in some industries are still in the process of being perfected.

For the green human resource management variable, the average value of 3.60 indicates that coal industry enterprises have made some progress in implementing green human resource practices, but the level is still moderate. This reflects the gap between awareness and action in the practical implementation of green human resource management.

Regarding standard deviations, the variables ranged from 0.67 to 0.74, indicating a moderate level of data dispersion and no significant variability between observations. This ensures data stability and suitability for further in-depth quantitative analysis.

The relatively wide range of values for the variables indicates significant differences among businesses in implementing green human resource management. This is an important basis for further research to analyze influencing factors and test relationships in the research model in subsequent sections.

**Reliability and validity testing of the scale**

After descriptive statistical analysis, the study conducted reliability and validity testing of the scales to ensure the validity of the variables before incorporating them into structural model analysis. The indices used included Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, composite reliability, and mean extracted variance. The results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Results of reliability and convergent validity testing.**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Overall reliability</b>	<b>mean extracted variance</b>
Environmental awareness	0.85	0.89	0.67
Commitment from leadership	0.88	0.91	0.71

Institutional pressure	0.84	0.88	0.65
Green organizational culture	0.89	0.92	0.74
Green Human Resource Management	0.87	0.90	0.69

*(Source: Results of survey data processing by the authors, 2026)*

The results in Table 2 show that all scales achieved high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the variables all greater than 0.7, ranging from 0.84 to 0.89. This demonstrates that the observed variables within the same scale have good internal consistency, reflecting the stability of the research concepts.

At the same time, the composite reliability of all scales exceeded 0.7, indicating that the observed variables are capable of well explaining their corresponding latent variables. This confirms that the scale structure constructed in the study is stable and reliable.

The mean variance index of all variables is greater than 0.5, ranging from 0.65 to 0.74, indicating that the scales have convergent validity. This means that the observed variables have a high degree of correlation with the latent variables they represent, ensuring accurate measurement of the research concepts.

Notably, the variable "green organizational culture" has the highest average extracted variance value, reaching 0.74, indicating that it is a well-measured concept with a high degree of correlation between observed variables. This reflects that organizational culture factors in coal industry enterprises have a relatively clear and easily identifiable structure in practice.

Overall, the validation results show that the measurement scale in the study has high reliability and validity, meets the standards of quantitative research, and provides a solid foundation for further structural model analysis and hypothesis testing in the following steps.

**Testing the structural model and research hypotheses.**

After the scales were validated for reliability and convergent validity, the study proceeded to evaluate the structural model to test the relationships between the variables in the model. The indices used included the coefficient of determination, the predictive coefficient, and the variance inflation factor. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Results of structural model evaluation**

Dependent variable	R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>	VIF (max)
Green organizational culture	0.43	0.28	2.15
Green Human Resource Management	0.64	0.41	2.40

*(Source: Results of survey data processing by the authors, 2026)*

The results in Table 3 show that the coefficient of determination for the green human resource management variable is 0.64, reflecting that the independent variables in the model explain 64% of the variation in green human resource management. This is a high level of explanation in studies in the fields of management and social sciences, indicating that the research model has a good fit with the real-world data.

For the green organizational culture variable, the coefficient of determination is 0.43, indicating that leadership commitment significantly explains the formation of a green organizational culture within the enterprise. This confirms the crucial role of leadership in shaping environmental values and norms within an organization.

The predictive values of all variables are greater than 0, with the green human resource management variable reaching 0.41, indicating that the model has good predictive ability. At the same time, the variance inflation coefficients of all variables are less than 3, demonstrating the absence of multicollinearity and ensuring the reliability of the model's estimates.

Based on that, the study tested the hypotheses through the path coefficient and statistical significance level, the results of which are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Results of hypothesis testing**

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta coefficient	P-value	Conclude
H1	Environmental awareness → Green human resource management	0.22	<0.05	Accept
H2	Commitment to leadership → Green human resource management	0.41	<0.001	Accept
H3	Institutional pressure → Green human resource management	0.19	<0.05	Accept
H4	Green organizational culture → Green human resource management	0.36	<0.001	Accept
H5	Commitment to leadership → Green organizational culture → Green human resource management	Significant	<0.01	Accept

*(Source: Results of survey data processing by the authors, 2026)*

The results in Table 4 show that all research hypotheses are accepted with appropriate statistical significance levels.

Hypothesis 1 suggests that environmental awareness has a positive impact on green human resource management in coal industry enterprises. The test results show an impact coefficient of 0.22 with a statistical significance level of less than 0.05, therefore this hypothesis is accepted. This result reflects that when employees have a clear awareness of environmental issues, they tend to support and participate more actively in green human resource management practices. However, the low level of impact indicates that awareness is not sufficient to create significant change without support from organizational factors.

Hypothesis 2 suggests that leadership commitment has a positive impact on green human resource management. The results show an impact coefficient of 0.41, with very high statistical significance, confirming the hypothesis. This is the strongest influencing factor in the model, demonstrating the decisive role of leadership in strategic direction and implementation of green human resource activities. When leaders demonstrate clear commitment, policies and resources for green human resource management will be prioritized, thereby promoting effective implementation within the enterprise.

Hypothesis 3 suggests that institutional pressure has a positive impact on green human resource management. The test results show an impact coefficient of 0.19 with a statistical significance level of less than 0.05, therefore this hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that legal regulations, customer requirements, and social pressure influence the implementation of green practices by businesses. However, the relatively low level of impact reflects that external pressures are not strong enough to become the main driving force for change within coal industry businesses.

Hypothesis 4 suggests that a green organizational culture has a positive impact on green human resource management. The results show an impact coefficient of 0.36 with high statistical significance, confirming the hypothesis. This indicates that when environmental values and norms are established and maintained within the organization, green human resource management practices will be implemented more effectively. Organizational culture acts as an internal mechanism to sustainably maintain green behavior.

Hypothesis 5 suggests that leadership commitment indirectly impacts green human resource management through a green organizational culture. The test results show that this indirect impact is statistically significant, therefore the hypothesis is accepted. This demonstrates that leadership not only directly impacts green human resource management but also, through building a green organizational culture, creates a long-lasting and sustainable influence.

Overall, the test results show that all hypotheses are accepted, confirming the suitability of the research model and clarifying the role of factors influencing green human resource management in the Vietnamese coal industry.

### **Discuss the research results.**

The research findings provide important empirical evidence regarding the factors influencing green human resource management in the context of Vietnam's coal industry. Firstly, leadership commitment has the strongest impact on green human resource management, consistent with previous studies that suggest leadership plays a central role in strategic direction and promoting environmentally related activities within organizations. This is particularly crucial in traditional industries like the coal industry, where strategic decisions are often highly centralized.

Furthermore, the research results also show that a green organizational culture is a significant factor impacting green human resource management. This reinforces the view that organizational values and norms can strongly influence employee behavior, thereby contributing to the sustainable maintenance of green practices. In the context of the coal industry, building a green organizational culture can help businesses transition from a traditional production model to a sustainable development model.

Notably, while workers' environmental awareness has a positive impact, it is not the deciding factor. This suggests that raising awareness is necessary but insufficient; it needs to be combined with policies and organizational mechanisms to create substantive change in behavior.

Furthermore, institutional pressure has an impact, but at a low level, reflecting that environmental regulations and policies in Vietnam have not yet created sufficient pressure to drive significant change in businesses. This suggests that stronger policies are needed to encourage and require businesses to adopt green governance practices.

Another noteworthy point is the mediating role of green organizational culture in the relationship between leadership commitment and green human resource management. This result shows that the impact of leadership extends beyond direct decisions to include building an organizational environment, thereby creating a long-lasting and sustainable influence.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the empirical evidence for the field of green human resource management in the context of developing economies, especially in industries with high environmental impact. At the same time, the study broadens the approach by considering the relationships between factors in a multidimensional way, including both direct and indirect impacts.

Overall, the research findings not only affirm the role of intrinsic factors such as leadership and organizational culture but also emphasize the need for a combination of internal and external factors to promote effective and sustainable green human resource management in the Vietnamese coal industry.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This study clarifies the factors influencing green human resource management in the Vietnamese coal industry amidst increasing demands for sustainable development. The analysis reveals that green human resource management is simultaneously affected by both internal and external factors, with leadership commitment and a green organizational culture playing a decisive role. In particular, leadership commitment not only directly but also indirectly impacts the formation and maintenance of a green organizational culture, thereby creating a long-term and sustainable influence on the implementation of green human resource practices within the enterprise.

Furthermore, the study also indicates that employees' environmental awareness and institutional pressure have a positive impact on green human resource management, although the extent of this influence is limited. This reflects the reality that raising individual awareness and improving the institutional framework are necessary but insufficient to create significant change without support from organizational factors. This result underscores the central role of internal factors in promoting green transformation in coal industry enterprises.

Based on these findings, the study proposes several key policy implications. First, coal industry enterprises need to strengthen the role of leadership in guiding sustainable development strategies by integrating environmental objectives into business strategies and human resource management. Leaders need to demonstrate clear

commitment not only at the policy level but also in concrete actions, in order to motivate and guide the entire organization.

Secondly, building and developing a green organizational culture should be considered a strategic priority. Businesses need to create a work environment that encourages environmentally friendly behaviors, while integrating green values into human resource management activities such as recruitment, training, evaluation, and rewards. This will help maintain green human resource management practices naturally and sustainably within the organization.

Thirdly, businesses need to focus on raising environmental awareness among employees through training programs and internal communication. Raising awareness will contribute to changing behavior, thereby promoting the effectiveness of green human resource management policies.

Furthermore, from a state management perspective, it is necessary to improve the system of policies and regulations to create pressure and incentives for businesses to adopt green governance practices. Support, incentive, and monitoring policies need to be designed in a coordinated manner to enhance implementation effectiveness and create a favorable environment for businesses to transform towards sustainability.

Despite achieving certain results, the study still has some limitations, such as the limited scope of the survey to the coal industry and the failure to fully consider other contextual factors that may affect green human resource management. Therefore, future studies could expand the scope to other industries and add research variables such as technological innovation, digital transformation, or corporate social responsibility to gain a more comprehensive view of green human resource management.

Overall, the study provided important empirical evidence on the factors influencing green human resource management in the Vietnamese coal industry, and proposed valuable policy implications for businesses and policymakers in promoting sustainable development.

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