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Original Article

Influence of Green Recruitment and Selection on Sustainability of Selected Tea Factories in Kericho Highlands Region, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this study was to assess the influence of green recruitment and selection on the sustainability of selected tea factories in Kericho Highlands region, Kenya. The study was anchored on human capital theory. It adopted a correlational research design, with a targeted population of 915 respondents drawn from tea factories in the Kericho highlands region. A sample size of 278 respondents was determined scientifically using the Yamane taro formula. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The validity of the research was checked together with the supervisors and subject experts, while instrument reliability was determined through Cronbach's alpha coefficient, where a coefficient of 0.7987 was obtained. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis was used to analyse data. The findings established a significant positive relationship between green recruitment and selection and the sustainability of the tea factories. The study concluded that green recruitment and selection influenced the sustainability of the factories.

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INTRODUCTION

Organizations are gradually observing increased consciousness regarding the importance of going green and adopting environmental management strategies which are essential in moving towards sustainable business practices (Ahmad, 2015). Organizational sustainability can be attained by balancing managing the environment, protecting the stakeholder's interest, and ensuring that the business stays afloat economically (Yusoff, Nejati, Kee, & Amran, 2018). This can be achieved by implementing green human resource management practices whose main objective is to promote environmentalism and boost employee morale and satisfaction (Jabbour, 2013). The idea of GHRM contains systems, practices, and policies that define employees in an organization as green to beneficiate the natural environment, business, individuals, and the society at large (Renwick, Jansson, Verburg, Revoredo-Giha, Gocht, & McCracken, 2013).

Green human resource management, through its various practices, defines a firm's alignment towards environment protection. It also focuses on the fragility of the ecosystem and the environmental effects of the organization's economic activities (Mishra, Sarkar, & Kiranmai, 2014). Green human resource management contributes to the overall improvement of the organization's performance through the internal production processes as well as provides good payback to both internal and external stakeholders (Tang, Chen, Jiang, Paille & Jia, 2018).

Green recruitment and selection (GRS) have been identified as a critical business driver for growing organizations. Green recruitment and selection are regarded as the process of identifying qualified candidates for a vacancy through online advertisements to minimize actions that can harm the environment (Islam, 2014). Green recruitment and selection, which is a key component of Green Human resource management, play an active role in implementing green initiatives in recruitment such as green need identification, preparation of job description, and creating recruitment plans conducting interviews (Ahmad, 2015).

The majority of the third world countries have not adopted or implemented green human resource management practices, which has resulted in increased pollution and other adverse effects on the ecosystem (Al-Romeedy, 2019). Scholarly evidence indicates that some countries such as Egypt have integrated environmental policies with their organizational goals and objectives. However, these policies are not fully implemented, and thus organizations still rely on the traditional recruitment practices such as receiving recruitment applications manually (Mishra, Sarkar, & Kiranmai, 2014). A review of green practices focusing on policies in the organization that operated within the metropolitan municipality in South Africa by Agyepong, Adelaide Owusu, and Godwell Nhamo (2017), indicated that many organizations have adopted green practices in recruitment; however, the implementation was slow. Further training on the benefits of green human resource practices was required to ensure effectiveness in implementing the practices. Mwita (2018), indicated that the implementation of green training, recruitment and selection practices lead to improved firm performance in the public sector in Tanzania. According to Okeyo and Ragui (2017), proper formulation and implementation of green

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recruitment strategies enable organizations to enhance the green image, establish and strengthen their core competencies and achieve high efficiency leading to organizational sustainability.

The organizational sustainability of tea factories plays a crucial role in ensuring environmental health protection, conducive environmental competition, and fostering employee satisfaction and retention. Most tea processing factories have become concerned about improving and achieving sustainability by implementing effective green human resource management practices (Haddock-Millar, Sanyal & Müller-Camen, 2016; Likhitkar & Verma, 2017). According to pollution statistics in Kenya, the statistics index on pollution stands at 1.7 %, indicating it is on an upward trend. This poses a threat to the environment requiring attention from various stakeholders. Hosain and Rahman (2016), recommend that tea factories take environmental concerns into their strategic business plans for efficient implementation. The factories should also adjust and take cognizance of environmentally friendly practices throughout their daily business operations.

Study Hypothesis

H_0: There is no significant relationship between green recruitment and selection and sustainability of selected tea factories in the Kericho Highlands region, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section covers the theoretical review of literature, empirical literature and a conceptual framework.

Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on Human Capital Theory. According to Sweetland (1996), the theory was first formulated by Adam Smith and later it became the science of human capital (Almendarez, 2013). Armstrong and Taylor (2020), asserted that humans are either born with inborn abilities or they just acquire them through learning and end up transforming them into human capital incase more or further attention is given to them. Bontis, Chua and Richardson (2000), argue that the human intelligence, human skills and human capabilities are the most critical factors in associations and how these assets are overseen gives the organizations competitive edge. This factor can be acquired or attained through training and development, human resource performance management and reward.

Human capital theory may not apply to some situations such as where the organization does not have informant on how to implement training and reward, human resource performance management and reward to the employees in order to attain organization sustainability. Schulz Chowdhury and Van de Voort (2013), organizations need to establish the importance of human capital which could be accessed through human resource practices.

To this study, the theory will be anchored on three objectives; green training and development, green human resource performance and lastly green reward. The theory will address on how green training and development will contribute to employee efficiency, how green human resource contributes to sustainability, and green reward management motivate employees (Schwab, 2018). Employees who are highly motivated tend to have high interest in acquiring new knowledge which will improve on their skills, increase their capabilities hence boosting sustainability of tea factories.

Tea factories would be able to evaluate their organizational culture, norms and beliefs of the workers internally and generalize them to match the environment they are operating in. Therefore, this theory supported the relationship between; green training and development, green human resource performance, and green reward management and sustainability of tea factory.

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Empirical Review

Past scholarly studies on green human resource management and organizational sustainability were reviewed to establish contextual, conceptual and methodological gaps

Green Recruitment, Selection and Sustainability

Green selection and recruitment are among the best practices of human resource management that give an organization a chance to established initiative of HRM that are green to each applicant of a job. Sustaining and recruiting new workforce is a big problem facing HRM in the world. (Sudin, 2011).

A study by Chen, Hossen, Muzafary and Begum, (2018), sought to determine the effect of green selection and recruitment on banking sustainability in Bangladesh. The research study adopted descriptive research design. Data was collected using secondary and primary sources. Secondary data was collected by use of banks annual reports, published reports, magazines and journals while structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data. The study targeted 20 banks and purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents. Data collected was analyzed by using descriptive statistics technique. Findings of the study showed eighty percent of the banks selected had adopted recruitment and selection processes while seventy percent of the banks indicated that they were duplicating tasks of which it was consuming time, cumbersome and hectic which were contrary to the idea of green recruitment and selection. Further the study findings indicated traditional recruitment and selection was not cost effective like green recruitment and selection. The study recommended for the banks to adopt green recruitment and selection for the purpose of cutting cost at the same time foster banks environmental sustainability.

A study in Malaysia by Yong, Yusliza, Ramayah, Chiappetta, Jabbour, Sehnem and Mani (2020), sought to determine the effect of green HRM on manufacturing industries sustainability in manufacturing industries Malaysia. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. 112 manufacturing companies were used to obtain data for the study. The study aimed to determine the influence of green recruitment, green selection, green training, green reward, green analysis, green description, and green performance assessment on manufacturing sustainability. Findings from this study identified green recruitment to positively impact manufacturing firms' sustainability, but green selection had an insignificant influence on manufacturing firms' sustainability.

Ogbu and Okwurume (2019), studied the relationship between human resource management and deposit-taking banks Sustainability in Nigeria. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. A simple random sampling technique was used to sample ten deposits banks, and the study used primary data sources, and data will be collected using questionnaires. Five managers were surveyed from each bank. The researcher administered 50 questionnaires, and only 41 copies were collected from the respondents. The study findings indicated green recruitment was positively significant with banks' sustainability.

Kuria and Mose (2019), sought to analyze the impact of green human resource management techniques on the sustainability of the universities in Kenya. Their research used a descriptive research design. The study targeted 10 universities, and they were picked because they had roughly 400 employees working in schools or deans of faculties, office of human resources, and senior managers. A purposive sampling technique was used to pick 120 respondents from the target population. The study adopted open-ended questionnaires, and data collected and analyzed was presented using graphs, tables, and charts. The study findings showed green recruitment and green selection had a significant and positive relationship with universities sustainability.

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Sustainability

Sustainability is the avoidance of the depletion of natural resources to maintain an ecological balance. To organization sustainability, the term is considered to create and preserve natural resources concerned with environmental health, social benefits, and economic health (Almada & Borges, 2018). According to Diófási-Kovács and Valkó (2015), organizational sustainability revolves around the environmental, social, and economic level, which is driven by the growth and development underpinned in social responsibility.

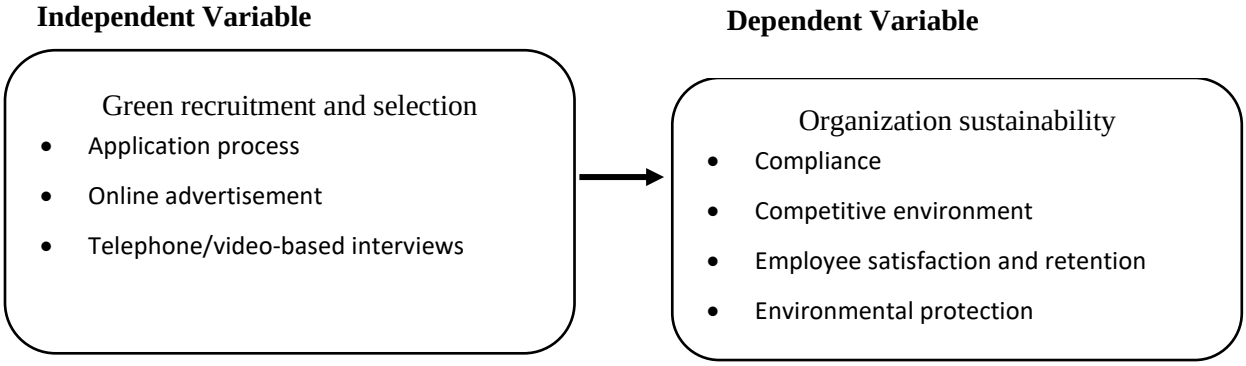
A comparative study was conducted by Hadjri, Perizade, and Farla (2019) on environmental management in manufacturing firms in Mexico. The study adopted a survey research design. Primary data was used to collect data for analysis, where both descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted for data analysis. The findings revealed that firms which implemented green environmental systems were more compliant with the environmental policies and thus enhanced their sustainability. The firms had high ratings compared to those firms which were still slugging in implementing green environmental systems. This was associated with the environmental certifications they received from the government.

Howes, Wortley, Potts, Dedekorkut-Howes, Serrao-Neumann, Davidson, and Nunn (2017), studied the failure of organizational environmental sustainability policy implementation in manufacturing firms in South Africa. The study relied on a descriptive research design, and the data collected was analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. The key pillars of organizational sustainability were green human resource management. The findings indicated that green training, recruitment, selection, and rewards were major contributors to organizational environmental sustainability, leading to competitive environment advantage.

Owino and Kwasira (2016), carried out a study to determine the effect of green HRM practices on Menengai Oil refinery environmental sustainability. The research adopted a descriptive research design where primary data was used to obtain data for analysis. A sample size of 163 respondents was picked from a target population of 275 employees. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data, and the data was presented in the form of pie charts, figures, percentages, and tables. The study found that green training had an insignificant relationship with environmental sustainability while green performance management revealed a significant relationship with environmental sustainability. The study recommended that for an organization to achieve environmental sustainability, it must embrace green human resource management.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



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METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlational research design through which the relationship between green recruitment and selection and the sustainability of selected tea factories in the Kericho Highlands region was assessed. This type of research design was vital to this study because the researcher tried to unravel the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The study's target population was 915 respondents drawn from 12 tea factories from the Kericho highlands region. a sample size of 278 was selected through proportionate stratified sampling being adopted to select respondents from each tea factory. Primary data on green recruitment and selection was obtained using a structured questionnaire with a 5 point Likert scale. Secondary data on organization sustainability was obtained from published literature and the tea factory's website. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to provide a summary of the data. At the same time, correlation and regression analyses were carried out to test the relationship between green recruitment and the selection of selected tea factories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's main objective was to establish a relationship between green recruitment and selection and the sustainability of selected tea factories in the Kericho Highlands region, Kenya.

Demographic Characteristics

The response rate for the study was 91%, implying that 253 questionnaires were returned out of the 278 issued questionnaires. The study established that the majority of the respondents 60 (39.2%), fell between the age of 28 years and 37 years, those who were below the age of 27 years were 22 (14.4%), while those between 38 years and 47 years were 50 (32.7%) and those between 48-57 years were 21 (13.7%). Further, the study established that the majority of the respondents, 72 (47.1%), were graduates while 51 (33.3%) had obtained a diploma and 30 (19.6%) of the respondents had a postgraduate diploma or degree. This implies that the majority of the respondents understood clearly the influence of various green human resource management practices on the sustainability of the tea factories. Finally, the majority, 93 (60.8%) of respondents, had worked in the tea factory for 11 to 15 years. 50 (32.7%) of the respondents had worked in the factory for 6 to 10 years, and 10 (6.5%) employees had worked in the factory for over 16 years.

Descriptive Statistics

The study sought to assess specific green human resource management practices used at the various tea factories by using a Likert Scale to measure the extent to which the respondents agreed to specific statements provided in the questionnaire. In the Likert Scale, 5 represented Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Neutral, 2-, Disagree, and 1-Strongly Disagree.

Table 1: Green Recruitment and Selection

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
The factory has developed a green job description for employees	10 (7%)	97 (63%)	25 (16%)	11(8%)	10 (7%)	3.5621	.95855
Recruitment of employees to the factory involves those who are aware of green practices	15 (10%)	56 (37%)	52 (34%)	30 (20%)		3.3660	.90867

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Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
The factory encourages new applicants to use green criteria (such as online CVs) when applying for the job.	35 (23%)	103 (67%)	5 (3%)	-	10 (7%)	4.0000	.92480
The factory prefers doing online interviews for potential employees.	-	50 (33%)	31 (20%)	52 (34%)	20 (13%)	2.7255	1.0590
Green recruitment and selection has enhanced employee retention in the factory	10 (7%)	82 (54%)	30 (19%)	21 (13.7%)	10 (7%)	3.3987	1.02174

The results from *Table 1* established that the factory has developed a green job description for employees (*M* = 3.561; *SD* = 0.9585). The respondents also agreed that recruitment of employees to the factory involved those who were aware of green practices (*M* = 3.366; *SD* = 0.9087. On whether the factory encouraged new applicants to use green criteria (such as online submission of CVs) when applying for a job, the majority of the respondents agreed (*M* = 4.000; *SD* = 0.9248). However, most respondents disagreed (*M* = 2.725; *SD* = 1.059) on whether the tea factory preferred doing online interviews for potential employees. Finally, most of the respondents agreed (*M* = 3.3987; *SD* = 1.02174) that green recruitment and selection had enhanced employee retention in the factory. In conclusion, these findings imply that the various tea factories had adopted Green Recruitment and Selection practices and thus led to the sustainability of various firms. The findings are similar to those of Chen, Hossen, Muzafary, and Begum (2018), who established that 80% of the sampled banks had adopted recruitment and selection processes, leading to efficiency and effectiveness in the management processes. However, the study findings contradicted those of Yong, Yusliza, Ramayah, Chiappetta, Jabbour, Sehnem, and Mani (2020), who established that green recruitment had a positive impact on manufacturing firm's sustainability, but green selection, had an insignificant statistical relationship with the sampled manufacturing firms' sustainability

Inferential Statistics

The study used a simple linear regression model to establish the relationship between green recruitment and selection and the sustainability of selected tea factories because only one independent variable was used.

The model tested in the study was presented as;

$$Y= \beta_0+ \beta_1X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where Y=dependent Variable (Organization Sustainability); β_0 = Constant; X_1 = Independent Variable (Green recruitment and Selection); ε = Error Term

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate
1	0.844[a]	0.712	0.704	0.67772

a. Predictors: (Constant), Green Recruitment and Selection

b. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

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The findings obtained in *table 4.13*, R of 0.844, indicate a positive correlation between green human resource management and the sustainability of tea factories. R^2 is represented by 0.712, which implies that 71.2% of the variation in organization sustainability can be explained by one unit change in green recruitment and selection practices.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	168.122	4	42.030	91.509	0.000[b]
	Residual	67.977	148	0.459		
	Total	236.099	152			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), Green Recruitment and Selection, Green Performance Management, Green Training, and Green Reward Management

The findings indicate that independent variables had a statically significant relationship with the dependent variable, F (4,148) = 91.509, $p<0.05$. This implies that the regression model used was a good fit for the obtained data. In addition, the analysis of Variance suggests that Green Recruitment and Selection influenced the sustainability of the selected tea factories. The management should therefore emphasize the above practices. These findings support earlier findings by Hadjri, Perizade, and Farla (2019), which established a positive statistical relationship between Green Human Resource management and firm sustainability.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The selected tea factories have put in place green recruitment and selection practices as indicated by the availability of green job descriptions for all employees, contributing to their sustainability. Further, the factories enhanced the adoption of green human resources practices by recruiting employees aware of green practices. New applicants were also encouraged to use green criteria (such as online submission of CVs) when applying for jobs.

The study recommended that as much as the various tea factories had successfully adopted and implemented green human resource management practices, they should develop a platform that could make it possible to conduct interviews online. The factories should also encourage new applicants to send their applications online.

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