

GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY OF MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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Abstract: *This paper empirically examined the relationship between green human resource management and organizational agility of multinational companies in south-south, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design and the population of this study comprised all the eight (8) multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria. 88 respondents were drawn from the population through a census approach in which eight managers were selected from each of the multinational oil and gas companies however only 79 respondents provided data for the study through questionnaire that was designed in the modified 5-point Likert scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. From the results of the analysis it was revealed that greening environment which is a dimension of green human resource management positively and significantly relate with operational flexibility (measure of organizational agility) of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria. Based on this finding, it was concluded that environmentally sustainable practices within human resource management significantly enhances an organization's ability to adapt and respond to changing operational demands. Therefore, the study recommended that, Multinational oil and gas companies in South-South Nigeria should develop and implement comprehensive green HR policies that integrate environmental sustainability into all aspects of human resource management.*

Keywords: *Greening environment, Green human resource management, Organizational agility; Operational flexibility.*

Introduction

In today's rapidly changing business environment, organizational agility has become a critical factor for the sustained success of multinational oil and gas companies. This agility refers to an organization's ability to quickly adapt to market changes, environmental shifts, and unexpected challenges while maintaining operational efficiency. As the industry faces increasing pressures from regulatory bodies, environmental concerns, and the global transition towards renewable energy, companies are seeking innovative strategies to enhance their agility. One such strategy that has garnered significant attention in recent years is green human resource management (GHRM). Green human resource management involves the integration of environmental management into traditional HR practices, aiming to foster a culture of sustainability and responsiveness within organizations (Renwick et al., 2023).

The South-South region of Nigeria, a hub for the nation's oil and gas activities, presents a unique context for examining the impact of GHRM on organizational agility. Multinational companies operating in this region are confronted with a myriad of challenges, including environmental degradation, community relations issues, and fluctuating global oil prices. These challenges necessitate a high degree of organizational agility to remain competitive and sustainable. Implementing GHRM practices can potentially address these challenges by embedding environmental considerations into the core HR functions, thereby enhancing the company's ability to adapt and respond effectively (Osagie et al., 2023).

Recent research emphasizes the significance of GHRM in promoting organizational agility. By incorporating sustainable practices into HR activities such as recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement, companies can develop a workforce that is aligned with environmental goals and capable of driving innovation. This alignment not only improves environmental performance but also enhances the overall adaptability of the organization. Studies have shown that companies with robust GHRM practices tend to exhibit higher levels of employee engagement, innovation, and operational efficiency, all of which are critical components of organizational agility (Jabbour et al., 2022).

Moreover, the relationship between GHRM and organizational agility is particularly pertinent for multinational oil and gas companies in South-South Nigeria, given the region's environmental and socio-economic complexities. Effective GHRM practices can help these companies navigate the intricate landscape by fostering a proactive and resilient organizational culture. For instance, environmentally conscious recruitment and training programs can equip employees with the skills and mindset needed to tackle sustainability challenges, while green performance management can ensure that environmental objectives are integrated into the company's strategic goals. Such initiatives are essential for building a nimble organization that can swiftly respond to both internal and external pressures (Dumont et al., 2023).

Exploring the relationship between green human resource management and organizational agility in multinational oil and gas companies in South-South Nigeria is both timely and relevant. As the industry grapples with the dual demands of maintaining profitability and ensuring environmental sustainability, understanding how GHRM can enhance organizational agility offers valuable insights. This study aims to shed light on the strategic role of GHRM in fostering a more agile and resilient oil and gas sector in the region. By doing so, it hopes to contribute to the broader discourse on sustainable business practices and provide practical recommendations for companies seeking to thrive in an increasingly complex and volatile environment.

Statement of the Problem

The oil and gas industry in South-South Nigeria faces severe environmental challenges and socio-economic complexities, significantly affecting the sustainability and competitiveness of multinational companies operating in the region. Issues such as environmental degradation, community conflicts, regulatory pressures, and volatile oil prices create a turbulent business environment that demands high organizational agility. However, many companies struggle to achieve this agility due to traditional management practices that inadequately address the integration of sustainability and environmental considerations into their core operations. This inability to adapt rapidly and effectively to these challenges underscores the need for innovative approaches that enhance organizational resilience and responsiveness.

Despite the potential of green human resource management to address these challenges by embedding environmental sustainability into HR practices, there is a lack of empirical evidence on its effectiveness in fostering organizational agility within the context of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South Nigeria. Existing research primarily focuses on developed economies or different industries, leaving a significant gap in understanding how GHRM practices can be specifically tailored and implemented to meet the unique needs of the oil and gas sector in this region. This gap in knowledge limits the ability of companies to adopt GHRM strategies confidently, as they lack clear insights into the practical benefits and mechanisms through which GHRM can enhance agility and overall organizational performance.

Moreover, there is a pressing need to explore the specific pathways through which GHRM influences organizational agility, such as through improved employee engagement, innovation, and alignment with environmental goals. Without a thorough understanding of these mechanisms, multinational oil and gas companies in South-South Nigeria may miss out on strategic opportunities to enhance their adaptability and resilience in the face of environmental and market fluctuations. Addressing this research gap is crucial for providing actionable insights that can guide the effective implementation of GHRM practices, ultimately contributing to the sustainable development and competitive advantage of these companies in an increasingly complex and volatile industry.

Conceptual Framework

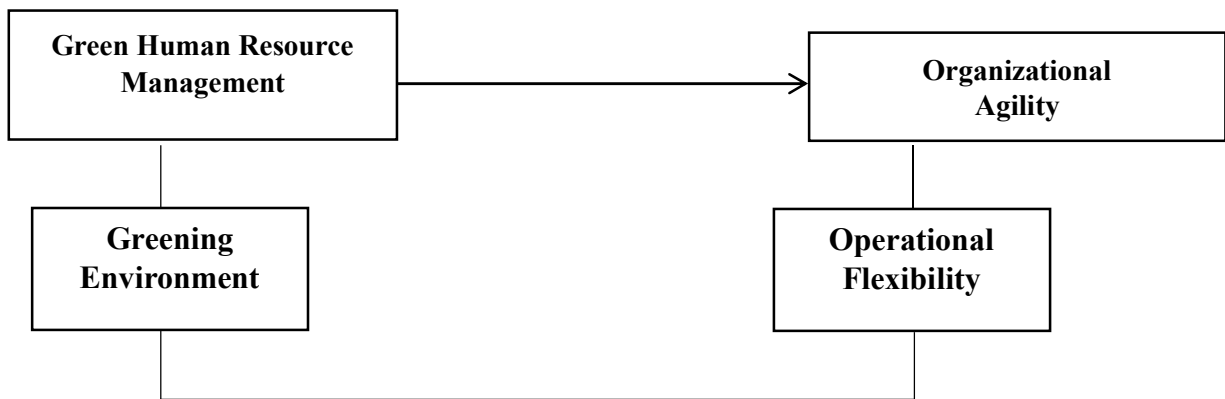


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework showing the relationship between green human resource management and organizational agility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Source: Betton and Dess, (2015).

Aim and Objective

The aim of this paper was to explore the relationship between green human resource management and organizational agility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the paper seek to:

1. evaluate the relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Question

The research question below guided this paper:

1. What is the relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

The null hypothesis below was tested using 0.05 level of significance as a benchmark:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Green Human Resource Management

Green human resource management (GHRM) refers to the integration of environmental sustainability into various HR practices and policies, aimed at promoting environmentally responsible behavior among employees and aligning organizational objectives with environmental goals. GHRM encompasses a range of practices, including green recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement, all designed to foster a culture of sustainability within organizations. By incorporating environmental considerations into HR functions, GHRM helps organizations reduce their ecological footprint and enhance their overall environmental performance (Renwick et al., 2023).

Recent studies highlight that GHRM is not just about adopting environmentally friendly practices but also about embedding a sustainability ethos into the organizational culture. This involves not only recruiting individuals who are committed to environmental values but also providing ongoing training that emphasizes the importance of sustainability in daily operations. Furthermore, GHRM includes performance management systems that reward employees for their contributions to environmental goals and encourages them to participate in green initiatives. These practices collectively aim to create a workforce that is both aware of and motivated towards achieving the organization's environmental objectives (Jabbour et al., 2022).

The impact of GHRM extends beyond individual practices to influence overall organizational performance and competitiveness. By aligning HR practices with environmental sustainability, organizations can enhance their reputation, comply with regulatory requirements, and respond more effectively to market demands for eco-friendly products and services. Recent empirical research underscores that companies implementing robust GHRM practices tend to experience higher levels of employee engagement, innovation, and operational efficiency, all of which contribute to a more sustainable and agile organization (Dumont et al., 2023). This integration of sustainability into HR functions thus plays a critical role in helping organizations navigate environmental challenges and achieve long-term success.

Dimension of Green Human Resource Management

Greening Environment

Greening the environment refers to the adoption of practices and policies aimed at reducing environmental impact and promoting sustainability. This concept encompasses a broad range of activities designed to minimize pollution, conserve natural resources, and enhance ecosystem health. Key strategies include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving waste management, and increasing energy efficiency. By focusing on these areas, greening efforts aim to mitigate the adverse effects of industrial and human activities on the environment, ensuring the preservation of natural resources for future generations (UNEP, 2024).

Recent developments in greening the environment highlight the importance of integrating environmental considerations into both public policy and private sector practices. Governments and organizations are increasingly adopting green technologies and sustainable practices as part of their environmental strategies. This includes the implementation of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, and the promotion of green infrastructure that supports biodiversity and reduces urban heat islands. These initiatives are critical for addressing global environmental challenges, such as climate change and resource depletion, and for supporting the transition towards a more sustainable economy (IEA, 2024).

The concept of greening the environment also emphasizes the role of individual and community actions in contributing to broader sustainability goals. Public awareness campaigns and educational programs play a crucial role in encouraging environmentally friendly behaviors, such as reducing waste, conserving water, and supporting sustainable products. Recent research indicates that community-driven green initiatives, such as local recycling programs and conservation projects, can significantly impact environmental quality and foster a culture of sustainability at the grassroots level (OECD, 2024). These collective efforts are essential for achieving long-term environmental goals and ensuring a healthier planet.

Concept of Organizational Agility

Organizational agility refers to an organization's ability to rapidly adapt to market changes, environmental shifts, and internal challenges while maintaining operational effectiveness. This concept involves the flexibility to respond quickly to new opportunities, threats, and disruptions, enabling organizations to sustain their competitive advantage and drive innovation. Recent research underscores that organizational agility is crucial for navigating the complexities of today's business environment, where rapid technological advancements and shifting consumer preferences demand a high level of responsiveness (Kester et al., 2023).

Recent studies highlight several key dimensions of organizational agility, including strategic agility, operational agility, and cultural agility. Strategic agility involves the capacity to anticipate and respond to market trends and competitive pressures, while operational agility focuses on the efficiency and flexibility of internal processes. Cultural agility pertains to fostering a culture that supports continuous learning, collaboration, and adaptability among employees. These dimensions collectively enable organizations to remain competitive and resilient in the face of dynamic external conditions (Teece et al., 2022).

The importance of organizational agility has been increasingly recognized in various industries, particularly as companies face unprecedented challenges such as global economic fluctuations and

technological disruptions. Research has shown that organizations with high levels of agility are better positioned to innovate, improve customer satisfaction, and achieve superior performance outcomes (Doz & Kosonen, 2023). This adaptability not only enhances organizational resilience but also supports long-term sustainability and growth in an ever-evolving business landscape.

Measure of Organizational Agility

Operational Flexibility

Operational flexibility refers to an organization's ability to adapt its operational processes and resource allocations in response to changing conditions and demands. This concept involves the capacity to quickly adjust production schedules, manage inventory, and reconfigure supply chains to meet fluctuating market needs and operational challenges. Operational flexibility is crucial for organizations aiming to maintain efficiency and responsiveness in dynamic environments where demand patterns and external factors are unpredictable (Hitt et al., 2023).

Recent research highlights several components of operational flexibility, including process flexibility, volume flexibility, and product flexibility. Process flexibility involves the ability to modify production processes or operations to accommodate changes in product design or volume. Volume flexibility pertains to the capacity to scale production up or down based on market demand, while product flexibility refers to the ability to alter product offerings in response to customer preferences or competitive pressures. These elements collectively enable organizations to manage uncertainties and optimize their operational performance (Zhang et al., 2023).

The importance of operational flexibility has been underscored by recent studies, which show that organizations with high operational flexibility can better manage supply chain disruptions, reduce lead times, and enhance overall customer satisfaction. For instance, companies that can rapidly adjust their production capabilities and inventory levels are more likely to respond effectively to supply chain interruptions or sudden shifts in consumer demand (Sheu et al., 2024). This adaptability not only supports immediate operational efficiency but also contributes to long-term strategic success by enhancing an organization's ability to navigate and thrive in an increasingly volatile business environment.

Theoretical Foundation

Dynamic capabilities theory, introduced by Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (1997), focuses on an organization's ability to adapt and innovate in response to a rapidly changing environment. It emphasizes that beyond having valuable resources, firms need dynamic capabilities—such as the ability to sense and seize new opportunities, and to reconfigure their assets and processes—to maintain a competitive edge. This theoretical framework is particularly relevant for multinational oil and gas companies in South-South Nigeria, where environmental and regulatory challenges require continuous adaptation and strategic realignment to ensure operational efficiency and compliance.

In this context, green human resource management (GHRM) plays a critical role by enhancing these dynamic capabilities. GHRM practices, such as incorporating sustainability into recruitment, training, and performance management, foster an organizational culture that is more responsive and adaptable to environmental changes and regulatory demands. By aligning human resource practices with environmental goals, these companies can better manage the complexities of operating in a volatile industry and improve their organizational agility. Thus, GHRM not only

supports environmental sustainability but also strengthens the company's ability to navigate and thrive in a challenging business environment, ensuring long-term competitiveness and resilience (Jabbour et al., 2022; Teece et al., 2023).

Empirical Review

Qihong, Abu, Farid & Abdullah (2023), examined green human resource management and job pursuit intention: Mediating role of corporate social responsibility and organizational reputation. Their study aimed to evaluate whether green human resource management practice encourages prospective candidates to join environmentally responsible enterprises through organizational reputation and corporate social responsibility. The sample was gathered from 402 students from various universities in Bangladesh using a pre-structured questionnaire. The link between the latent components has been explained by analyzing the obtained data using the Partial Least Squares Method (PLSM) of Structural equation Modeling (SEM). The findings indicated that green human resources management has a positive relationship with job pursuit intention and organizational reputation and that corporate social responsibility plays a significant mediating role in this relationship. Students studying in universities in Bangladesh reported having higher job pursuit intentions towards organizations that practice environmental responsibility. The results also show that green human resource management is a source for luring graduated students to pursue careers in green firms and will enable practitioners to combine green human resource management with their conventional human resource practices to employ qualified applicants. The results provide valuable insights into the nature of green human resource management and how the top management is committed to green initiatives in an emerging economy like Bangladesh. Also, the results will help the top management understand how to use green human resource management projects to create corporate social responsibility initiatives and an excellent corporate reputation and attract highly qualified, socially responsible employees to improve environmental performance in organizations. The national policymakers may also get input in designing a green human resource management policy for the economy. Bangladesh is a climate-vulnerable country with a minimal practice of green human resource management in the economy, so the empirical findings of this study will attract researchers, academicians, and practitioners of human resource management to carry out further research in the economy of this area. Finally, this study contributes to the body of knowledge in the still-emerging subject of green human resource management by empirically showing worthy outcomes.

Atoko (2023), investigated the effect of green human resource management practices on organizational effectiveness and efficiency in Nigeria: An African perspective. The objective of this study was to establish the effect of green human resource management practices on organizational effectiveness and efficiency in Africa. The methodology was aligned to Grant and Booth (2009) whereby secondary data is considered a sufficient methodology for data collection. The findings revealed a strong relationship between green human resource management practices and organizational effectiveness and efficiency. The study concluded that implementation of green human resource management practices by organizations contributes to benefits such as improvement of the public image of an organization, competitive advantage, a loyal and committed staff, high performance, more awareness on environmental protection and an organizational ability to adhere to the laws on environmental protection. The recommendations were: more training programmes should be designed and implemented in organizations in order to create awareness

and understanding on Green Human Resource Management Practices and how these practices contribute to organizational effectiveness and efficiency, Academic Institutions of Higher Learning and professional institutions should include in their curricula, content on Green Human Resource Management Practices in order to produce graduates who are knowledgeable in green behavior. Organizations should also adopt policies that support green behavior hence protecting the environment. Organizations should hire employees who are knowledgeable in green behavior.

Huo, et al. (2022), examined the role of green human resource management practices in driving green performance in the context of manufacturing SMEs in Pakistan. Their paper aimed to investigate the impact of green human resource management (GHRM) practices on green performance through the mediation of green work climate, green work engagement, and green employee behaviour. The extent to which individual green values moderate the relationship between green work climate and green employee behaviour was also examined. To meet the objectives, a cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted using simple random sampling, and the data were gathered using structured questionnaires from 390 employees of manufacturing SMEs in Pakistan. The findings of the study supported all the direct and indirect relationships and revealed that the incorporation of GHRM practices in SMEs has performance-enabling effects in terms of achieving green performance. By incorporating the impact of GHRM practices on green performance via mediation–moderation analysis of contemporary green variables in a single research model, the study expands the knowledge base, particularly in the context of SMEs. The study’s unique model and findings provide realistic insights for SMEs to come up with better strategies for greening the environment by ensuring green performance. The findings of the study also provide important implications for academia and practitioners.

METHODOLOGY

This research paper adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of this study comprised of eight (8) multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria. The sample size comprised of eight (8) multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria as adopted by the population of the study. Hence, this study is a census study which studied the entire population. However, the unit of analysis comprised of eleven managers from each of the eight (8) multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria. Departments are: Drilling Engineering Department, Health, Safety, Environment (HSE) Department, Oil field worker, Refining department, Exploration, Finance, Operations and production, Training Department, Human Resource Department, Well site managers and Account Department. Therefore, the managers which constituted the respondent for the study was eighty eight (88). The source of data was the primary source and the instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire. The Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation was employed to test the hypothesis formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Distribution and Retrieval of Questionnaire Items

Copies of Questionnaire Administered	Retrieved Copies	Copies Not Retrieved	Percentage Retrieved
88	79	9	90%

Source: Field Work, 2024.

Table 2: Gender Distribution

Sex	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Male	59	75.0	75.0
Valid Female	20	25.0	25.0
Total	79	100.0	100.0

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

The gender distribution presented above shows that fifty-nine (59) representing 75% of the total respondents were male while the total number of female respondents was twenty (20) representing 25% of the entire population.

Table 3: Age Distribution

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid 18-35 years	0	0	0
Valid 36-45 years	48	61.0	61.0
Valid 46 years and above	31	39.0	39.0
Total	79	100.00	100.00

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

To obtain the age distribution, the respondents were asked and given the option of choosing the age brackets that best fit their age. The responses are presented using percentages and frequencies. The age distribution is categorized into three cardinal age brackets. 48 representing 61% of the respondents fell within the age bracket of 36-45 years while 31 representing 39% are of the age bracket of 46 years and above.

Table 4: Educational Qualification Distribution

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid SSCE	0	0.0	0.0
Valid OND	0	0.0	0.0
Valid HND/ BSc	0	0.0	0.0
Valid Postgraduate	79	100.0	100.0
Total	79	100.0	100.0

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

The educational qualification distribution presented above showed that all the respondents have postgraduate degree.

Table 5: Years of Experience

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid 1- 5 years	3	4.0	4.0
6-10 years	6	7.0	7.0
11 years and above	70	89.0	89.0
Total	79	100.0	100.0

Source: SPSS Output.

The years of experience distribution presented above showed that 3 respondents representing 4% of the distribution have 1-5 years' experience, 6 respondents' representing 7% of the distribution have 6-10years experience while the rest 70 representing 89% of the respondents have experience of 11 years and above.

Testing of Hypothesis

Research Question One: What is the relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 6: Relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria

		Correlations	
		Greening Environment	Operational Flexibility
Greening Environment	Pearson Correlation	1	.991**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	79	79
Operational Flexibility	Pearson Correlation	.991**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	79	79

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS output, 2025.

The SPSS output on Table 6 shows that a Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was run to assess the relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria using a sample of 79 managers. The strength and direction of the relationship between the variables are indicated by the r-value which is 0.991. This means there is a strong and positive relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility. Furthermore, significance of the relationship is shown by the probability value which is 0.000 less than the threshold of 0.05 indicating that the relationship between the variables is statistically significant. In other words, there is a very strong, positive and statistically significant

relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility ($r = 0.991$, $N = 79$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). In view of this result, we reject the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between greening environment and operational flexibility of multinational oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The analysis indicates that the "greening environment," a dimension of green human resource management, demonstrates a very strong and positive relationship with "operational flexibility," a measure of organizational flexibility. This suggests that implementing environmentally sustainable practices within human resource management significantly enhances an organization's ability to adapt and respond to changing operational demands. The integration of eco-friendly practices in HRM not only contributes to a sustainable environment but also enhances organizational efficiency and agility. Based on the findings from the analysis, the study therefore concludes that, there is a significant relationship between green resource management and organizational agility of multinational companies in south-South, Nigeria.

RWCOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusion, it was recommended that:

- i. Multinational oil and gas companies in South-South Nigeria should develop and implement comprehensive green HR policies that integrate environmental sustainability into all aspects of human resource management. This could include initiatives such as eco-friendly recruitment practices, green training programs, and sustainability-focused performance evaluations. By embedding these practices into their HR policies, companies can foster a culture of environmental responsibility, which in turn will improve their operational flexibility and adaptability to market changes.
- ii. Companies should invest in continuous training programs aimed at increasing environmental awareness among employees. This training should focus on the importance of sustainability, the role of each employee in achieving environmental goals, and practical steps they can take in their daily tasks to support these goals. Enhanced environmental awareness will not only contribute to better implementation of green practices but also improve overall operational efficiency and flexibility by ensuring that employees are well-informed and motivated to participate in sustainability initiatives.

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