

# A Model of Green Human Resource Management with Emphasis on Environmental and Energy Factors in Mashhad Municipality

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The aim of this study is to present a model for energy and environmental policy-making in GHRM for Mashhad Municipality.

**Methodology:** This research is applied in terms of its purpose and descriptive-survey in terms of data collection methodology. The statistical population of this study consists of experts and managers of Mashhad Municipality, totaling 240 individuals. The sample size, calculated based on Cochran's formula, is 143 participants. Data collection tools in the library method included note-taking, information databases, documents, and the internet. In the field method, qualitative questions were derived from review articles, and quantitative questions were collected using a questionnaire. To develop the questionnaire, various related articles were reviewed to explore green human resource management policy-making. After three stages of checklist compilation, an initial 34-item questionnaire was prepared. This questionnaire was then distributed among university professors. Using exploratory factor analysis, more significant factors were identified, and less important ones were eliminated from the questionnaire. The final questionnaire was prepared after responses were collected and was distributed among the study sample. Data analysis was conducted using structural equation modeling, exploratory factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis with AMOS software.

**Findings:** The research findings, while validating the proposed model, revealed that the components of GHRM encompass individual, social, cultural, energy, environmental, organizational, and ecological dimensions.

**Conclusion:** The results demonstrated the impact of energy, environmental, and ecological components of GHRM on the managerial components of the municipality, including the Deputy of Planning and Development, the Deputy of Finance and Support, the Deputy of Urban Services and Environment, the Deputy of Transportation and Traffic, the Cultural and Social Organization, the Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs, and the Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture.

**Keywords:** Green Human Resources, Energy, Environmental, Municipality, Model, Policy-Making

## 1 Introduction

The increasing environmental pollution and its harmful consequences, alongside the growing demand from societies for environmentally friendly products and services, have led to the emergence of the concept of green management (Ansari & Sadeghi-Moghadam, 2014; Rasouli et al., 2024). This concept integrates management with environmental requirements at all stages, including product design, the selection and procurement of raw materials, production and manufacturing, distribution processes, delivery to customers, and recycling and reuse management, aiming to maximize the efficiency of energy and resource consumption while enhancing process performance (Elfat et al., 2011; Samadiyeh, 2024; V, 2024). Understanding green management and environmental awareness as effective human resource assets can transform individuals' environmental processes, enabling them to embrace environmental values and motivations and fulfill their commitments to environmental protection (Mehdi Zadeh et al., 2011). Green human resource management (GHRM) represents environmental management within organizations or companies, being the most crucial part of implementing environmental programs. Green human resource systems foster a green atmosphere, ultimately facilitating the greening of organizations. Human resource management activities and theories contribute to reducing environmental damage (Ren et al., 2018). Moreover, factors at the individual, organizational, and inter-organizational levels influence the successful implementation of GHRM. Kim et al. (2019) noted the positive impact of GHRM and organizational commitment on environmentally friendly behavior (Kim et al., 2019).

Cohen (2012) indicated that organizations might realize the need for sustainability through various pathways. While organizations may speak green, the extent to which they act green could be questionable (Prasad & Elmes, 2005, p. 23). Given the aforementioned issues concerning GHRM challenges, it can be said that there is little consensus on the best practices for implementing sustainability initiatives. Moreover, despite the existing research gaps, no comprehensive studies on GHRM have yet been conducted, especially regarding Mashhad Municipality, highlighting the novelty of the current research, which focuses on developing an energy and environmental policy-making model for GHRM in Mashhad Municipality (Cohen et al., 2012).

Safary et al. demonstrated a significant relationship between GHRM and environmental awareness, behavior,

and performance of environmental advocates. They found that environmental awareness significantly relates to the behavior and performance of environmental advocates, and servant leadership moderates the relationship between GHRM and environmental awareness but does not moderate the relationship between GHRM and environmental behavior and performance (Safary & Onaq, 2023). Findings from Mazidi et al. revealed significant relationships between GHRM and task-related environmental performance, proactive environmental performance, and environmental awareness. Environmental awareness significantly correlates with both task-related and proactive environmental performance, and servant leadership plays a moderating role in these relationships (Mazidi & Mazidi, 2023).

Ghaedamini Harouni et al. (2023) found that green knowledge management enhances organizational capabilities for achieving green innovation and sustainable development. Moreover, green innovation is identified as an essential positive predictor of corporate sustainable development. Organizational green culture also reinforces the relationship between knowledge management and green innovation, aiding in sustainable development (Ghaedamini Harouni et al., 2023). Amouzad Mahdirji et al. showed a significant relationship between information technology and GHRM, considering the mediating role of human resource subsystems at the Agricultural Jihad Organization of North Khorasan (Amouzad Mahdiraji & Rezaei Rad, 2021). Sousarai et al. (2022) indicated that entrepreneurial organizational behavior significantly impacts social sustainable development (Sousarai et al., 2022). Hashemi et al. (2022) demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between GHRM and environmental collaboration, with the moderating role of green internal supply chain management among employees of Zamzam Company in Tabriz (Hashemi & Eskandari, 2022).

Therefore, the aim of this study was to develop an energy and environmental policy-making model for GHRM in Mashhad Municipality.

## 2 Methods and Materials

This research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical (non-experimental) from the survey group in terms of method and is field-based regarding data collection. The spatial scope of this research is the Mashhad Municipality, and the temporal scope is related to the years 2022-2023. A hierarchical method was used in part of the

research to examine the variables with higher priority using the Expert Choice software. The study population is limited and is divided into two categories:

a) The statistical population in the review method for identifying the components of GHRM policy-making in Mashhad Municipality: 30 articles were studied.

b) The statistical population in the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis method for identifying the components of GHRM policy-making and ranking their importance to present a policy model includes 240 individuals, comprising experts and managers of Mashhad Municipality. The sampling method was simple random sampling using Cochran's formula, resulting in a sample size of 143.

Phase One: In this phase, through a review of related literature and qualitative research, the components of GHRM policy-making in Mashhad Municipality were identified. After completing three stages and collecting checklists, a 74-item questionnaire was developed. This questionnaire was then distributed among senior experts (those with a master's degree or higher). In the second phase, after experts and specialists responded to the questionnaire, more significant factors were identified, and less important ones were removed. A second questionnaire, containing 19 main components, was then distributed among experts. Following responses, the final questionnaire was prepared and distributed among the study sample.

The data analysis method and research question explanation are divided into two main parts:

a) Identifying the components of GHRM policy-making in Mashhad Municipality using the review method.

b) Presenting the GHRM policy-making model in Mashhad Municipality using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis.

### 3 Findings and Results

Among the respondents, 75.5% (109) were male, and 24.5% (34) were female. The classical linear regression model has a set of assumptions, known as classical assumptions, mostly concerning the disturbance term. To ensure that the least squares estimates of regression coefficients in the model of the impact of GHRM on municipal management are the Best Linear Unbiased Estimators (BLUE), these assumptions must be examined and tested.

Cronbach's alpha was calculated using SPSS software for the entire questionnaire, which included the GHRM and municipal management questionnaires. Cronbach's alpha values for both the GHRM (0.87) and municipal management (0.83) questionnaires are greater than 0.8, indicating high reliability. The fit indices for the measurement models of GHRM and municipal management are shown in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1**

*Fit Indices of the Measurement Models*

Index	Acceptable Range	GHRM	Municipal Management
X <sup>2</sup> /df	3 or less	2.34	2.23
RMR	Close to zero	0.046	0.039
GFI	0.9 or higher	0.981	0.891
AGFI	0.9 or higher	0.955	0.865
NFI	0.9 or higher	0.961	0.883
RFI	0.9 or higher	0.932	0.865
IFI	0.9 or higher	0.977	0.932
TLI	0.9 or higher	0.960	0.920
CFI	0.9 or higher	0.977	0.931
PRATIO	0.5 or higher	0.571	0.863
PNFI	0.5 or higher	0.549	0.762
PCFI	0.5 or higher	0.558	0.804
RMSEA	Less than 0.08	0.058	0.055

The results indicate that all measurement model fit indices are at acceptable levels. The AMOS software

calculates the significance of factor loadings using p-values and the critical ratio (CR), which are reported in [Table 2](#).

**Table 2***Significance of Measurement Models*

Significance (p-value)	Critical Ratio (CR)	Factor Loading	Items
P<0.01	11.73	0.77	GHRM in the Environmental Dimension
P<0.01	11.45	0.76	GHRM in the Energy Dimension
P<0.01	13.42	0.86	GHRM in the Ecological Dimension
P<0.01	10.19	0.73	Deputy of Planning and Development
P<0.01	10.97	0.78	Deputy of Finance and Support
P<0.01	11.28	0.80	Deputy of Urban Services and Environment
P<0.01	11.40	0.81	Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs
P<0.01	11.33	0.80	Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture
P<0.01	11.15	0.79	Cultural and Social Organization
P<0.01	10.77	0.77	Deputy of Transportation and Traffic

Factor loadings in each scale are greater than 0.7, and the critical ratio is greater than 2.56, confirming their significance at the 99% confidence level. Construct validity and reliability of the scales are then evaluated based on the factor loadings and their significance.

The results show that the selected indicators for measuring the model constructs have adequate precision, as the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for both GHRM (0.666) and municipal management constructs (0.613,  $R^2=0.37$ ) is greater than 0.5, and the composite reliability index for both GHRM (0.0933) and municipal management constructs (0.0917) exceeds 0.6. Thus, each construct in the model exhibits acceptable convergent validity and composite reliability for measuring the research variables.

The overall measurement model findings indicate that all factor loadings for GHRM indicators, including GHRM in the individual, organizational, environmental, energy, cultural, social, and ecological dimensions, and municipal management system indicators, such as the Deputy of Planning and Development, Deputy of Finance and Support, Deputy of Urban Services and Environment, Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs, Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture, Cultural and Social Organization, and Deputy of Transportation and Traffic, are greater than 0.7, indicating desirability. The overall model fit indices were examined, and the results are presented below.

**Table 3***Overall Model Fit Indices*

Index	Acceptable Range	Reported Value
X <sup>2</sup> /df	3 or less	2.9
NFI	0.9 or higher	0.891
IFI	0.9 or higher	0.940
CFI	0.9 or higher	0.939
GFI	0.9 or higher	0.901
TLI	0.9 or higher	0.926
RFI	0.9 or higher	0.891
PCFI	0.5 or higher	0.767
PNFI	0.5 or higher	0.744
PRATIO	0.5 or higher	0.817
AGFI	0.9 or higher	0.865
RMSEA	Less than 0.08	0.07
RMR	Close to zero	0.028

The results in Table 3 show that the chi-square ratio (X<sup>2</sup>/df) is 2.9, less than 3. The indices CFI, IFI, NFI, GFI, TLI, RFI, PCFI, and PNFI are all greater than 0.9, and the RMSEA is less than 0.08, indicating an acceptable fit for the overall measurement model. Divergent validity can be

assessed by comparing the square of the correlation coefficient between constructs with the AVE values. Table 6 examines the divergent validity of the overall measurement model. In divergent validity, the AVE of each scale should

be greater than the squared correlation coefficient between that construct and other constructs in the model.

Since the Durbin-Watson statistic (2.19) falls within the 1.5 to 2.5 range, the assumption of no autocorrelation between errors is accepted.

**Table 4**

*Tolerance and VIF Values for the Components*

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
X <sub>1</sub>	0.873	1.146
X <sub>2</sub>	0.604	1.654
X <sub>3</sub>	0.462	2.167
X <sub>4</sub>	0.440	2.274
X <sub>5</sub>	0.698	1.432
X <sub>6</sub>	0.858	1.166
X <sub>7</sub>	0.809	1.236

As shown, the tolerance values are large (greater than 0.1), indicating no multicollinearity, and the VIF values are less than 5, confirming the independence assumption. Since all the preconditions for linear regression are satisfied, linear regression analysis is used to examine the impact of the components on the dependent variable.

Increasing concerns about the environment and the emergence of international environmental standards have compelled organizations to adopt green strategies and implement green management throughout their operations. Social phenomena are inherently dynamic, interacting with various societal variables. Energy literacy, as a concept and

social variable, falls within this scope. The consumption of cultural goods is a socio-cultural variable related to energy literacy. Thus, examining energy literacy among citizens and its relationship with cultural goods consumption can reveal the impact of GHRM in the energy dimension on municipal management components. Considering the limited energy resources and the necessity of energy conservation, using solar energy is a strategic solution for Mashhad. The regression analysis results for the impact of GHRM in the energy dimension on municipal management components are presented in [Table 5](#).

**Table 5**

*Linear Regression Analysis Results for the Impact of GHRM in the Energy Dimension on Municipal Management Components*

Independent Variable	B Coefficient	Standardized Beta Coefficient (BETA)	T Statistic	Significance Level
Constant ( $\alpha$ )	3.223	-	6.85	0.001
Deputy of Planning and Development (x <sub>1</sub> )	0.184	0.18	2.572	0.011
Deputy of Finance and Support (x <sub>2</sub> )	-0.352	-0.341	-4.059	0.001
Deputy of Urban Services and Environment (x <sub>3</sub> )	0.103	0.086	0.893	0.373
Deputy of Transportation and Traffic (x <sub>4</sub> )	-0.244	-0.222	-2.255	0.025
Cultural and Social Organization (x <sub>5</sub> )	-0.086	-0.076	-0.969	0.334
Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs (x <sub>6</sub> )	0.223	0.205	2.906	0.004
Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture (x <sub>7</sub> )	0.097	0.104	1.426	0.156

Therefore, the components of the Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs, Deputy of Planning and Development, and Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture in municipal management have the most significant impact on GHRM in the energy dimension. On the other hand, GHRM in the energy dimension does not have a significant relationship with the Deputy of Finance and Support, Deputy of Transportation and Traffic, and Cultural and Social Organization.

Urban green infrastructure is directly linked to human health and biodiversity in urban areas within the environmental dimension and plays a significant role in urban ecology. Recently, research on how to manage cities and socio-cultural, economic, and environmental systems has increased to advance sustainable urban environmental management. The environmental aspect of urban green infrastructure, beyond preserving and expanding nature and creating an active urban ecosystem, can also bring economic and social benefits to cities and be utilized at various scales,



from individual homes or buildings to broader landscapes. Equity in the distribution of urban green spaces, enhancing public health, public education and citizenship, improving urban environmental quality, promoting clean transportation, environmental diversity, and visual aesthetics are additional benefits of urban green spaces in the environmental dimension. To achieve progress toward

sustainable development, many organizations seek to implement environmental management systems. The results of the impact of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) in the environmental dimension on municipal management components, derived from regression analysis, are presented in [Table 6](#).

**Table 6**

*Linear Regression Analysis Results for the Impact of GHRM in the Environmental Dimension on Municipal Management Components*

Independent Variable	B Coefficient	Standardized Beta Coefficient (BETA)	T Statistic	Significance Level
Constant ( $\alpha$ )	3.258	-	7.874	0.000
Deputy of Planning and Development ( $x_1$ )	0.024	0.027	0.374	0.709
Deputy of Finance and Support ( $x_2$ )	-0.081	-0.092	-1.060	0.291
Deputy of Urban Services and Environment ( $x_3$ )	0.426	0.415	4.193	0.000
Deputy of Transportation and Traffic ( $x_4$ )	-0.133	-0.142	-1.401	0.163
Cultural and Social Organization ( $x_5$ )	0.023	0.024	0.295	0.768
Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs ( $x_6$ )	-0.007	-0.008	-0.109	0.913
Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture ( $x_7$ )	-0.095	-0.119	-1.590	0.113

Thus, the components of the Deputy of Urban Services and Environment, Deputy of Planning and Development, and Cultural and Social Organization in municipal management have the greatest impact on GHRM in the environmental dimension. On the other hand, GHRM in the environmental dimension does not have a significant relationship with the Deputy of Finance and Support, Deputy of Transportation and Traffic, Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs, or Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture.

Environmental protection is influenced by individuals' awareness levels, which, in turn, are affected by numerous

factors. With urbanization, air pollution has become one of the biggest urban challenges, requiring special measures. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adopting clean energy are among the effective actions prioritized by many large cities dealing with air pollution. Municipalities, as local urban governance bodies, can promote renewable energy use over fossil fuels to meet their needs and foster public adoption of these clean energy sources in cities. The results of the impact of GHRM in the ecological dimension on municipal management components, derived from regression analysis, are presented in [Table 7](#).

**Table 7**

*Linear Regression Analysis Results for the Impact of GHRM in the Ecological Dimension on Municipal Management Components*

Independent Variable	B Coefficient	Standardized Beta Coefficient (BETA)	T Statistic	Significance Level
Constant ( $\alpha$ )	0.461	-	1.101	0.272
Deputy of Planning and Development ( $x_1$ )	0.295	0.298	4.636	0.001
Deputy of Finance and Support ( $x_2$ )	-0.186	-0.186	-2.412	0.017
Deputy of Urban Services and Environment ( $x_3$ )	0.359	0.308	3.495	0.001
Deputy of Transportation and Traffic ( $x_4$ )	-0.143	-0.134	-1.480	0.140
Cultural and Social Organization ( $x_5$ )	0.295	0.267	3.724	0.001
Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs ( $x_6$ )	0.238	0.226	3.487	0.001
Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture ( $x_7$ )	0.020	0.022	0.332	0.741

Therefore, based on the results, the components of the Deputy of Urban Services and Environment, Deputy of Planning and Development, Cultural and Social Organization, and Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs in municipal management have the greatest impact on GHRM

in the ecological dimension. Additionally, GHRM in the ecological dimension does not have a significant relationship with the Deputy of Finance and Support or the Deputy of Transportation and Traffic.



acceptable levels. The AMOS software calculated the significance of factor loadings using p-values and the critical ratio (CR). Factor loadings greater than 0.7 and a critical ratio exceeding 2.56 confirm the factor loadings' significance at the 99% confidence level. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for both the GHRM and municipal management constructs are greater than 0.5, and the composite reliability index is greater than 0.6. Thus, both constructs exhibit acceptable convergent validity and composite reliability for measuring research variables. The indices CFI, IFI, NFI, GFI, TLI, RFI, PCFI, and PNFI are all greater than 0.9, and the RMSEA is less than 0.08, indicating that the overall model fit indices are satisfactory. The AVE values of the constructs are greater than the squared correlation coefficient with other constructs, confirming the model constructs' divergent validity.

Based on the obtained data, the conceptual model of the GHRM policy-making framework for municipalities is generally proposed for Iranian metropolitan municipalities, as illustrated in [Figure 1](#).

#### 4 Discussion and Conclusion

All factor loadings of the indicators for Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), including GHRM in the environmental dimension, GHRM in the energy dimension, and GHRM in the ecological dimension, as well as the indicators of the municipal management system, such as the Deputy of Planning and Development, Deputy of Finance and Support, Deputy of Urban Services and Environment, Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs, Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture, Cultural and Social Organization, and Deputy of Transportation and Traffic, are greater than 0.7, indicating their desirability. Therefore, the following results are obtained:

a) The components of the Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs, Deputy of Planning and Development, and Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture have the greatest impact on GHRM in the energy dimension. On the other hand, GHRM in the energy dimension does not have a significant relationship with the components of the Deputy of Finance and Support, Deputy of Transportation and Traffic, or Cultural and Social Organization.

b) The components of the Deputy of Urban Services and Environment, Deputy of Planning and Development, and Cultural and Social Organization have the greatest impact on GHRM in the environmental dimension. However, GHRM in the environmental dimension does not have a significant

relationship with the components of the Deputy of Finance and Support, Deputy of Transportation and Traffic, Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs, or Deputy of Urban Planning and Architecture.

c) The components of the Deputy of Urban Services and Environment, Deputy of Planning and Development, Cultural and Social Organization, and Deputy of Technical and Civil Affairs have the greatest impact on GHRM in the ecological dimension. Additionally, GHRM in the ecological dimension does not have a significant relationship with the components of the Deputy of Finance and Support or Deputy of Transportation and Traffic within municipal management.

#### Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

#### Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

#### Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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#### Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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#### Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.



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