

FROM GREEN RECRUITMENT TO HIGH PERFORMANCE: A MEDIATED MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE HRM IN ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS

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Abstract

The growing emphasis on environmental sustainability in the tourism sector has accelerated the adoption of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) practices. This study investigates the effect of green recruitment and development on employee performance, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable, within the context of ecotourism destinations in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. The primary objective is to examine how environmentally oriented HR strategies contribute to improving employee outcomes in sustainable tourism settings. A quantitative approach was employed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze data collected from 355 employees through structured surveys. The results revealed that both green recruitment and green development significantly influence employee performance, both directly and indirectly, through enhanced job satisfaction. Notably, green development exerted the strongest influence on job satisfaction, affirming its role in building a committed and high-performing workforce. These findings offer theoretical contributions to the development of GHRM frameworks by validating job satisfaction as a key psychological pathway. Practically, this study highlights the importance of embedding sustainability values in HR practices to strengthen organizational performance in nature-based tourism enterprises.

Keywords: *green recruitment, green development, job satisfaction, employee performance, sustainable HRM, ecotourism.*

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable human resource management is crucial for the success of ecotourism-based tourism destinations, especially in East Kalimantan, which is rich in biodiversity and conservation. As global attention to environmental and sustainability issues increases, organizations operating in the tourism sector are required not only to maintain the physical environment but also to adopt a management approach that is in line with sustainability principles. In this context, Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is present as a strategic approach that integrates environmentally friendly values into human resource management practices, with a focus on green recruitment and green development as its main pillars (Renwick et al., 2016). Green recruitment is a recruitment process that considers environmental values with the aim of attracting individuals who have concern and competence in ecological issues (Jabbour & de Sousa Jabbour, 2016). Meanwhile, green development is oriented towards coaching and developing employees through training, strengthening a green organizational culture, and empowering them to make decisions that support sustainability goals. Both practices are believed to increase employee engagement and work motivation, as well as have a long-term impact on improving overall organizational performance (Pham et al., 2023; Tang et al., 2022).

However, most of the literature on GHRM to date has focused more on industrial sectors such as manufacturing, energy, or finance, and has not examined its implementation in the context of ecotourism, especially in developing countries such as Indonesia. This creates a significant literature gap, even though the ecotourism sector is closely related to environmental and sustainability issues and requires a managerial approach that can address the complexity of its ecosystem challenges. Moreover, ecotourism destinations in East Kalimantan require a workforce that is not only technically competent but also committed to environmental conservation. In addition, previous studies are still limited in identifying the psychological mechanisms that bridge the relationship between GHRM practices and organizational outcomes. One important variable that has the potential to mediate this relationship is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction refers to employees' perceptions of their work conditions and experiences, which reflect their level of happiness and involvement in the organization (Yusliza et al., 2020). Within the framework of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), organizations that focus on employee sustainability values and welfare trigger reciprocity in the form of increased job satisfaction and performance.

Research by Aboramadan (2022) shows that GHRM practices have a significant effect on increasing job satisfaction, which then contributes to innovative behavior and increased performance. However, these studies were mostly conducted in the Middle Eastern context and did not cover the social and cultural realities of work in Indonesia, especially in the tourism sector. This emphasizes the urgent need to further explore how green recruitment and development impact employee job satisfaction and performance in the Indonesian ecotourism setting. In addition to contextual gaps, methodological gaps have been found in many studies that combine green HRM as a single composite variable without separating specific dimensions. In fact, according to Singh et al. (2023), an analysis that breaks down GHRM elements separately, such as green recruitment and green development, will provide a more accurate picture of their respective contributions to organizational outcomes. Therefore, testing the specific effects of green recruitment and development on employee performance is an important agenda for expanding our understanding of GHRM.

The formulation of the problem proposed in this study is as follows. First, does green recruitment affect the performance of employees at ecotourism-based tourist destinations in East Kalimantan? Second, how does green development affect employee performance? Third, does job satisfaction play a mediating role in the relationship between green recruitment, green development, and employee performance? These questions were answered through a quantitative approach involving workers from various ecotourism destinations in East Kalimantan. This study aims to empirically test the relationship between green recruitment and green development practices on employee performance and to identify the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship. The focus of this study is directed at the ecotourism context in East Kalimantan as a representation of the tourism sector, which has a high environmental orientation and great potential in encouraging sustainable development in the eastern Indonesian region. In terms of scientific contribution, this study offers a new perspective in the GHRM literature by presenting empirical data from the tourism sector, which is relatively undiscussed in the sustainability discourse. In addition, this study strengthens the mediation model involving job satisfaction, provides a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms linking organizational policies and individual performance, and enriches the cross-sectoral understanding of GHRM practices.

The practical contribution of this research lies in providing a scientific basis for ecotourism destination managers to design environmentally friendly HR management strategies. Through a deep understanding of the importance of green recruitment and green development, managers can be more effective in increasing employee job satisfaction and productivity as well as in creating a work environment that supports the goals of nature conservation and local community development. Theoretically, this study supports the framework of social exchange theory, which emphasizes that when organizations provide positive resources such as environmental training and green value-based recruitment, employees will demonstrate loyalty and more productive work behavior. This confirms the important role of psychological aspects in bridging managerial practices and performance at the individual level. Thus, this article not only enriches the academic literature related to GHRM but also provides a real contribution to the development of human resource management practices in the sustainable tourism sector. Through exploration in the context of East Kalimantan ecotourism destinations, this study opens up a new space for innovation in sustainability-based HR policies in an area that has great potential in national and global ecotourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Green Recruitment, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance

Green recruitment is a recruitment process that focuses on sustainability values, including an emphasis on environmental awareness and commitment to green practices from the beginning of candidate selection. This strategy

aims to attract individuals with values that match the principles of an environmentally conscious organization (Renwick et al., 2016). In the context of ecotourism destinations in East Kalimantan, this practice is very relevant because recruited employees must not only have technical competence but also concern for nature conservation and tourism sustainability. Previous studies have shown that green recruitment has a positive impact on employee performance because it encourages value congruence between individuals and organizations, which, in turn, increases loyalty, work engagement, and work effectiveness (Pham et al., 2023; Shah, 2022). Green recruitment strategies also enhance the reputation of the organization and encourage employees' intrinsic motivation to contribute optimally to achieving sustainability goals. In the tourism industry, where direct interaction with nature and local communities is very high, employees with green values are more productive and responsible. On the other hand, green recruitment has also been shown to have a positive relationship with job satisfaction. Candidates recruited through a green approach tend to feel more valued, so they have a positive perception of the organization and the work they do (Yusliza et al., 2020). High job satisfaction then becomes an important foundation for supporting improved performance. Based on these findings, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Green Recruitment has a significant positive effect on Employee Performance.

H2: Green Recruitment has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

2. Green Development, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance

Green development refers to human resource development initiatives that instill awareness and skills related to environmental issues through training, education, mentoring, and the establishment of a green organizational culture. Employees who participate in environmental training gain relevant knowledge and feel more empowered and motivated to contribute to the organization's sustainable goals (Jabbour et al., 2019). In the context of ecotourism in East Kalimantan, training on waste management, conservation, and environmental ethics-based services is crucial. Green development positively contributes to job satisfaction because employees feel valued, invested, and professionally developed (Aboramadan, 2022). Empowerment through competency development improves perceptions of the organization and creates healthier working relationships. The satisfaction that arises from self-development encourages a sense of belonging and work engagement, which ultimately affects productivity and the intention to stay in the organization (Singh et al., 2023). Furthermore, employees who receive continuous training and development tend to show direct performance improvement. They not only have better technical skills, but also show greater initiative and responsibility towards their work tasks (Tang et al., 2022). Thus, the influence of green development on performance is not only technical but also psychological. Based on this, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Green Development has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

H4: Green Development has a significant positive effect on Employee Performance.

3. Job Satisfaction and the Role of Mediating on Performance

Job satisfaction is a positive emotional state that arises when employees feel that their needs and expectations are being met in their work. Satisfaction has a direct impact on improving performance through increased morale, reduced conflict, and increased efficiency (Judge et al., 2001). In the ecotourism sector, satisfied employees tend to care more about the quality of service and environmental sustainability of the destination where they work. Several studies have shown that job satisfaction plays a mediating role in the relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance (Su & Swanson, 2022; Pham et al., 2023). When organizations implement green recruitment and green development, employees feel value alignment and development opportunities, which in turn increase job satisfaction. This satisfaction triggers the emergence of consistently higher performance. In this context, job satisfaction serves as a psychological bridge that connects organizational intervention (GHRM) with individual output (performance). Therefore, to complete the causal relationship as a whole, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H5: Job Satisfaction has a significant positive effect on Employee Performance.

H6: Job Satisfaction mediates the influence of Green Recruitment on Employee Performance.

H7: Job Satisfaction mediates the influence of Green Development on Employee Performance.

METHOD

1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to empirically examine the influence of green recruitment and development on employee performance, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable. This study adopted a cross-sectional survey approach, which is widely utilized in the field of human resource management to test theoretical models and causal relationships between constructs (Hair et al., 2019; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Given the nature of the study, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was selected as the primary analytical technique, allowing for simultaneous estimation of measurement and structural relationships among latent variables (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

2. Population and Sample

The target population of this study consisted of employees working in ecotourism-based destinations in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. These employees are directly involved in tourism services, environmental conservation, and community-based tourism development. Using purposive sampling, 355 valid responses were collected from individuals employed in various ecotourism organizations, including forest parks, community-managed tourism villages, and nature-based resorts. The sample size exceeded the minimum requirement for SEM analysis, providing sufficient power for model testing (Kline, 2016; Hair et al., 2019). The respondents were characterized by diverse demographics and job backgrounds, including operational staff, environmental educators, customer service personnel, and managerial-level employees. The selection criterion was based on a minimum of six months of employment tenure to ensure that participants had adequate exposure to organizational HR practices.

3. Data Collection Technique

Data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire distributed both online and in person from January to March 2025. This method was chosen because of its efficiency and ability to reach geographically dispersed ecotourism sites in East Kalimantan. The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter to ensure confidentiality and voluntary participation. To minimize common method bias, procedural remedies such as random item ordering, anonymity, and clear instructions were applied (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

4. Research Instrument

The measurement instrument consists of four constructs: Green Recruitment, Green Development, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance. Each construct was measured using reflective indicators adapted and modified from prior validated studies. Green Recruitment and Green Development used the measuring scales developed by Tang et al. (2022) and Singh et al. (2023). Job Satisfaction was assessed using items from Judge et al. (2001), while Employee Performance was measured using a validated scale from Su and Swanson (2022). All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree." Prior to full-scale data collection, a pilot test was conducted with 30 respondents to assess clarity, reliability, and face validity. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values for each construct exceeded the threshold of 0.70, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeded 0.50, indicating acceptable convergent validity and internal consistency (Hair et al., 2019).

5. Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4 software. SEM-PLS was chosen because of its suitability for theory development, model complexity, and predictive accuracy in behavioral research (Sarstedt et al., 2022; Hair et al., 2021). The analysis followed a two-step procedure consisting of a measurement model evaluation (to assess reliability and validity) and structural model testing (to examine hypothesized relationships and mediating effects). Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell-Larcker and HTMT criteria, while multicollinearity was examined using VIF values. Mediation analysis employed the bootstrapping technique with 5000 resamples to estimate indirect effects and determine the significance of job satisfaction as a mediator (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The quality of the model was evaluated using R^2 , Q^2 , and f^2 values to interpret the explanatory power and effect sizes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Descriptive Analysis of Respondents

A total of 355 employees from various ecotourism-based destinations in East Kalimantan participated in this study. Respondents were drawn from community-based tourism areas, eco-resorts, nature reserves, and forest tourism

parks. In terms of gender, the sample included both male and female employees, with a relatively balanced distribution. The majority of respondents were in the age group of 31–40 years, indicating a productive workforce with moderate experience. In terms of education level, most respondents had completed a bachelor's degree, reflecting the minimum requirements for roles in environmental education, tour guidance, and administrative management in ecotourism. Regarding tenure, the majority had worked between 2 to five years, suggesting sufficient exposure to organizational practices such as recruitment, training, and performance evaluation. The roles represented included those of the operational staff, environmental educators, customer service officers, and managerial-level personnel. This demographic profile supports the generalizability of the findings within the ecotourism workforce context and provides an adequate basis for further statistical analysis, including Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

2. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Descriptive analysis was used to see the general picture of respondents' perceptions of each research variable, namely Green Recruitment (GR), Green Development (GD), Job Satisfaction (JS), and Employee Performance (EP). Each variable was measured using several indicators with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The values analyzed include the mean, standard deviation (SD), minimum, and maximum to describe the distribution and tendency of the respondent data. The results of the analysis show that all variables have an average value (mean) above 3.80, indicating that respondents' perceptions of the implementation of green HRM practices, job satisfaction, and performance are quite high. The Green Development variable has the highest average score, indicating that respondents feel they have received enough environmental-based training and development. Meanwhile, the Employee Performance variable also shows a positive perception from respondents, reflecting productivity and performance commitment in carrying out ecotourism-based tasks.

Table 1 . Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables (N = 355)

Variable	Number of Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Green Recruitment (X1)	5	3.87	0.61	2.20	5.00
Green Development (X2)	5	4.02	0.58	2.60	5.00
Job Satisfaction (Y1)	4	3.91	0.65	2.00	5.00
Employee Performance (Y2)	5	3.95	0.63	2.40	5.00

3. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

Evaluation of the measurement model in the SEM-PLS analysis is a crucial initial step to ensure the validity and reliability of the research construct before testing the structural relationship between variables. In this study, the evaluation of the measurement model was carried out on four main constructs, namely Green Recruitment (X1), Green Development (X2), Job Satisfaction (Y1), and Employee Performance (Y2), based on the main criteria, including outer loading, internal reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and rho_A), and convergent validity (AVE).

The results of the outer loading test showed that all indicators had values above the minimum limit of 0.60, indicating that each indicator sufficiently represented the measured construct (Hair et al., 2019; Wong, 2019). Indicators such as Y1.6 (interpersonal relationships = 0.826) and X2.1 (environmental awareness training = 0.813) even show a very strong contribution to their latent variables. This indicates that respondents' perceptions of interpersonal aspects and environmental training are prominent in shaping job satisfaction and green development in the context of ecotourism.

Table 2. Outer Model Test Results

Indicator	Symbol	Outer Loading	Cronbach's alpha	(rho_a)	(AVE)
Employee Performance (Y2)		0.747	0.842	0.843	0.560
1. Quality of work results	Y2.1	0.664			
2. Efficiency in completing tasks	Y2.2	0.794			
3. Innovative ability	Y2.3	0.761			
4. Compliance with procedures	Y2.4	0.748			
5. Productivity	Y2.5	0.758			

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6. Contribution to the organization's environmental goals	Y2.6	0.757			
Job Satisfaction (Y1)		0.756	0.850	0.852	0.574
1. Suitability of work with personal values	Y1.1	0.796			
2. Comfortable working environment conditions	Y1.2	0.672			
3. Appreciation for contributions	Y1.3	0.753			
4. Suitability of tasks to expectations	Y1.4	0.752			
5. Satisfaction with professional development	Y1.5	0.736			
6. Interpersonal relationships	Y1.6	0.826			
:Green Recruitment (X1)		0.768	0.826	0.827	0.591
1. Inclusion of environmentally friendly policies in recruitment	X1.1	0.794			
2. Consideration of sustainable values in the selection of prospective employees	X1.2	0.778			
3. Use of digital methods to reduce paper usage	X1.3	0.787			
4. Communication of environmental vision	X1.4	0.697			
5. Recruitment of candidates with environmental awareness	X1.5	0.783			
Green development (X2)		0.780	0.842	0.843	0.560
1. Environmental awareness training	X2.1	0.813			
2. Development of environmentally friendly skills	X2.2	0.802			
3. Involvement in environmentally friendly programs	X2.3	0.752			
4. Application of green technology in training	X2.4	0.783			
5. Measuring the impact of environmental training	X2.5	0.749	0.748	0.045	16,634

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

All constructs also meet the internal reliability criteria with Cronbach's alpha and rho_A values above 0.70, indicating consistency between indicators in each construct (Sarstedt et al., 2022). The AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value for all constructs is above 0.50, indicating convergent validity is met, where more than 50% of the indicator variance can be explained by their respective constructs (Henseler et al., 2016). Thus, the entire measurement model can be considered reliable and statistically valid for proceeding to the structural model evaluation stage (inner model). Based on the results, discriminant validity was confirmed, as the square root of the AVE (diagonal values) for each construct exceeded the inter-construct correlation coefficients (off-diagonal values). This suggests that each latent construct shares more variance with its associated indicators than with the other constructs, thus satisfying the requirement of discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). For example, the square root of AVE for Green Development is 0.749, which is higher than its correlations with Green Recruitment, Job Satisfaction, or Employee Performance. The Fornell-Larcker matrix below confirms that all constructs are empirically distinct, validating the structural integrity of the model and allowing the continuation of the structural model evaluation.

Table 3 . Fornell-Larcker Criterion Results

Construction	Green Recruitment	Green Development	Job Satisfaction	Employee Performance
Green Recruitment	0.769			
Green Development	0.521	0.749		
Job Satisfaction	0.478	0.559	0.758	
Employee Performance	0.486	0.525	0.593	0.748

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

4. Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

The evaluation of the structural model (inner model) in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) aims to measure the predictive power and causal relationships between latent constructs in the research model. One of the main indicators for testing the quality of the structural model is the coefficient of determination (R^2), which reflects how much of the endogenous construct variance can be explained by the exogenous construct. Based on the results of the analysis, the R^2 value for Job Satisfaction (Y1) is 0.692 and for Employee Performance (Y2) is 0.794. According to Hair et al. (2019), an R^2 value of 0.67 and above indicates substantial predictive power. Thus, this model has high explanatory power, with more than 69% of the variance in job satisfaction and 79% of the variance in employee performance being explained by green recruitment, green development, and job satisfaction.

In addition, an f^2 effect size analysis was used to evaluate the relative contribution of each exogenous construct to the endogenous construct. The results show that Green Development (X2) has a strong influence on Job Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.301$), which means it contributes greatly to increasing job satisfaction. Meanwhile, Green Recruitment (X1) has a moderate influence on Job Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.128$) and a strong influence on Employee Performance ($f^2 = 0.209$). On the other hand, the contribution of Green Development to Employee Performance is smaller ($f^2 = 0.048$), indicating that its impact is more significant indirectly through job satisfaction. The direct influence of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance is also relatively large ($f^2 = 0.215$), strengthening the position of the mediating variable in this model. Overall, the structural model strongly supports the research hypotheses and provides empirical evidence of the direct and indirect effects of green human resource management on work outcomes. This finding is in line with previous literature stating that a sustainable HRM approach can improve organizational outcomes through psychological pathways, such as job satisfaction (Pham et al., 2023; Su & Swanson, 2022). This strong structural validity allows the model to be used as a basis for strategic decision-making in HR management in the ecotourism sector.

5. Path Coefficient Analysis

The results of the path coefficient test in the PLS-SEM structural model show that all relationship paths between the variables in this research model are statistically significant. Green Recruitment has a positive and significant direct effect on Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.382$, $p < 0.001$) and Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.344$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the recruitment process based on sustainability values can improve employee performance and emotional satisfaction. Green Development has a stronger effect on Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.527$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that green training and development programs provide meaningful work experiences and encourage psychological attachment to the organization (Pham et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2023). The direct effect of Green Development on Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.195$, $p = 0.025$), although smaller, is still significant, indicating that environmental competence built through training has a direct impact on work quality, efficiency, and productivity in the ecotourism sector. Meanwhile, Job Satisfaction plays a significant role in improving Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.379$, $p < 0.001$), which strengthens the social exchange theory that when employees feel satisfied, they tend to reciprocate with optimal performance (Blau, 1964; Su & Swanson, 2022). Two mediation paths also show significant effects: Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Green Recruitment and Performance ($\beta = 0.130$, $p = 0.005$), as well as between Green Development and Performance ($\beta = 0.200$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that the full effect of GHRM practices on work outcomes is highly dependent on employee psychological conditions.

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Table 4. Path Coefficients

No	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
1	Green Recruitment has a significant positive effect on Employee Performance	0.382	4,282	0,000	Accepted
2	Green Recruitment has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction	0.344	3,525	0,000	Accepted
3	Green development has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction	0.527	5,694	0,000	Accepted
4	Green development has a significant positive effect on employee performance	0.195	2,239	0.025	Accepted
5	Job Satisfaction has a significant positive effect on Employee Performance	0.379	4,646	0,000	Accepted
6	Job Satisfaction Mediates the Influence of Green Recruitment on Employee Performance	0.130	2,837	0.005	Accepted
7	Job Satisfaction Mediates the Influence of Green Development on Employee Performance	0.200	3,394	0.001	Accepted

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

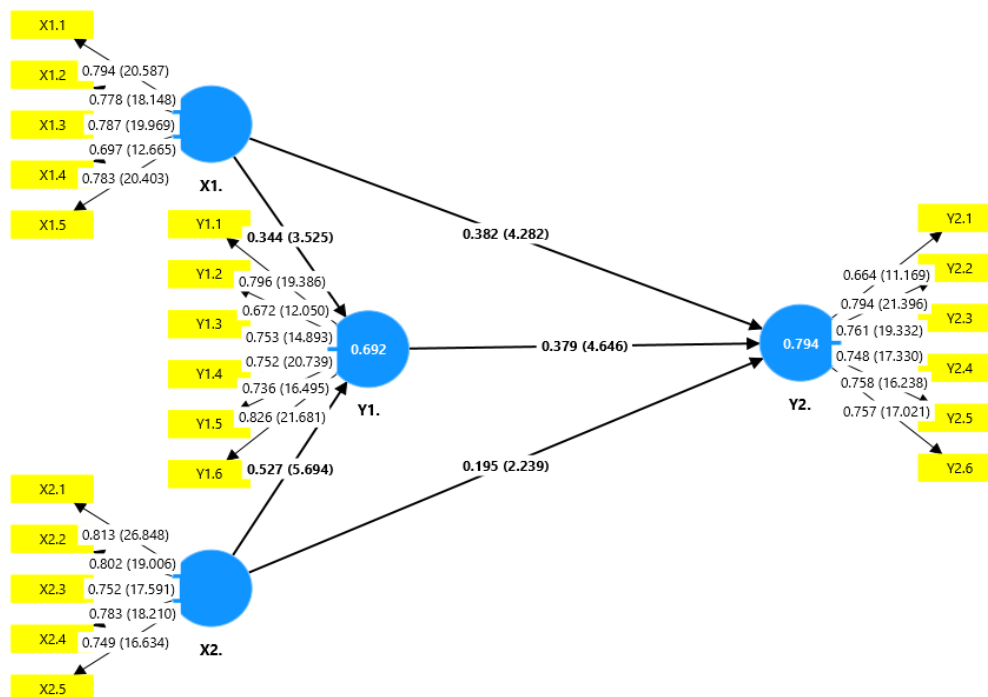


Figure 1. SmartPLS 4 output

DISCUSSION

These findings not only support the empirical validity of all research hypotheses, but also confirm the strategic role of green HRM in driving organizational performance through affective and psychological pathways, such as job satisfaction. These results are consistent with previous studies showing that the success of GHRM implementation in organizations is largely determined by employees' perceptions of organizational support and values (Yusliza et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2022). Therefore, strengthening organizational capabilities in green recruitment and development is key to sustainably increasing the competitiveness of the ecotourism sector.

1. Green Recruitment on Employee Performance

The results show that green recruitment has a significant positive effect on employee performance. This indicates that a recruitment process that considers sustainability values can attract individuals who not only have technical competence but are also committed to the organization's environmental mission. Employees who feel a value fit with

the organization tend to show higher loyalty and work performance. This finding is consistent with previous studies stating that green recruitment plays an important role in increasing work efficiency and contributing to organizational goals (Renwick *et al.*, 2016; Shah, 2022). The theoretical implication of this finding is the importance of strengthening person-organization fit theory in the context of GHRM, while in practice, ecotourism organizations need to design a selection system that integrates environmental dimensions into the interview process, job descriptions, and employer branding promotions.

2. Green Recruitment for Job Satisfaction

The positive influence of green recruitment on job satisfaction shows that when the recruitment process is carried out transparently and reflects green values, employees feel appreciated from the beginning of joining. This creates a perception of organizational justice and a sense of belonging, which leads to high job satisfaction. Previous studies support the idea that sustainable recruitment strategies can increase psychological and affective attachment to an organization (Yusliza *et al.*, 2020; Pham *et al.*, 2023). Theoretically, these findings confirm that GHRM is not only oriented towards environmental sustainability but also has a significant impact on the psychological aspects of employees. Practically, these results encourage HRM managers to make the green dimension a key element in the employer value proposition in the sustainable tourism sector.

3. Green Development towards Job Satisfaction

The results also showed that green development had the strongest influence on job satisfaction. Employees who engage in environmentally oriented training and development feel that the organization cares about their personal growth within a sustainable framework. This is in line with studies by Jabbour *et al.* (2019) and Singh *et al.* (2023), who found that green training increases employees' intrinsic motivation and affective commitment. Theoretically, these findings support the development of dynamic capabilities through sustainable training as a part of green HRM. Practically, ecotourism organizations need to invest resources in environmental training modules, such as waste management, resource conservation, and green technology, to improve well-being and job satisfaction.

4. Green Development on Employee Performance

Green development also has a direct effect on employee performance, although the effect is smaller than that on job satisfaction. This shows that the development of environmentally friendly skills has a positive impact on employees' operational and innovation capabilities. The knowledge and skills gained from green training programs help employees align their work tasks with sustainability principles, ultimately increasing the effectiveness of their performance. This finding is in line with research by Tang *et al.* (2022), which links green training to increased productivity. Its theoretical contribution lies in strengthening the relationship between organizational learning and performance within a sustainability framework. In practice, ecotourism business actors must view green development not just as an environmental program but as a strategy to increase HR competitiveness.

5. Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Job satisfaction has been shown to significantly influence employee performance. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to have high commitment, are loyal to the organization, and are motivated to show maximum performance. This finding supports the motivation-hygiene theory and social exchange theory, which state that satisfaction acts as a driver of productive work behavior (Judge *et al.*, 2001; Su & Swanson, 2022). In ecotourism, satisfied employees are better able to convey sustainability values to visitors and maintain service quality. From a theoretical perspective, this finding reinforces the importance of the affective dimension in bridging HRM practices and work outcomes. In practice, organizations must continue to create a supportive, transparent, and value-aligned work environment for employees.

6. Job Satisfaction as Mediator: Green Recruitment and Employee Performance

The findings also confirm that job satisfaction mediates the effect of green recruitment on employee performance. This shows that the green recruitment process does not directly impact performance, but rather through the satisfaction experienced by employees. This mediation explains the psychological mechanism by which value congruence between candidates and the organization through green recruitment builds job satisfaction, which then translates into higher performance. Research from Pham *et al.* (2023) and Su and Swanson (2022) supports the position of satisfaction as a significant mediator in the GHRM model. These findings extend the literature by

providing evidence in the context of the ecotourism industry in Indonesia and practically showing that value-based recruitment must be accompanied by strengthening aspects of well-being and work comfort.

7. Job Satisfaction as Mediator: Green Development and Employee Performance

Job satisfaction has also been shown to mediate the relationship between green development and employee performance. Comprehensive environmental training programs enhance employees' job satisfaction by providing a sense of competence, appreciation, and involvement in the organization's mission. This, in turn, indirectly leads to increased performance. Studies by Aboramadan (2022) and Singh *et al.* (2023) showed similar mediation pathways in the context of hospitality and manufacturing. These findings are important for strengthening the role of affective variables as a bridge between management practices and work outcomes. Practically, ecotourism organizations should not only evaluate the direct impact of training on output, but also how the training experience impacts well-being and work attitudes.

CONCLUSION

This study provides empirical evidence regarding the significant role of green human resource management practices, particularly green recruitment and development, in enhancing employee performance within ecotourism destinations in East Kalimantan. The findings validate that both green recruitment and green development exert direct and indirect influences on employee performance, with job satisfaction serving as a key mediating variable. Among these practices, green development has the strongest association with job satisfaction, which subsequently acts as a vital determinant of employee performance. Mediation analysis revealed that job satisfaction functions as a crucial psychological pathway that connects sustainable HR practices to desirable behavioral outcomes among employees, thereby affirming the human-centered nature of environmental human resource management strategies. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the green HRM literature by incorporating affective mechanisms, particularly job satisfaction, into the relationship between green HR practices and employee performance. It strengthens the theoretical integration between social exchange theory and the person-organization fit paradigm by highlighting how the alignment of personal values with organizational sustainability initiatives can foster commitment and enhance workplace performance. On the practical side, the results emphasize the need for organizations—especially those operating in environmentally sensitive sectors such as ecotourism—to embed ecological values into their recruitment processes and to prioritize continuous environmental training and development programs. These strategies are essential not only for attracting environmentally conscious talent but also for nurturing a high-performing and satisfied workforce.

In terms of policy implications, this study suggests that governmental institutions and tourism regulatory bodies should consider introducing standardized guidelines for the implementation of green human resource management in tourism enterprises. Integrating sustainability-oriented performance indicators into national and regional tourism development frameworks could help institutionalize green values at both the organizational and policy levels, thereby advancing sustainable tourism goals in line with national ecological priorities. Nevertheless, several limitations of this study must be acknowledged. The cross-sectional design of this study limits its ability to infer causality, and the use of self-reported data may be prone to common method bias. Furthermore, because the data were collected exclusively from ecotourism destinations within a single Indonesian province, the generalizability of the results to other sectors or geographic regions may be constrained. Future research should adopt longitudinal approaches to better capture causal relationships over time and incorporate multiple data sources to mitigate common method variance. Expanding the model to include other relevant mediators, such as organizational commitment or environmental identity, and testing it across diverse sectors could further enrich the understanding of how green HRM practices influence sustainable employee outcomes in various organizational contexts.

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Author Contributions

Irsan Tricahyadinata conceptualized the research framework, coordinated data analysis, and led the manuscript preparation. Wirasmi Wardhani was responsible for literature review development, instrument design, and editorial refinement of the final manuscript. Muhammad Faisal conducted field data collection, performed statistical analysis, and assisted in the interpretation of results. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and contributed equally to the intellectual content and development of this research.

Conflicts of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, that could influence the research outcomes, interpretations, or publication of this manuscript. The study was conducted independently, and all opinions expressed were solely those of the authors and did not reflect the official position of any affiliated institutions.

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Owing to confidentiality agreements with participating ecotourism organizations, some restrictions may apply to the availability of sensitive organizational data used in the analysis.

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