

Environmental Sustainability Practices Based on Green Human Resources Management in Hotel Companies

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Abstract

Generating value for sustainable development in the global order is one of the challenges organizations face. Based on this, environmental sustainability practices are determined as the foundation of green management promoted by human resources in hotel companies in Santiago de Cali-Colombia. Through a descriptive documentary case study with a qualitative approach, a theoretical-normative review of the variables was achieved. For the empirical study, selection criteria for seven sample units were defined. Information was obtained through semi-structured interviews with managers or administrators. Findings show the need to strengthen actions to promote transformations to overcome behaviors that weaken environmental balance. Additionally, strengthen the company's image under the principle of sustainable interactions between customers, suppliers, employees, and government, as sustainable practices relate to green human management under a conclusive differential that leads to public policy guidelines to mitigate environmental impact.

Keywords: *Green Management, Human Management, Environmental Sustainability, Public Policy, Small-Medium Enterprises, Hotel Sector.*

Introduction

Given the dynamics of economic developments that have emerged in the global sphere, companies dedicated to hotel management have directed their efforts towards adapting processes that favor tourism stability and growth in the regions. In this way, it is important to add to the potentialities and mitigate problems related to tourism development strategies. Therefore, the study on the effectiveness of management, tourism resources and internal and external factors is decisive for its influence on its development (Syafri et al., 2024). Likewise, they have sought to promote initiatives focused on social responsibility, which positively impacts their employees' quality of life and constructive relationships with stakeholders. However, among the importance of the study is overcoming traditional contributions by hotels, in order to generate value related to the development of practices that promote environmental preservation and conservation in pursuit of adding to environmental and business sustainability.

Aspects associated with complex processes related to organizational culture and human management are considered fundamental to promote conditions in hotel management. Based on this, anticipating ways to contribute to the preservation of natural resources and socioeconomic conditions deserve to be transcended and prioritized among current and projected perspectives of hotels. This demonstrates that organizations require a development standard that equally favors economic, environmental, and social dimensions (Jabbour & Santos, 2008).

Sustainability can be used as a reference point to develop solutions to address environmental and social challenges (Kuckertz & Wagner, 2010). As such, overcoming weaknesses due to little or no adaptation of effective environmental management systems that promote social and economic impacts become part of the challenges faced by hotel businesses. Given the above, strengthening procedures associated with ways

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to generate value and renew processes that contribute to cleaner production is required, and therefore environmental preservation is projected (Olivares & Vargas, 2014).

Cleaner production is emphasized as part of the strategy that allows projecting concrete actions with sustainability in the short and medium term. The importance of its implementation is linked to the adoption of processes that allow companies to interact proactively to minimize waste and its impacts, as well as optimize the selection and acquisition of resources-raw materials and supplies, in order to mitigate effects on the environment and on employees and consumers of client services. However, among the predominant factors are the processes implicit in GHRM practices, which involve green recruitment, ecological selection, ecological training and development, ecological compensation and rewards, ecological performance evaluation, labor relations, ecological collective bargaining, and ecological complaint management (Siyambalapatiya, et al., 2018).

Among the main considerations, Renwick et al. (2013) states that GHRM practices are framed in 1) job analysis and description; 2) recruitment, selection and training; 3) development, performance and evaluation, and 4) rewards. This becomes an operational impact strategy that contributes to cost reduction, such as the renewal of hotels' corporate image, where the human factor is co-responsible for the viability of actions to be undertaken for its implementation. Adding to the above is the importance of contributions associated with sustainability-focused innovation, in which there is an evident competitive advantage of some hotel chains regarding the adoption of Sustainable Technologies and Practices (STP) in their environmental management plans (Amazonas et al., 2018).

The above considerations promote the development of spaces that allow mentioning the barriers that limit the understanding of the effects of sustainable practices among the most outstanding ones: 1) omission of a functional management directed to the development of eco-friendly practices, 2) weak capacity to make viable reverse logistics - effective waste management, 3) lack of optimization of the use on water and energy resources, 4) little or no projection on actions linked to cleaner production, 5) ignorance on the importance of the use of products with eco-label characteristics for preventive and corrective maintenance of infrastructure, as well as 6) the inexistence of a vision incidences of practices that affect the social and environmental conditions of human talent.

As part of the strategy to mitigate the aforementioned barriers, it is required the interactions within the organizations where the human factor is decisive. Thus, to promote the approach of this research to project an effective corporate environmental management with the management of human talent. In response as it is currently called "Green Human Resources" (Renwick, 2008)

From this perspective, the process of preservation and conservation linked to environmental management is considered from the hotel sector to be unpostponable. Consequently, achieving synergies from human management allows projecting interaction processes with other areas of the company to ensure its viability (Wagner, 2007). Consequently, the link between human resources management and human resources is conceived as a determining factor for environmental management (Wilkinson et al., 2001). In view of the above, the relevance of the strategic management of human talent (STM) is highlighted, as such three fundamental aspects are defined: the competitiveness of organizations, the systemic or integrative approach in STM and the need for coherence or fit between STM and organizational strategy (Aguilar, 2015). The more effective human resources practices are, the more significant the performance of organizations tends to be (Huselid et al., 1997).

In view of the above, sustainable practices-green management-human resources, when studied as variables that must interact synergistically, require an integral management to promote processes that transform the reality that minimizes the impulse towards sustainability in hotels. In view of the above, the objective of the study is to determine the environmental sustainability practices as the basis of green management promoted by human resources in hotel companies in Santiago de Cali-Colombia. Its development was based on the literature review, the methodological approach, followed by the results and conclusive aspects, which generate basic principles that deserve to be considered for the purposes of continuous improvement of one of the business sectors that contribute to the development of the emerging economy.

Literature Review

Management of Sustainability Practices from the Environmental Approach

The management of sustainable practices has become a topic of debate in the global order. Its effects contribute to developing competitive advantages, the scope of which provides for the three pillars of sustainability, i.e., economic, environmental and social (Elkington, 1997; Hawken, et al., 1999; Gardberg & Fombrun, 2006; Andriate & Fink, 2008;). Consequently, companies are transforming their operations by integrating social and environmental dimensions into their business models. In view of the above, the focus of analysis of the research is centered on the environmental dimension of sustainability. In this regard, environmental sustainability highlights its scope and the capacity of companies to generate impact associated with the environment. This approach is framed from the principle of social responsibility, which ensures the performance of the organization with the environment, the welfare of employees and ethical development (Elkington, 1997; Servaes & Tamayo, 2013).

Likewise, the first approaches to sustainability in organizations are determined by the direction oriented towards the optimization of their processes, with special emphasis on the manufacturing area, and introduces green manufacturing concepts such as Kaizen, Six-sigma, Lean Manufacturing and Jidoka and waste minimization approaches. Gradually, other concepts entered the organization such as green marketing (Peattie & Crane, 2005), green supply chain (Srivastava, 2007), green accounting (Owen, et al., 1997) and GHRM (Renwick et al., 2013). Management which, in the face of climate change, added to the diversity of legal and social regulations, project important contributions that promote environmental responsibility.

Lo descrito se ha convertido en un objetivo primordial para muchas organizaciones, en el que se vinculan políticas y objetivos estratégicos que marcan el compromiso frente a lo medioambiental (Chouinard et al., 2011). En el mismo orden, se menciona que las capacidades y comportamientos ecológicos del recurso humano de las organizaciones permite el logro de los objetivos económicos, sociales y ecológicos (Kramar, 2013). Las capacidades necesarias para contribuir a la sostenibilidad ambiental son identificadas por (Ehnert, 2009) como pensamiento sistémico, reflexión, colaboración, autoconocimiento individual y conciencia de los valores. Conjunto de acciones vinculadas con la capacidad de interacción de la gestión de recursos humanos.

In general terms, the viability of sustainability practices must be promoted, in order to achieve assertive results, by human resources. Thus, the development of spaces and the creation of conditions for the empowerment and effective management by human talent are required. From this point of view, environmental actions allow reciprocal exchanges based on common values that, if promoted, will strengthen social exchanges between employees and the organization, contributing to environmentally sustainable companies (Hoffman, 1993; Paillé et al., 2013; Hameed et al., 2020).

In this regard, the ecological behavior of employees can be of two types: voluntary ecological behavior and task-based ecological behavior. Task-based ecological behavior is that which takes place within organizations and is framed within the scope of job duties, defined by activities formally described and identified as part of the job description. Voluntary employee green behavior has been defined as behavior that involves personal initiative and exceeds organizational expectations (Norton et al., 2015). By promoting the social, organizational, and psychological environment, discretionary behaviors provide the context in which task performance occurs (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Chaudhary, 2019). Approach that allows to conceive from an integral vision what is related to the green management of human talent.

Green Human Talent Management (GVTH)

Green Human Resource Management (GVTH) responds to the set of policies and practices that induce green behavior in an organization through its employees, resulting in a sustainable environmental performance of the company (Chaudhary, 2019). This definition internally of organizations allows to foresee the commitment to contribute to preservation and conservation of the environment. To achieve its

viability, it is necessary to encourage the development of green attitudes and behaviors among employees aligned with the green objectives of the organization; therefore, the importance given by companies to incorporate effective “green” policies is preceded by the culture and commitment of human resources management to achieve their green objectives.

Undoubtedly, GVTH represents a link between environmental management systems and the organization's human resource management (HRM) (Renwick et al., 2013). Regarding the latter, Wagner et al. (2013) states that this knowledge has potential hard benefits (such as cost reduction) or soft benefits (such as satisfaction and pride in working for such an organization), as well as the transferability, according to Paredes et al. (2024) its effectiveness contributes to systematize processes that seek to strengthen assets and renew inter-organizational and organizational capabilities from the production of new knowledge. This knowledge is required to innovate and create solutions that contribute to generate favorable environmental conditions.

Given that the role of human capital is critical in implementing business strategy and achieving organizational goals, researchers argue that it is crucial to align GHR with the environmental management system to achieve the organization's environmental sustainability goals (Ren et al., 2018). The HRM function has been credited with playing a substantial role in creating a culture of sustainability in organizations (Yong et al., 2019). Making reference on the green behavior of employees, merits being linked to business strategy.

Its purpose is designed to ensure both the behavior that provides for the consolidation of green management, and to generate the basis for achieving sustainability objectives. In this regard, the relevance is based on existing advances in the literature that determine that the GVTH, generates for the adoption of environmental awareness throughout the process of hiring, training, rewarding and developing a green workforce that understands and values environmentally friendly practices and initiatives (Daily & Huang, 2001; Govindarajulu & Daily 2004; Jabbour, 2008; Renwick, 2008; Jackson & Seo, 2010; Jabbour et al., 2010; Abbour, 2011; Daily et al., 2012; Jabbour, et al., 2013; Renwick, 2013; Opatha, 2014; Paillé et al., 2014; Yusliza et al., 2015; Guerci et al., 2015; Ahmad., 2015; JRobertson & Barling, 2017; Tang, 2017; Kim et al., 2019; Roscoe et al., 2019; Chen & Yan, 2022).

The intentional behavior of human talent, which is determinant in reducing the negative impact of human actions. This may include activities such as water conservation, efficient use of resources, waste reduction, energy saving and recycling (Dubois & DuBois, 2012; Ones & Dilchert, 2012; Unsworth et al., 2013; Norton et al., 2015; Chaudhary, 2019). In this sense, one of the practices that deserves to be strengthened in organizations is associated with green behaviors by employees and thus communicating the organization's preference to hire people with environmental values, which is likely to increase employees' ecological awareness and understanding (Renwick et al., 2013).

It also highlights the investment capacity of organizations to engage employees in training processes that add to green initiatives, which contributes to improving their knowledge, skills, capabilities and making them psychologically more aware to adopt green behaviors. This goes hand in hand with human resource management theories that suggest that human resource management practices are effective in eliciting the right behaviors in the workplace and depend on employees understanding the need and urgency to adopt such practices (Nishii et al., 2008). For the referred process, the motivation of employees to participate and contribute to green activities is of equal relevance, consequently, it is essential to provide organizations with rewards and promotions that value the green performance of employees (Renwick et al., 2013; Dumont et al., 2017; Chaudhary, 2019).

The findings indicate that the adoption of GVTH practices by organizations contributes to employees' strong identification with these practices and behaviors that benefit the organization (Saeed et al., 2019). As such, capabilities in human talent are highlighted to contribute to environmental sustainability, which is promoted by Ehnert (2009), and focus on systems thinking, reflection, collaboration, individual self-knowledge and awareness of values. In view of the above, the growing importance of sustainability must be reflected in the projection of organizational practices, in which human resource management capabilities are strategic.

Green Management of Human Resources from the Dynamics of the Hotel Sector

In the last decade, the relevance of contributing to the goals of the sustainable development objectives has been a priority in the development of initiatives promoted at the global level, determined by public policies and business sector programs. With respect to the latter, the behavior of the hotel sector is analyzed. It is considered that it has gradually increased its contributions to sustainable development (Remm et al., 2022). One of the main reasons for this is the impact of the tourism industry, which is seen as one of the main beneficiaries of globalization before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, while tourism is an important driver of economic growth and social welfare, a transformation of the industry towards more sustainable practices is needed to ensure that sustainable development goals can be achieved (Gruchmann et al., 2022).

The competitive environment and the pressures of numerous stakeholders in the sector have a direct impact on the sector under study, to promote compliance in its operations based on the dimensions of sustainability, with special emphasis on the field of environmental responsibility, which is the subject of this research. Thus, environmental objectives are defined in their business policies and strategies. This leads to both the fulfillment of environmental objectives and the implementation of environmentally sustainable business practices, which require constant evaluation processes to measure their effects, making use of environmental accounting and reporting (Jankovic & Krivacic, 2014).

It should be noted that the accounting practices referred to are weakly conceived with respect to other management activities. In addition, environmental management tools to reduce their environmental footprint and improve their relationship with stakeholders are weak (Jankovic & Krivacic, 2014; Manganari, et al., 2016). In the same order, it is mentioned related to another trend that contributes to promote sustainable practices from organizations such as the commitment to the viability of green marketing, whose contributions in the hotel sector leads to a commitment to corporate social responsibility and its effects on the environment.

Given the above, the role of the Malaysian government in protecting the environment, the challenges of green marketing and the status of CSR within the hotel industry are considered (Punitha & Mohd, 2013). The discussion reveals that hotels are under constant pressure to balance the various forms of corporate social responsibility. Knowing the importance of sustainability, various governments of a global order promote initiatives in favor of the stability of hotels, as well as other sectors in which they add process for the adoption of green technologies and practices by providing incentives and tax exemptions. This approach has become a benchmark for emerging regions that are committed to sustainable development. On this subject, from the context of hotels, the eco-environmental conditions are mediated by the conditions in terms of environmental physical infrastructure and its effects to reduce the negative impact on the environment.

Structures and designs are also conceived to operate in a way that ensures sustainable use of energy, water, materials and land in a much more efficient and effective manner than hotel buildings that are simply built to code. Green practices have high environmental performance, but hotels are adopting them primarily for financial reasons. Most of the highly positioned hotel chains demonstrate significant initiatives that have enabled them to integrate green into their hotels, although there are upfront costs associated with becoming a sustainable property (Persic-Zivadinov, 2009).

On the above, it is determined that reports associated with the new role of customer-stakeholders, prioritize their preferences for hotels that respond to ecological principles due to their greater awareness of environmental degradation and an increasing need for conservation and sustainability (Gunduz et al., 2023). As such, promoting pro-environmental behaviors in workers are considered a priority, to strengthen management commitment, organizational support, supervisors and work from creativity and innovation for GHRM practices (Renwick et al., 2013; Opatha et al., 2014). It is from the above, when the importance of green human resources management is determined, through which awareness processes are strengthened in the collaborators, which allows overcoming part of the complexities that violate environmental management.

Method

Type and Approach of the Study

The development of the research was based on a case study methodology. Its scope is framed in empirical research, through which behaviors are studied on the phenomena associated with the environmental sustainability practices promoted by the hotel business sector. The case study is a way of approaching a particular fact, phenomenon, event or situation in depth and in context. This allows a greater understanding of its complexity; at the same time, it allows the context to be analyzed, especially when the limits between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident (Durán, 1969; Yin, 1994;). In view of the above, the convergence of the triangulation of the results was based on the theoretical and empirical analysis, these are presented highlighting the various conceptual theoretical approaches, added to the results of the empirical study and the analysis phase from the expertise of the researchers (Chang & Paredes, 2016).

In the same order, it is considered that the case study associated with the research presents a complete and accurate account of reality, so that decisive actions are taken to obtain and present the available evidence according to the phenomenon and context of study (Castro, 2010). In view of the above, the feasibility of the qualitative approach is added, through which the theoretical relationships and the regulations governing the behavior of the variables on the sector of small hotel companies in Santiago de Cali-Colombia are presented.

In view of the above, qualitative research is proposed from an integral development perspective and is summarized as multi-paradigmatic in its approach. Its practice sensitizes the value of the multi-method approach, which responds from the naturalistic perspective and the interpretative understanding of human experience (Guardián-Fernández, 2010). In this sense, qualitative research promotes interest in the reality or phenomena being studied and is determined by the perception of the person studying the phenomena that govern the analysis of the variables. For this case study, the environmentally sustainable practices and the green management of human resources, understanding that their dynamics are transformed according to the conditions of the environments.

Sampling Units and Data Collection Instrument

The sample units were characterized from the hotel sector, as presented in Table 1 the characterization of the sample units.

Tabal 1. Caracterización De Las Unidades Muestrales

| Hotel | Size | Capacity (rooms) | Services |
|-------|--------|------------------|--|
| 1 | Big | 108 | Restaurant, bar, business center, meeting rooms, gym, free Wi-Fi, laundry service, room service. |
| 2 | Big | 90 | Restaurante, bar, piscina, gimnasio, centro de negocios, salas de reuniones, Wi-Fi gratuito, servicio de lavandería, servicio a la habitación. |
| 3 | Medium | 38 | Restaurant, café, free Wi-Fi, laundry service, room service. |
| 4 | Small | 20 | Free Wi-Fi, laundry service, breakfast included. |
| 5 | Small | 15 | Free Wi-Fi, breakfast included, laundry service. |
| 6 | Medium | 60 | Restaurant, swimming pool, free Wi-Fi, laundry service, gym. |
| 7 | Big | 200 | Restaurant, bar, free Wi-Fi, business center, laundry service, parking. |

Based on the profile of the sample units, data was recovered through the design of a structured interview under the statement of five (5) questions, aimed at determining the initiatives or consolidated advances from the hotel sector in terms of green management-human management. Instrument directed to the managers of the hotels located in the context of Valle del Cauca-Colombia, attached to the Association of Hotels and Tourism of Colombia, Chapter Valle del Cauca.

Among the indicators analyzed, those associated with the ways of making sustainability practices viable stand out, including: organizational culture and its association with environmental management, promoted environmental sustainability practices, the measurement system used for environmental management, and specifics on human management. Likewise, the drivers and limitations for its viability or the disposition that merits projecting to promote the principles that govern sustainability from the context of the study are specified.

Due to the nature of the case study, the information was processed using the qualitative approach, which allowed the triangulation of the results, evidencing the contextual reality of the selected sample units, presented in Table 2. Likewise, among the main components for the analysis and validation of results, the coherence of qualitative results was considered according to the three elements studied, as well as the validity and validity of the constructs selected from the perception of the entrepreneurs. Likewise, the role of the sample units was considered. This process allowed transcending to the analysis of results, and the joint discussion of data with representatives of the sector, which facilitated the generation of contributions for the strengthening of future practical implications, prior substantiation of results to direct actions that promote the green management of human talent.

Results and Discussion

Based on the methodology described above, the qualitative analysis developed allowed presenting the triangulation of the results to validate the behavior of the sample units according to the variables and indicators studied that support environmental sustainability, green management and human resources, see Table 2.

Table 2. Triangulation of Results Based on the Variables and Indicators That Govern Sustainability Practices

| Práctica que aporta a la sostenibilidad | % de avance | Fundamentación teórica/normativa | Aporte de autores |
|---|---|--|---|
| Organizational culture: foundation for promoting environmentally responsible values and practices. | 80% of hotel companies evaluated | Opatha & Arullrajah (2014); de Souza Freitas et al. (2012) | They highlight the need to strengthen policies and decision-making processes to work together with government entities and certify sustainable practices. They suggest going beyond the focus on recycling and plastic reduction. |
| Defined policies for environmental sustainability. | 80% of consolidated progress in waste management. | Kramar (2014), Dummont (2016) | They emphasize the correct management of solid and liquid waste such as oils, in addition to promoting the recycling of materials such as batteries and light bulbs in collaboration with other sectors. |
| Planning and management of initiatives that project clean (eco-friendly) energies. | 70% progress on initiatives limited by economic investment effects. | Renwick et al. (2013); Siyambalapitiya, et al., 2018 | They propose strengthening renewable energy initiatives (solar panels), electric vehicles and water and energy saving awareness programs, which are limited due to lack of investment. |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Optimization of raw materials and supplies for space maintenance. | 70% progress to respond according to standards governing sustainability practices. | Chaudhary (2019); Paille et al., 2013. | Prioritizes the use of environmentally friendly products and support to local suppliers to minimize transportation emissions. |
| Motivations and incentives to consolidate sustainable practices from the green management of human talent. | 50% consolidation promoted from the projection of the strategic staf of the hotels | Mishra (2017); Reyner & Morgan (2017); Shen et al. (2016). | They encourage sustainability practices by employees, although initiatives are still weak. The importance of local regulations and shared social responsibility between management, employees and clients is highlighted. |
| Stakeholders and logistics | 55% of advance | Whitmarsh & O'Neill (2010). | They state that interactions with sustainable suppliers face challenges due to lack of local supply and high logistical costs when buying in bulk. |
| Difficulties in implementing the sustainability policy. | 70% from an integral vision to give viability to sustainable practices from an environmental approach. | Renwick et al. (2013); Molina et al. (2009) | They identify economic, cultural and legal barriers, such as high costs of sustainable infrastructure, lack of awareness and lack of regulatory knowledge. |
| Follow-up and management. | 57 % of the sample units present progress on management. | (Molina et al., 2009) | They affirm the existence of progress in service management, but the measurement of the effectiveness of sustainable practices is still in the initial stages, with reports and audits still weak. |

In addition to the triangulation presented, the viability of the normative and legal aspects are related as a case study, see Table 3.

Table 3. Relationship Between Sample Units and Normative Practices

| Hotel | Advance | Regulation / Normativity |
|----------------|--|---|
| Hotel 1 | Progress towards achieving the Colombian Environmental Seal and the zero-carbon initiative, but these efforts were halted due to the post-pandemic situation that limited audits and new certifications. | ISO 9001, (2015): Criteria for a quality management system. In adaptation stage for certification. ISO 14000, (2015): Promotes environmental care from the Plan, Do, Check and Act cycle, -PHVA-, to minimize the impact of the actions taken and demonstrate its commitment to the environment. |
| Hotel 2 | It has quality certification and is constantly renewing its safety, hygiene and sustainability | ISO 14001, (2015): Identifies the environmental impacts of the hotel |

| | | |
|----------------|--|--|
| | certification. In addition, they are exploring other certifications specifically focused on sustainability, perceiving benefits both in terms of commitment to the environment and commercially. | sector, based on the optimization of processes. |
| Hotel 3 | No interest in awards, seals or certifications related to environmental sustainability is currently evident. | ISO 15001, (2018): How to implement an energy policy and to properly manage the energy aspects derived from its activity, such as services, facilities, products, to save and quantify the energy cost in organizations. |
| Hotel 4 | Interest in certification options prevails, but limited resources and a weak employee culture have prevented progress in sustainability practices. | NETC5133, (2006): Measures the use of recycled or biodegradable materials, reduction in the use of natural resources, energy or waste generation. |
| Hotel 5 | Although they participate in non-environmental awards and certifications, they have not yet specifically included sustainable initiatives in their agenda. | Colombian Sectorial NTSH 006, (2004): Classification of lodging and accommodation establishments and the quality characteristics of the services offered and infrastructure. |
| Hotel 6 | They have obtained certifications of compliance with sustainability standards, demonstrating a clear commitment to environmental and community management in their surroundings. | Green Globe, (1992) - International Sustainability Standard. |
| Hotel 7 | High interest in the sectoral technical norm (NTS 0012) governing sustainability, showing a specific focus on complying with sectoral standards related to the environment. | Rainforest Alliance, (2007): Certification in sustainable practices in the tourism industry. |

Discussion of Results

According to the results presented, it is shown that the topic of green HRM practices has been the subject of important research advances. Its focus is on the feasibility of relationship between HRM programs, processes and techniques that are implemented in organizations in order to reduce negative environmental impacts or improve positive environmental impacts in these (Arulrajah et al., 2015).

Regarding the transformations on corporate perspectives related to environmental initiatives, the contributions on defined policies are associated with environmental job titles, marketing strategies, capital investments, auditing practices, design and development of new products and production processes (Molina et al., 2009). The same reference is considered on the importance of GVTH policies associated with capacity building and provision of opportunities, which allow understanding the factors that motivate employees to adopt green behaviors. As such it is stated that, environmental training in employees, empowers and equips them with knowledge, awareness and skills of green behavior, which promote environmental values through the support of leaders and managers (Dumont et al., 2016).

In the same vein, GVTH brings benefits to the organization in the short and medium term, due to its contributions to improvement to quality of life and social (i.e., work-life balance) and economic (i.e., maintaining profits) well-being along with awareness of environmental concern (i.e., reducing waste)

(Mishra, 2017). In this sense, the GVTH, involves practices aligned with the three sustainability pillars of environmental, social and economic balance (Opatha & Arullrajah, 2014).

In general, hotels use a variety of indicators to track their sustainable management. These include the consumption of resources such as electricity, water and gas, as well as waste management. Some facilities also prioritize and evaluate the cost management associated with these operations to identify areas for improvement and efficiency. In addition, they focus on practices such as preventive maintenance of equipment to minimize environmental impacts and ensure operational continuity. These efforts not only seek to comply with internal and external regulations, but also to enhance the hotel's environmental reputation and respond to the expectations of guests and stakeholders in terms of sustainability.

Equal priority has been given to human talent training processes, which represents the development of regular induction programs for new employees, with a specific focus on sustainable practices such as energy saving, waste management and responsible use of resources. In addition to the planning of periodic talks and internal campaigns led by teams specialized in sustainability, covering sensitive departments such as food and beverages, maintenance and housekeeping. In addition, efforts in social inclusion and diversity within the staff are highlighted, promoting an inclusive environment free of discrimination. As such, it is necessary to include green criteria in job descriptions, candidates' attitudes could be aligned with the company's green objectives in interviews, and used to consolidate environmental activities in companies (Renwick et al., 2013).

Given the above, the valuation given to human talent management is preceded in several cases by the recognition of the best ideas related to sustainability within the hotel operation. From this perspective, GHRM generates some implications associated with the use of various HR management practices, to reinforce environmental objectives and develop a workforce that is aware and committed to the cause of environmental sustainability (Masri & Jaaron, 2017). Without failing to highlight, the importance on the conformation of committees and periodic meetings where these ideas are discussed and evaluated, involving various departments and hierarchical staff in the decision-making process. However, there are cases where participation still needs greater impetus and commitment to promote more advanced and effective practices in sustainability.

Likewise, from the perspectives of the sample units, it is noted that the management of sustainable practices is frequently followed up on a weekly basis to monitor the effects of their viability and, above all, the investment-benefit ratio. Although priority is given to the capacity of consumption associated with occupancy, others have established sustainability committees that analyze key factors such as waste management and resource consumption on a monthly basis. In addition, mention is made of the use of specific platforms to manage follow-up on performance management associated with contributions to sustainability goals. Priorities include the elimination of single-use plastic and the reduction of energy consumption. These practices reflect from the hotel sector an integral approach to environmental sustainability, with visible efforts to comply with standards and goals established in the corporate context with global reach.

From a legislation and regulation perspective, hotels show varying degrees of interest and commitment to awards, seals or certifications related to environmental sustainability. As such, the study sector shows a diversity of interest and commitment towards the viability of recognitions (awards, seals or certifications) related to environmental sustainability. Some are actively involved, maintaining existing ones and looking for new opportunities to improve their environmental performance. This includes quality certificates that also cover sustainability aspects, perceived as beneficial both environmentally and commercially.

While a minority, due to economic effects, vision on human green management and strategies, show limited progress in this field. Without failing to highlight the experiences interrupted in their initiatives due to external circumstances, among the most relevant those generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the effects, the applied practices, confinement, which affected the socio-productive development, and prevented the strengthening of management indicators in priority areas during and after the pandemic, in different health, social, productive and business sectors, affecting the competitiveness and sustainability of

the business fabric of the regions (Paredes et al., 2020). As a result, a temporary paralysis was generated, which led to the duplication of efforts associated with the renewal of sustainable practices to promote the obtaining of new environmental seals or certifications.

With respect to the viability and compliance with standards that contribute to the strengthening of sustainability practices that lead to certification processes, they have hardly achieved the expected success. However, there are important initiatives that lead to the strengthening of actions and strategies that project feasible scenarios that are frequently measurable and monitored according to the criteria established by Latin American standards, which generate new scenarios to be consolidated from the hotel sector.

Table 3 Register of Latin American Legislation, Regulations and Certifications Related to the Hotel Sector

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Standards/Certification: | Travelers Choice, (2023). |
| Countries: | International. |
| Objective/Scope: | Recognize excellence in quality and service in tourism. Scope: Rewards customer satisfaction and experiences. Practice: Voluntary. |
| Standards/Certification: | ISO 1500, (2018). |
| Countries: | Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, España, EEUU, México, Perú y Uruguay. |
| Objective/Scope: | Implement efficient energy policies and measure energy costs. Scope: Saving and responsible management of energy in operations. Practice: Mandatory. |
| Standards/Certification: | ISO 900, (2015) |
| Countries: | Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, España, EE-UU, México, Perú y Uruguay. |
| Objective/Scope: | Establish criteria to implement a quality management system. Scope: Continuous improvement and customer satisfaction in processes and service. Practice: voluntary. |
| Standards/Certification: | ISO 14000, (2015). |
| Countries: | Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, España, EEUU, México, Perú y Uruguay. |
| Objective/Scope | Promote environmental care with the PHVA cycle. Scope: Minimize environmental impacts by demonstrating commitment. Practice: mandatory. |
| Standards/Certification: | ISO 14001, (2015). |
| Countries: | Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, España, EEUU, México, Perú y Uruguay. |
| Objective/Scope | Optimize processes to identify and reduce environmental impacts. Scope: Improve environmental management in the hotel sector. Practice: mandatory. |
| Standards/Certification: | Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), (2012). |
| Countries: | International. |
| Objective/Scope: | Establish global standards for sustainability in tourism. Scope: Promotes sustainable practices worldwide. Practice: voluntary. |
| Standards/Certification: | Rainforest Alliance, (2007) |
| Countries: | International. |
| Objective/Scope | Promote sustainable practices in the tourism industry. Scope: Promotes environmental sustainability in tourism. Practice: voluntary. |
| Standards/Certification: | Travel Life Association of British Travel Agents, (2007). |
| Countries: | International. |
| Objective/Scope | |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| | To certify tourism companies committed to sustainability. Scope: Promotes sustainable environmental and social practices. Practice: voluntary | |
| Standards/Certification: | GREAT Green Deal, (2007) | |
| Countries: | Guatemala. | |
| Objective/Scope: | To certify sustainable practices in tourism. Scope: Promotes environmental and social standards. Practice: voluntary. | |
| Standards/Certification: | NETC5133, (2006) | |
| Countries: | Colombia. | |
| Objective/Scope: | Measure the use of recyclable materials and reduce natural resources and waste. Scope: Improve sustainable waste management practices. Practice: mandatory. | |
| Standards/Certification: | NTSH Sectorial Colombiana 006, (2004) | |
| Countries: | Colombia. | |
| Objective/Scope: | Classify and standardize the quality of lodging services. Scope: Improve the quality of infrastructure and services. Practice: mandatory. | |
| Standards/Certification: | Audubon Green Lodging Program, (1996). | |
| Countries: | International. | |
| Objective/Scope: | Verify environmental practices in lodging facilities. Scope: Water conservation, energy efficiency and waste reduction. Practice: voluntary | |
| Standards/Certification: | Green Key Global, (1994) | |
| Countries: | International. | |
| Objective/Scope: | Validate environmental responsibility and sustainable operation in tourism. Scope: Commitment to strict sustainability criteria. Practice: voluntary | |
| Standards/Certification: | Green Seal, (1993). | |
| Countries: | International. | |
| Objective/Scope: | Award eco-labels to sustainable companies. Scope: Certifies environmentally friendly products and services. Practice: Voluntary. | |
| Standards/Certification: | Certificación de Turismo Sostenible, (1993). | |
| Countries: | Costa Rica. | |
| Objective/Scope: | Promote sustainable practices in tourism. Scope: Certifies compliance with environmental and social criteria. Practice: voluntary | |
| Standards/Certification: | Green Globe – Estándar Internacional de Sostenibilidad, (1992). | |
| Countries: | Internacional. | |
| Objective/Scope: | To certify sustainable tourism operations globally. Scope: Leading sustainability standards in tourism. Practice: Voluntary. | |
| Standards/Certification: | Sello S – SERNATUR, (1975) | |
| Countries: | Chile. | |
| Objective/Scope: | Recognize sustainable tourism practices. Scope: Validates sustainable initiatives in the tourism sector. Practice: voluntary. | |

Based on the above, important challenges arise associated with the need to understand the scope of Latin American regulations and certifications. These are defined to govern sustainability practices, which represent new challenges in the hotel sector and are focused on overcoming barriers that limit the effective viability of compliance with standards and parameters to obtain certifications. In view of the above, progress on the projection of green human talent management (GVTH), is raised as part of the

contributions that give relevance to sustainability practices (Kramar, 2014), for example, creating a green culture, implies that workers reduce waste, efficiently use resources and minimize damage to the environment (Ehnert et al. 2016; Paille et al., 2014).

Similarly, it is reaffirmed that human resource management has the greatest potential to incorporate sustainability at the organizational level in the pursuit of prosperity, environmental integrity and social equity (de Souza Freitas et al., 2012). As such, the results evidence that employees' green behaviors can reduce living expenses, implying that employees would be more motivated to adopt green behaviors at home such as recycling or waste reduction (Rayner & Morgan, 2017). For Malik et al. (2021) companies can achieve competitive advantages and sustainability by implementing GHRM, through green activities such as clean-up campaigns and recycling days, will help employees to modify their pro-environmental behavior and encourage them to actively participate in this type of activities and showing socially responsible behaviors.

Conclusions

The consolidated advances to determine the practices of environmental sustainability based on the green management of human resources in hotel companies, concludes on the relevance of the strengthening and strategic development that from the hotels deserve to be promoted to project in a favorable way the environmental sustainability in these companies. In this order, the human factor becomes a transcendental part for the ideation, creation and viability of environmentally responsible practices and policies. As such, aspects associated with their work on culture and strategy, added to the development of processes associated with sustainability, become part of the differentiating actions in the hotel sector companies.

In this order, the results infer that the challenges to be met are still in the preliminary stages of execution and projection, which requires important processes in a first phase associated with the training and development of human talent, as a basis for consolidating the Green Management of Human Talent (GVTH). From this perspective, the priorities are focused on the hierarchy of the main focuses that deserve to be considered, including: characterization of the risks that violate the environment and deserve to be mitigated.

In addition to the definition of strategies and policies aligned with the company's profile, as well as the effectiveness of communication and disclosure processes that generate distinctive value in the environments: customers-stakeholders-company-collaborators and related sectors. Although initiatives on sustainability practices in the last 5 years have been discrete, they are distinguished by a high degree of awareness of the importance of generating value and differentiating themselves favorably in the environment in which the hotel sector participates.

Within the framework of practical implications, the study foresees generating spaces for the transcendence between the theoretical and empirical, which allows to generate to the existing literature and generate new guidelines that allow systematizing ways to make sustainability practices viable in terms of:

projecting an integral vision of environmental sustainability within the framework of business strategy, which represents a key objective in business planning processes, 2) promoting the empowerment of human talent as the basis that guarantees GVTH, with capacities to overcome barriers that limit environmentally responsible conditions, 3) supporting the implementation of environmentally responsible policies and practices based on regulations, legislation and certifications that accredit the assertiveness and relevance of sustainable practices promoted from GVTH. 4) establishment of standards that allow monitoring and follow-up on progress in the adoption of sustainable practices that mitigate the barriers that weaken the progress of sustainable environmental management, whose indicators are associated with: carbon footprint, water and energy consumption, the amount of waste generated and 5) strategies to encourage greater employee participation and commitment, with training, participation in environmental work teams, the inclusion of environmental goals in individual objectives, among others.

Regarding the practical implications, it is urged to direct actions to consolidate initiatives that respond to environmental sustainability. To this end, it is necessary to: i) promote a holistic approach to the GVTH,

whose exercise contributes to overcoming the weaknesses that affect interaction processes between customers and employees, ii) create conditions that promote from the business strategy that favors environmental management under the efficiency of green technologies for the production and management of services that allow the optimal use of materials and inputs, iii) increase recycling management and reduce polluting emissions, iv) consolidate a culture of responsible production and consumption in the context of hotels.

The above responds to a holistic concept aimed at strengthening operations management in hotel companies, which not only benefits the environment, but also generates value for the company, positioning it as a responsible player committed to sustainability. In this sense, in a world increasingly aware of environmental challenges, sustainability becomes a key competitive advantage for organizations seeking to differentiate themselves and ensure their long-term success.

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