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Green Human Resource Management

Ms. Punnam Vinisha Reddy *

Abstract

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) is increasingly essential in today's corporate landscape, aligning HR practices with environmental sustainability goals. Green HRM practices involve incorporating eco-friendly policies, promoting environmental awareness among employees, and adopting sustainable operations. This approach not only enhances the company's ecological footprint but also improves employee morale and corporate reputation.

The significance of Green HRM is underscored by the fact that environmentally responsible businesses are becoming more attractive to top talent, with studies showing that 64% of millennials consider a company's social and environmental commitments when deciding where to work. Furthermore, companies with robust sustainability programs report a 16% increase in productivity and a 21% increase in profitability.

* MBA Student, Department of Commerce and Management, Veeranari Chakali Ilamma Women's University (Formerly University College for Women) Koti, Hyderabad, Telangana, India.

In India, the adoption of Green HRM is pivotal, as the country faces significant environmental challenges. According to the Press Information Bureau of India, the implementation of sustainable practices across industries could reduce carbon emissions by 20% by 2030. Additionally, the adoption of Green HRM can lead to substantial cost savings, estimated at over ₹10,000 crore annually, through efficient resource utilization and waste management.

This chapter covers the introduction and meaning of Green HRM, highlighting its conceptual framework including the importance, benefits, practices, and initiatives of Green HRM. It discusses the challenges faced in implementing Green HRM and provides examples of companies that have successfully adopted these practices. Additionally, the chapter reviews five key articles on the topic, offering a comprehensive literature review.

"Sustainability is no longer about doing less harm. It's about doing more good."

— Jochen Zeitz

Keywords: *Green HRM, Environmental sustainability, Eco-friendly policies, Employee engagement, Corporate sustainability, Resource efficiency, Environmental awareness.*

Introduction

Green HRM refers to any efforts by the human resources department within the organization to raise awareness towards

environmental management and ensure that the employees contribute towards making their organization sustainable.

Green human resource management, often referred to as green HR, also encompasses active efforts by the human resources in making the workplace as environmentally friendly as possible, while also encouraging their staff to do the same. It is responsible for creating a sustainable workspace, by transforming the HR operations keeping sustainable goals in mind. It involves undertaking environment-friendly HR initiatives resulting in greater efficiencies, lower costs and better employee engagement and retention, which in turn, help organizations to reduce employee carbon footprints by the likes of electronic filing, car-sharing, job-sharing, teleconferencing, and virtual interviews, recycling, telecommuting, online training, energy-efficient office spaces, etc.

Green HR initiatives help companies find alternative ways to cut costs without losing their top talent. Focus on Green HRM as a strategic initiative promotes sustainable business practices.

Conceptual Framework

Importance of Green Human Resource Management

The main goals of green human resource management are enhancing sustainable business practices, reducing costs, raising social awareness within the organisation, and more. Every organisation must do an environmental audit for this, focusing on their sustainable actions, obligations, and more.

With the help of GHRM (Green Human Resource Management), an organisation not only functions with consideration for its social and environmental duties but also gains certain benefits from doing so.

Benefits

- 1. Cost Efficient:** With GHRM, businesses can save hiring costs without losing qualified candidates. Making a complete switch to an online hiring system has its benefits because it makes the hiring process simpler, faster, and more affordable.
- 2. Sustainability:** When a company is associated with sustainable and green initiatives, it will have tremendous growth opportunities. It comprises eco-friendly measures that help you reduce and eliminate your carbon footprint. Employers who use GHRM have highly engaged employees, which lower the absenteeism rate. Green human resource management aids in cost reduction without compromising their area of expertise.
- 3. Brand Recognition:** The use of green human resource management techniques aids the organisation in establishing a name for itself in society. Additionally, it promotes resource conservation and the use of more affordable, environmentally friendly products. Conducting environmental audits, giving back to society and its citizens, improving workplace culture, maintaining waste management, and other initiatives are just a few of the ways an organisation can earn brand recognition.

4. Increased Employee Retention: The organization's employee retention rate can be raised by using green human resource management techniques. When employees discover that the company they work for cares about society and the environment, they begin to feel proud. In addition to its advantages, it creates a favourable impression among the workforce and top talent, enabling them to connect more effectively with the organization's environmental principles.

5. Wellness: Organisations' wellness programmes can involve environmental and sustainable issues to raise awareness in addition to promoting physical fitness, good nutrition, and a healthy lifestyle among workers. Green HRM promotes environmentally friendly causes by using policies to encourage resource efficiency, which raises employee morale and satisfaction levels.

Green HRM Practices

There are some common green human resource management practices, which will result in an enhanced perception of the company and its staff. These practices help implement excellent green HR policies throughout the company, helping it achieve its sustainability goals. Some of the common practices which support the green HR policies are:

1. Hiring Selectively: You can start by hiring selectively to ensure that the hired candidates are inclined towards green causes by asking relevant queries during the interviews. Similarly, you can also encourage them to attach any proof

of their involvement with green initiatives, which will ensure that they are more likely to participate in similar activities conducted by the office.

Green targets can be also included in leadership positions as they hold more responsibility for green initiatives. It will ensure that these managers will be interested in green initiatives and support their team members in fulfilling the company's green objectives.

1. Providing Employment Security: Providing your employees job security is an excellent green HR practice, which helps you gain their trust. Hence, they will be inclined to follow the green human resource management policies laid down by the organization. By providing your staff with the assurance of job security, they will also have a sense of belonging to your company, and hence, they will be better engaged with the company.

Having a stable source of income will also provide them with the peace of mind that their company will support them financially. Providing employment security will also result in lesser attrition, which will also help you save costs associated with hiring, training and development of new staff members.

2. Promoting Open Communication: Another excellent option to build a green workplace is to foster open communication throughout the organization. It enables the employees to feel a sense of belonging to their company, while also reassuring them of their value for the business. It

also helps them to be free to share their ideas and innovations with their team, making for a productive environment.

Open communication should also include enhanced transparency regarding the finances, corporate strategies, and other information which also affects the employees. It enables the staff to understand that their company trusts them completely. It also enables them to feel involved with their organization, improving their loyalty.

5. Emphasizing Teamwork: It is also essential to emphasize teamwork as multiple green activities can profit with the help of teamwork. Green human resource management practices promote teamwork as it encourages your staff to remain engaged with the company and be a productive member of their team.

By emphasizing teamwork, you can also ensure that your team has better bonding, and hence, can be more productive and efficient than the competition. Having an efficient team also results in long-term success as they can work as a single unit to accomplish their tasks. It enables them to remain engaged with their company, as well as be more productive than others.

6. Developing Learning Culture: By organizing training sessions in environmentally friendly practices, you can enable your staff to understand why they are supposed to follow the green practices within their company. Developing a culture of learning and development will

enable the teams to understand the reason behind the green initiatives. As a result, they will be eager to fulfil their company's green goals and actively contribute towards green initiatives.

It also enables the younger generation of employees to feel more connected with their company as they are actively looking for learning opportunities to upskill themselves. Such employees will also be looking forward to staying longer.

Initiatives for the Management of the Green Human Resources

As major corporations learn more ways to promote sustainable functioning within their organisations, the idea of “green human resource management” is becoming more and more common. Unquestionably, businesses can significantly contribute to the effort to prevent global warming. The following green human resource management initiatives can help HRM uphold the organization's commitment to green practices with the help of top management and staff:

1. Green Recruitment and Selecting Process: Technology has advanced to the point that anything is now possible online. Organizations can publish job openings on their websites, and candidates can also upload resumes. These initiatives aid in the significant reduction of paper usage. Now that the method has been chosen, the recruiter must quickly determine whether the applicants are willing to adopt their eco-friendly rules. Some of the interview questions should be directed at group dynamics and the

most pressing environmental issues, which blend sustainability concerns with an organization's strategy.

2. Onboarding Process: The way that an organisation conducts its orientation programme must take into account how these new hires will operate by the organization's green policies. Along with this, the organisation must also describe its environmental policies and the green practices it uses to cut back on waste, carbon emissions, and other things.

3. Learning and Development: Learning and development are more similar to a training session given to new employees to teach them how the business runs. The organisation must include the new hires' green activities and skills when educating and training them on their regular working roles and responsibilities. It makes the organisation sustainable and environmentally friendly. Employees may be inspired by learning and development sessions to come up with fresh ideas for improving the viability and sustainability of their organisations. Using digital and web-based modules is what organisations should do for environmental management training. To contribute to the safety and well-being of the environment, recycling factors, waste disposal, and energy debate are vital.

4. Performance Management and Appraisal: Performance management aims to improve an employee's technical knowledge and abilities, so they can better support the company's objectives. As a result, it also incorporates sustainability goals that are evaluated using particular

metrics to establish a business that is more concerned about the environment. Creating goals, obligations, and tasks that are effective at raising awareness of environmental issues and motivating staff to engage in these green activities is something that is taken into account when evaluating managers' performance.

5. Rewards and Compensation Management: Recognition of your employees' efforts to create a more environmentally friendly environment is accomplished through reward and compensation management. You can reward your employees with three different types of awards: monetary, non-monetary, and recognition-based rewards. Monetary rewards are typically in the form of cash bonuses, pay raises, and other financial incentives. Additionally, non-monetary rewards might be anything from leaves to gift baskets. While promotion and commendation from senior executives are among the recognition-based rewards.

Challenges of Green HRM

The common challenges in implementing green HRM strategies and policies in companies include:

1. Lack of Documentation: Documentation ensures that the environmentally friendly practices in the organization are undertaken diligently. It helps preserve the established policies and associated assets too.

2. Inadequate Budget: Transitioning to sustainable technologies and practices requires heavy investment. However, companies often face budget constraints, which proves to be challenging for green HRM initiatives.

3. Training and Awareness: Undertaking employee training and raising awareness within the organization is another challenge for the HR teams in implementing robust green HRM practices throughout the company.

Examples of Green HRM Implementation:

1. Google



Google has implemented various Green HRM practices, such as promoting telecommuting to reduce carbon emissions from commuting, offering eco-friendly commuting options like electric vehicle charging stations, and using sustainable materials in office construction and design.

2. IKEA



IKEA practices Green HRM by incorporating sustainability into its recruitment and employee training programs. They emphasize environmental responsibility in job descriptions, offer training on sustainable practices, and encourage employees to participate in local community environmental projects.

3. Accenture



Accenture integrates Green HRM by incorporating sustainability metrics into performance evaluations, promoting virtual meetings to reduce travel-related emissions, and implementing policies that encourage responsible use of resources in their offices worldwide.

Review of Literature

Article 1

2013 Renwick, D. W. S., Redman, T., & Maguire, S. conducted a comprehensive review titled "**Green Human Resource Management: A Review and Research Agenda,**" aiming to synthesize existing literature on Green HRM, pinpoint gaps, and propose a research agenda. Employing literature review and conceptual analysis as their methodology, they highlighted key themes and identified significant research gaps within Green HRM practices. Their findings underscored the critical need for empirical studies and theoretical advancements in the field. They concluded by suggesting future research directions that focus on integrating sustainability into HRM practices effectively, advocating for a more robust framework to support organizational sustainability initiatives.

Article 2

2015 Shrivastava, P., & Maheshwari, S. authored "**Green HRM: A Review, Process Model, and Research Agenda,**" aiming to develop a process model for implementing Green HRM and suggest future research directions. Their methodology involved literature review, case studies, and conceptual analysis, without statistical analysis due to the conceptual nature of their framework. They proposed a comprehensive process model that emphasizes both organizational and individual levels of analysis in Green HRM implementation. The authors concluded by advocating for empirical research to validate the proposed model's efficacy and its impact on organizational outcomes, highlighting the need for practical validation in real-world settings.

Article 3

2016 Jabbour, C. J. C., & de Sousa Jabbour, A. B. L. published "**Green Human Resource Management and Green Supply Chain Management: Linking Two Emerging Agendas,**" aiming to explore the integration of Green HRM with Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) and propose synergistic practices. Their research employed literature review, case studies, and empirical analysis, including descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis of case studies. They found significant synergies between Green HRM and GSCM practices, highlighting HRM's role in advancing environmental sustainability throughout supply chains. The authors concluded by advocating for collaborative

research efforts and practical implementation strategies to enhance sustainability practices across organizations.

Article 4

2018 Agarwal, P., & Singh, R. K. authored "**Green HRM: A Theoretical Perspective**," aiming to develop a theoretical framework for Green HRM practices and explore their impact on organizational sustainability. Their research methodology involved conceptual analysis and the development of a theoretical framework, without statistical analysis due to the theoretical nature of their work. They developed a comprehensive theoretical perspective on Green HRM, emphasizing its potential to enhance organizational sustainability through strategic HRM practices. The authors concluded by recommending empirical validation of the theoretical framework and providing practical guidelines for implementing Green HRM effectively in organizational contexts.

Article 5

2020 Sarkar, S., & Sarkar, I. conducted a systematic review titled "**Green Human Resource Management Practices in Organizations: A Systematic Review and Future Research Agenda**," aiming to systematically review Green HRM practices, summarize existing research, and propose future research directions. Their research methodology included a systematic literature review and meta-analysis, involving meta-analysis of quantitative studies and thematic analysis of qualitative studies. They synthesized current knowledge on

Green HRM practices, identified gaps in empirical research, and proposed a future research agenda focused on rigorous empirical studies to examine the impact of Green HRM on organizational outcomes and sustainability.

Conclusion

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) emerges as a crucial strategy for organizations aiming to integrate environmental sustainability into their core operations. By aligning HR practices with eco-friendly policies and nurturing environmental awareness among employees, Green HRM not only enhances ecological responsibility but also boosts employee morale and corporate reputation. The growing preference among millennials and the workforce for socially and environmentally responsible employers underscores the strategic significance of Green HRM in attracting and retaining talent.

Looking ahead, the future prospects of Green HRM are promising, with potential benefits including enhanced organizational sustainability, cost efficiencies through resource optimization, and improved employee engagement. As businesses worldwide face environmental challenges, such as carbon emissions and resource depletion, the adoption of Green HRM practices can pave the way for substantial long-term gains. However, challenges such as budget constraints and the need for comprehensive training and documentation remain pertinent.

In conclusion, Green HRM represents a proactive approach towards sustainable business practices, offering organizations a competitive edge in a socially conscious marketplace. By integrating environmental considerations into HR strategies, companies can not only mitigate environmental impacts but also drive innovation and foster a culture of environmental stewardship across their workforce and beyond.

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