

GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: PRACTICES & CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT:

In the current scenario there is greater emphasis on merging Environmental practices with the Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices. The ill effects of environmental degradation have become quite evident with the passage of time in the form of various diseases and ecological imbalance. The various environmental conventions being held are all stressing the importance of eco-friendly practices in order to ensure the survival of humanity and to give brighter greener future to our upcoming generations. Business organizations are major contributors to the environmental degradation and hence the onus lies more on them to restore the balance. In fact, by incorporating these sustainable pro-environment friendly practices in the business operation will have a greater impact on creating better future and more live able planet. Human Resource professionals are playing major role in integration and implementation of the green practices in the organization. Green human resource management can be defined as a set of policies, practices, and systems that stimulate the green behavior of a company's employees in order to create an environmentally sensitive, resource-efficient, and socially responsible organization. This study will explore the various Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) Practices based on existing literature, discuss the models of green human resource management and will also throw light on challenges and issues being faced while implementing them at organizational level.

Keywords: *Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), Human Resource Management (HRM), Environment Friendly, Sustainable.*

INTRODUCTION

People of both developed and developing countries are becoming aware of importance of Green Environmentally Friendly Organizations. There are many National & International organisation like United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) and various treaties and agreements like Paris Agreement, Kyoto protocol etc. to combat climate change are working to create Green Environment which in turn regulate the roles and practices of organisation within the national boundaries. Macro changes requires small steps at micro level. Business Organisations can play a major role in reducing the carbon footprints by streamlining their man, machines, processes & all business operations with green technology.

In creating green organisation, a lot of focus has been on the production side like use of environmentally friendly raw material and judicious use of resources and effective disposal of harmful wastes etc. but here the major component or we can say the backbone of any organisation is left behind that is Human Resource which can play the major role in creating sustainable environment friendly Organisations. This can be achieved by first integrating Green Environmentally friendly practices in the HRM and this in turns will influence integrating Green Practices at all levels of Organisations. Green HRM means "the HRM aspects of Environmental Management" [Renwick, Douglas W. S.; Redman, Tom; Maguire, Stuart (2013)]. A broader definition considers GHRM as "pheno-mena relevant to understanding relationships between organizational activities that impact the

natural environment and the design, evolution, implementation and influence of HRM systems." [Ren, Shuang; Tang, Guiyao; E. Jackson, Susan (2018-09-01)] Collins and Clark, 2003) elaborates that within an organization, human resource and their system are the basic foundation of any business, be it financial business or sustainable business. They are the ones responsible for planning and executing those eco-friendly policies to create a green atmosphere. Therefore, without facilitating the human resource and implementing sustainable policies, going green would be a hard nut to crack (Ahmad, 2015). Considering the above points, this study aims to explore the various green human resource management practices prevalent in the organisation and how they can be integrated and what challenges are being faced by HR professionals while

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implementing them.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To explore the various GHRM practices prevalent in organisation as per existing literature.
- 2) To study the models of GHRM.
- 3) To study the various issues and challenges being faced while implementing GHRM practices at the organisation level.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is primarily based upon the secondary data. The data relevant to the topic is collected from different databases, websites, papers published journals, magazines and newspaper articles and other available sources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of literature is mainly focused on definition and meaning of Green Human Resource Management. The term Green HRM has been coined by (Wehrmeyer 1996), when he published his book *Greening People: Human Resources and Environmental Management*. It is an attempt to connect the two fields of Environmental management and Human resource management. Hence, it is a recent concept in the field of Management. Prasad (2013) defines Green HRM as the contribution of HR policies to protect and preserve the natural resources. According to Renwick et al, (2008), the integration of corporate environmental management into human resource management is termed as green HRM. They also stated that human resources aspects of environmental management are green HRM. These scholars broadly specified that distinguished policies in the field of recruitment, performance management and appraisal, training and development, employment relations and pay and reward are considered as powerful

tools for aligning employees with an organization's environmental strategy. In 2011, Jabbour again defined green HRM as "the level of greening of human resource management practices" in terms of functional and competitive dimensions of HRM. Green HRM is referred to "all the activities involved in development, implementation and on-going maintenance of a system that aims at making employees of an organization green. It is the side of HRM that is concerned with transforming normal employees into green employees so as to achieve environmental goals of the organization and finally to make a significant contribution to environmental sustainability. It refers to the policies, practices and systems that make employees of the organization green for the benefit of the individual, society, natural environment, and the business" (Opatha, 2013; Opatha and Anton Arulrajah, 2014). Hence Green HRM involves two vital elements: environmentally friendly HR practices and the preservation of knowledge capital.

GREEN HRM PRACTICES GREEN RECRUITMENT

This means recruiting people who have an understanding & knowledge about environmentally friendly practices and who have competencies to apply such green behaviour at workplace. On the other hand, organisation can create an image of 'Green employer brand' in order to attract the right candidate with the same bend of mind. Bombiak and Marciniuk-Kluska convincingly discuss that companies should pay attention to the selection of the candidates who would display eco-friendly behaviour. They further discuss that such a practice can make the company a green employer which would in turn lead to the

acquisition of talented individuals. Some of the practices that can be followed under this head:

- To design job description & job specification in such a way that includes green competencies and green behaviour while performing various tasks.
- To hire individuals who are committed to embrace such eco-friendly practices.
- To include some certifications related to environmental management and its incorporation at business level in the job specification which will help organisation to get people who have a basic idea about eco-friendly practices.
- To ask some questions based Environmental management at workplace in the interview round.
- In the evaluation process includes green score for each candidate apart from other criteria while selection a candidate.
- Go paperless while posting recruitment ads, inviting, offering the job.

Pavitra Mishra (2017) identified two parts of Green recruitment and selection: (1) Employing eco-friendly ways of hiring such as online tools, limited paper usage at the time of recruitment and selection.

(2) Measuring green attitudes at the time of selection, considering people who value green practices and follow basic environment-friendly activities such as recycling, less printing, and conservation of energy.

GREEN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management is a motivational approach to enhance employees' technical skills that help in achieving company goals. Thus, performance appraisal can include sustainability objectives measured with specific metrics to set up a greener

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company. Opatha & Arulrajah(2014) advocates the evaluation of employees" job performance according to green-related criteria and inclusion of a separate component for progress on greening in the performance feedback interview. Green performance appraisal may be significant because when a behaviour is measured to judge an individual, its perceived value rises and efforts to comply with the same are increased. This will direct their efforts in the fulfilment of goals with complete adherence to environmental management policy of the organization. Thus, including green behaviours in the performance appraisal system will facilitate their adoption among employees.

- Setting Green performance standards to be achieved and to be evaluated.
- Performance appraisal includes separate field for environmentally friendly behaviours and green scores related with it.

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE WORKPLACE

Organisations like Tata Group of Companies have installed corporate-wide environmental performance standards to measure environmental performance standards, and developing green information systems and audits to get beneficial data on managerial environmental performance (Mandip, 2012).

GREEN COMPENSATION AND REWARDS

Mandip (2012) states that attainment of specific sustainable initiatives should be incorporated into the compensation system by offering employees a benefits package that rewards employees for changing behaviours. A variable pay

element can be added to the compensation system by linking the pay to eco-performance. Opatha and Arulrajah (2014) advocate for giving financial as well as non-financial rewards to employees for their good green performance. Renwick et al. discuss that companies utilizing environmental rewards enhance employees' willingness to exhibit eco-friendly behaviours.

GREEN TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Training & Development helps to develop required skillset, attitude and desired behaviour within an individual. Incorporating Green Practices at this level will help to align the employees to exhibit green behaviours and skills in day-to-day operations which in turn will have great long term impact. Green training and development educate employees about the value of EM, train them in working methods that conserve energy, reduce waste, diffuse environmental awareness within the organization, and provide opportunity to engage employees in environmental problem-solving (Zoogah, 2011). Green training and development educate employees about the value of Environment Management, train them in working methods that conserve energy, reduce waste, diffuse environmental awareness within the organization, and provide opportunity to engage employees in environmental problem-solving. Ramus (2002) in a survey of managers, on best management practices concluded that environmental training and education, along with establishing a favorable environmental culture for the employees where they feel that they are the part of environmental outcomes, were the most important HRM processes that facilitate

the achievement of environmental goals. Green orientation programs for the newly hired employees should be an integral part of the training and development process (Mandip, 2012). In Germany, all employees at Siemens receive some environmental training, with a focus on those involved with the treatment of hazardous waste/dangerous substances and interested specialists. Such training is an element of the in-house training program taking at least one day during working hours and has produced 5,000 suggestions a year from plant employee on environmental protection (North & Daig, 1996). All this will result in reducing wastage, proper utilization of resources and conservation of energy. In short, Green Training & Development must be included at all levels within the organisation Top, middle & low level. This will lead developing green managers who have sustainability approach in all business operations which in turn will create green teams and these will lead to green department and in turn a whole green organisation who are fully committed to fulfil their objectives with special emphasis on Environmental Management practices.

GREEN EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Employee relation refers to peaceful and friendly employee employer relations. In order to achieve this status quo employee are involved in Decision making process, goal setting and regular feedbacks are taken as they are in the shoes wherein they can give relevant feedback and help organisation improve their performance & productivity. Green employee involvement is defined as "Creating an environment in which people have an impact on decisions and actions that affect their jobs"

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(Quagraine, 2015). Employee participation in green initiatives increases the chances of better green management as it aligns employees' goals, capabilities, motivations, and perceptions with green management practices and systems. Involving employees in EM has been reported as improving EM systems such as efficient resource usage (Florida & Davison, 2001); reducing waste (May & Flannery, 1995); and reducing pollution from workplaces (Kitazawa & Sarkis, 2000). Involvement of employee leads to more responsible motivated workforce in implementing green goals and achieving them. Employers also plays a major role in fulfilling their green commitments by creating an open environment for green ideas and feedback and incorporating eco-friendly behaviours at each level and within each function of the organisation.

GREEN HR INITIATIVES

- Creating green building, which involves use of such a building material that puts less pressure on non-renewable resources and in turn will entail low building cost.
- Conservation of Energy- Conservation of energy in the office has the potential for a great environmental impact. It includes use of renewable sources of energy like wind solar etc. for energy production. The HR department at the UK arm of Sky has started a campaign where the employees are asked to turn off PCs, TVs, and lights when leaving, to use 100% renewable energy, and introduced solar lighting (Davies & Smith, 2007). In addition, HR systems such as e-HR are seen to be able to help management and employees track their own carbon emissions (Beechinor, 2007). Organizations are also promoting the extensive use of energy star rated light bulbs and fixtures which undoubtedly consumes at least two-thirds less energy than regular ones.
- Recycling and Waste disposal-The business organisation are using 3 R's-Reduce, Recycle and Reuse. Organization is involving in the use recycle waste and reducing the necessity of using fresh raw material. HCL's E-Waste Management Initiatives HCL has adopted diverse initiatives to reduce operational impact on the environment. These include various energy saving initiatives at their offices, IT infrastructure, efficiency improvement, environmental practices at manufacturing plants and green products and services for customers. HCL has also started the "Green Bag Campaign". Under this campaign various collection centres spread across India. At these collection centres HCL is collecting e waste from customers and clients. In all its user meets, HCL shares the e-waste management details with its customers. Internal Waste Management at HCL Eco-Safe Programme emphasis on reuse and recycling internal waste - 'Internal Waste Management'. The internal waste management system focuses on recovery, reuse and recycling of waste generated from within the organization. All by-products generated during manufacturing are recycled by authorized recyclers in an environmentally friendly manner and all WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronics Equipment) generated in the organization is forwarded to these recyclers for disposal.

MODELS OF GREEN HRM



Figure 1 Model of Green HRM

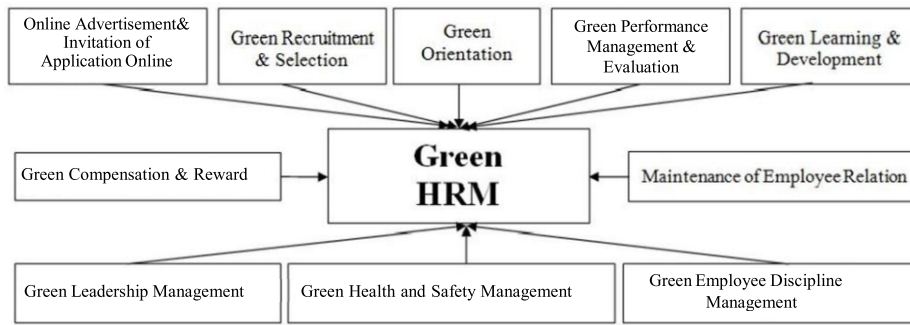
Source: Sharma & Gupta (2015)

As per this model given by Sharma & Gupta all the Human resource management functions has an impact on Employees green behaviors. In order to practice GHRM within the organization its important to incorporate green environment practices within each sub function and implementation of the same will require desired green behaviors from employees.

- To design job description & job specification in such a way that includes green competencies and green behaviour while performing various tasks.
- To hire individuals who are committed to embrace such eco-friendly practices.
- To include some certifications related to environmental management and its incorporation at business level in the job specification which will help organisation to get people who have a basic idea about eco-friendly practices.
- To ask some questions based Environmental management at workplace in the interview round.
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Source: (Hosain & Rahman, 2016)

The following model was proposed by Hosain and Rahman in 2016. In this model he explained the 10 function of HR that contribute to the fulfillment of objective of green HRM. When these functions independently focus on green practices like online invitation of candidate through online advertisements, green recruitment and selection, green orientation and communicating green outcomes expected and in turn evaluation of performance on these green standards, developing green learning & development, green employee relations, green discipline management, green health & safety management, green leadership management & attractive green compensation & rewards system that will in turn contribute to Green HRM practices within the organization.

ISSUES & CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING GREEN HRM

- 1) Lack of commitment and motivation from Top management to implement GHRM.
 - 2) Lack of awareness among people on the importance of green environmental management systems within the organization.
 - 3) Difficulty in finding green competencies in the prospective employees.
 - 4) HR Professionals are unable to incorporate relevant green performance dimensions within the performance Management System of the organization.
 - 5) Green Performance based Rewards are not lucrative and motivating to stimulate employees to exhibit such behaviors.
 - 6) Organizations feel implementation of green building and instruments etc. will entail an extra and huge cost to them.
 - 7) Suitable Metrics to measure green behavior & Performance is lacking.
 - 8) Government Support & Initiatives to encourage green practices is not very encouraging and needs to be in the form of mandatory compliance.
 - 9) There is lot of cost and investment involved in creation of Green Brand Employer image and their return is very uncertain.
- It is difficult to load each employee with enthusiasm and passion to contribute to GHRM practices within organization.

CONCLUSION

GHRM is an emerging concept. It has immense potential in greening organization & their operations. This study aims to explore concept, practices, models & challenges of GHRM. It explains the various practices of GHRM, how the green variable is blended in each HRM function. These may range from green recruitment and selection where focus is on attracting and selecting Green employees, creating green ads. Etc., Green performance management system where performance

standards are set in line with green objectives of organization and percolating the same at each level in the form of expectation. The final performance is assessed based on the same. Reward and compensation are linked to Green Performance. Green Training & Development helps in inculcating green behaviour, green skill, knowledge of eco-friendly practices & green attitude in the employees and various GHRM initiatives are discussed that can help in protecting of environment and reduce wastage of resources and in turn will reduce carbon footprint.

It explains the two models of GHRM which explain how greening various wings of HRM may lead to implementation of GHRM at organization level and how can we extract desired green behavior from employees. It also discussed the various challenges & issues in implementation of GHRM which points towards achieving Environmental Management at organization through commitment from top management, government initiative to create sustainable organization and offering perks & benefits for best eco initiative or eco practices by business unit, developing eco-friendly behaviour in earlier stages by introducing environment management subjects at secondary, Graduate & Post graduate level irrespective of stream. Developing proper dimensions & metrics to test and measure green behavior and performance etc. However, it is clear from the study that incorporation of Environmental Management practices in framing HR policies & strategies will not only lead to greening the HRM function but will also lead to greener organization as a whole.

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