

A STUDY ON AWARENESS OF GREEN HRM PRACTICES AMONG EDUCATORS

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ABSTRACT

When the businesses across the world are suffering from the impact of climate change and designing ways and means to combat the same, it's necessary to understand that actions and behaviours to achieve sustainability should be wholesome and across the organization. Human Resource department is in the centre to encourage employees in eco-friendly behaviours and aligning organizational activities and practices accordingly. The practice of incorporating sustainability into HR functions through various actions such as reducing paper usage, promoting usage of energy efficient equipments, alluring environment conscious stakeholders etc, is referred to as Green HRM or Green Human Resource Management. The current study aimed at exploring the concept of Green HRM and its awareness among people. The study used qualitative analysis tool to enquire about awareness of various aspects of Green HRM among educators working in education institutes of the city of Bhopal, MP. This was achieved through primary data collection and analysis with the help of a structured questionnaire. The study also used secondary data collected through various journals, articles and reports available on different websites. The study concluded that respondents are aware of the Green HRM practices and feel motivated to participate in Green HRM practices out of environmental concern and their own personal interest. The study recommended designing and implementing appropriate rewards for motivating employees to participate in green HRM practices.

Keywords: Green HRM, sustainability, awareness, environmental, HR practices

INTRODUCTION

When the businesses across the world are suffering from the impact of climate change and designing ways and means to combat the same, it's necessary to understand that actions and behaviours to achieve sustainability should be wholesome and across the organization. Human Resource department is in the centre to encourage employees in eco-friendly behaviours and aligning organizational activities and practices accordingly. The practice of incorporating sustainability into HR functions through various measures like reducing paper usage, encouraging use of energy saving equipments, attracting environment conscious stakeholders etc, is referred to as Green HRM or Green Human Resource Management.

With increasing concern about environment and sustainability corporations are becoming more vigilant of the environmental impact of their operations. Many organizations are adopting resource-efficient techniques that minimize negative effects on the environment like making procedures paper free, increased digitization of documentation and so on. These initiatives not only promote environmental sustainability but also enhance operational efficiency. Organizations are incorporating green recruitment and selection practices and now prioritizing the hiring of professionals who are nature-minded and committed to sustainability (Salim, Gogoi & Dutta, 2022). Green HRM practices includes Green recruitment which refers to hiring people with environment-related knowledge, skills, and behaviours (Ahmad, 2015); and Green training is defined as the process of improving the environmental knowledge, skills, and attitudes of employees to achieve the organisation's environmental goals (Thevanes and Arulrajah, 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sharma, Sakhuja & Nijjer (2022) studied 317 research articles published on the topic of green HRM and explored recent trends in green HRM.

Rizvi & Garg (2021) in their study utilized both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain in-depth insights into sustainable HR practices. The research explored various green initiatives adopted by organizations and their impact on overall performance and management. Additionally, it examined the relationship between HR strategies and the long-term sustainability of the organizational environment. By integrating environmentally responsible HR policies, businesses can enhance their ecological footprint while improving efficiency and employee engagement.

Shafaei, Nejati & Yusoff (2020) have a study on the outcomes of the green HRM on the employees' welfare and employee productivity. The study has found that green HRM has a positive impact on employee job satisfaction.

Majeed & Khan (2019) reviewed literatures and addressed the need of green HRM. It emphasized various sustainable HR practices adopted by organizations and provided recommendations for implementing these practices on a larger scale. The research also explored strategies for integrating environmental management with human resource management, enabling companies to gain a competitive edge in the corporate landscape. By aligning HR policies with sustainability goals, businesses can enhance their environmental responsibility while driving long-term organizational success.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the study is to explore the concept of Green HRM practices and its awareness among people.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection: The study is descriptive and involves qualitative analysis based on primary data. The data was collected through structured questionnaire circulated among educators that is people belonging to education sector in the city of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The study also used secondary data collected from research papers, articles and reports available on various websites.

Sample and Sampling technique: A structured questionnaire was circulated among 30 respondents using convenience sampling method. The respondents are majorly employed in the higher education organizations of Bhopal city.

Limitations of the study: The study is subject to responses by people working in education sector within the limits of Bhopal city only, so generalisation of the results over all educators may not be possible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study revealed various green HRM practices adopted by various corporate using secondary data analysis of existing literature. The purpose of Green HRM practices is to integrate eco-operational initiatives into various human resource functions to minimize the

environmental footprint of HR practices and foster a sustainability-driven culture. This includes incorporating green principles into recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement programs. By embedding sustainability into HR processes, businesses can reduce their ecological impact while promoting a culture where environmental responsibility becomes a core organizational value. While reviewing the existing literature, the study uncovered various Green HRM practices as follows:

(I) Green HRM Practices:

- **Greening the Recruitment and Selection processes:** Organizations should prioritize hiring employees who are environment conscious and zealous for eco-friendly practices. This involves integrating ecological standards into job descriptions and selection processes to ensure alignment with the company's green initiatives and objectives.
- **Sustainability Focused Training and Development:** Providing environmental management training and sustainability-focused programs helps employees imbibe necessary skills to contribute to the company's eco-friendly initiatives. This nurtures a workforce that actively supports green practices.
- **Green Performance Management:** Performance appraisals should incorporate nature friendly performance metrics, encouraging employees to integrate sustainable practices into their routine work. Recognizing and rewarding eco-conscious efforts build up a culture of sustainability.
- **Environmental Compensation and Benefits:** Offering incentives for sustainable behaviour can motivate employees to adopt eco-friendly actions. These incentives may include bonuses, recognition programs, flexible work alternatives, or other eco-friendly rewards.
- **Green Employee Relations:** Building a green workplace culture involves actively engaging employees in eco-friendly activities such as reprocessing programs, energy conservation measures, and carpooling/vehicle pooling incentives. Encouraging sustainable behaviours reinforces the organization's commitment to environmental responsibility.

(II) Data Analysis: Responses received from people belonging to education sector are tabulated as follows:

Table#01 Summarized Responses on Awareness about Green HRM Practices

Q. No.	Particulars	Responses
Q1	Gender of Respondents	Male: 12 % Female: 88%
Q2	Current Status [Employed, Self-employed (professional), Business owner / partner]	Employed: 100 %
Q3	To which sector does your organization belong?	Education Sector: 100%
Q4	Nature of your organization	Private: 76% Govt/ Public: 24%
Q5	Are you aware of the concept of Green HRM?	Yes: 100 %
Q6	Does your organization actively implement Green HRM practices	Yes: 71% Not sure: 29%
Q7	Which Green HRM practices are followed in your organization?	Green Recruitment: 35% Green Training: 29% Green Performance Management:47% Green Workplace Initiatives: 71% Green Commuting Incentives:35% Employee Engagement in Sustainability Projects:18% Rewarding Green Initiatives:6%
Q8	Which of the following sustainable HR practices do you follow in daily activities?	Video conferencing instead of travel: 47% Telecommuting/Remote work:29% Flexible work hours: 18% Using company-provided transport:12% Using rainwater harvesting systems: 35% Using solar or energy-efficient equipment:65% The College building well designed with proper ventilated class rooms and natural light:41%
Q9	Does your organization provide rewards/incentives for adopting Green	Yes, financial rewards: 6% Yes, non-financial recognition (certificates,

	HRM practices?	appreciation, etc.): 24% No, but planning to implement: 35% No, not interested: 35%
Q10	What is the biggest challenge in implementing Green HRM in your organization?	High cost of implementation:33% Lack of awareness among employees: 33% Resistance from employees: 6% Lack of management support: 11% Difficulty in adopting green technology: 17%
Q11	How do you rate your organization's commitment to sustainability and Green HRM?	Excellent: 0 Good: 61% Average: 39% Poor: 0 No initiatives at all: 0
Q12	Which of the following do you think has the greatest impact on making an organization environmentally friendly?	Strong sustainability policies:11% Employee engagement in eco-friendly activities: 17% Green hiring & training programs: 0 Use of green technologies in the workplace: 44% Government regulations and legal compliance: 28%
Q13	Do you believe, green HRM practices contributed towards improving brand or image of your organization	Strongly agree: 44% Agree: 45% Neutral:11% Disagree: 0 Strongly disagree:0
Q14	What motivates you the most to participate in Green HRM initiatives?	Environmental concern: 50% Organizational rewards and incentives: 0 Company policies/mandates: 0 Influence from colleagues or leaders:6% Personal interest in sustainability: 44%
Q15	What additional Green HRM practices would you like to see in your organization?	• Promoting employee to reuse the paper • Raising workers' environmental consciousness, and preparing them to spot environmental issues and implement solutions • Paperless work culture • Management Engagement and Commitment • Workshops and seminars for students.
Q16	Any additional suggestions or feedback regarding Green HRM initiatives	• Government should make strong policies to aware organizations to make it in regular practice • There should be some legal reforms to govern green HRM practices

		• Rain water harvesting and sharing of transport system or use of public transport system • Paper less working environment • Creating more awareness through social media
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Table#01 summarizes the question asked and responses of the respondents most of whom were females and employed in the higher education institutions of Bhopal city. As it is evident from table that majority of respondents were from private sector organisations (76%). Around 71% of the respondents said that their organizations actively implement Green HRM practices whereas 29% were not sure about it. Adopting Green Workplace initiatives was the most followed green HRM practice in the respondents' organizations (71%) whereas Rewarding Green Initiatives was the least followed practice (6%). Usage of Solar or energy efficient equipments was the most common daily activity done by the respondents as green HRM practice whereas using company-provided transport was the least followed daily green practice. As regards Rewarding the Green Initiatives by the employees, only 6% said they get financial rewards but 24% said that they used to get non financial rewards in the form of appreciation. At the same time, majority of the organizations, 35%, were either planning to implement the practice of rewarding the green initiatives or not interested at all in such initiatives. According to 33% respondents, the biggest challenge in implementing green HRM practices is High cost of implementation and 33% respondents felt that Lack of awareness among employees is the biggest challenge. Resistance from employees was the least ranked challenge (6%). According to 61% respondents, they feel that the Commitment of their organization towards Sustainability & Green HRM is ranked as Good, whereas 39% felt that the commitment stands at Average level. Use of green technologies in the workplace has the greatest impact on making an organization environmentally friendly, according to 44% respondents, followed by Government regulations and legal compliance (28%). And Green hiring & training programs has no impact on making an organization environmentally friendly as none of the respondents felt so. Around 89% respondents agree that green HRM practices contributed towards improving brand or image of their organization whereas 11% respondents were neutral about this. The concern for environment is the main motivation for the 50% respondents to participate in Green HRM initiatives; 44% respondents participate out of personal interest in sustainability.

Findings: The major findings of the study are:

- All of the respondent-educators were aware about Green HRM practices.
- Lack of awareness and high cost of implementations are the major challenges in implementing Green HRM practices.
- Green HRM practices contribute towards improving brand or image of the organization.
- The concern for environment is the main motivation to participate in Green HRM initiatives.

(III) Challenges in adopting Green HRM

The study revealed following major challenges in implementing Green HRM practices:

- High cost of implementing Green HRM activities: Embracing green HRM practices often requires substantial financial investment in developing eco-friendly infrastructure, conducting sustainability training programs, and technology upgrades. This can be a major hurdle for organizations, especially small and medium enterprises.
- Obliviousness among employees: Many employees may not comprehend the importance of sustainability in HR practices. Without proper training and awareness programs, they may fail to engage with or support green initiatives.
- Dissonance from employees: Employees may be reluctant to change their modus operandi and adopt new eco-friendly practices. Overcoming this resistance to change requires effective communication, training, and incentives.
- Lack of commitment from management: If top management does not prioritize or actively support Green HRM, implementation efforts may face obstacles. Strong leadership commitment is essential for driving sustainability-focused HR policies.
- Difficulty in adopting green technology: Transitioning to green technologies, such as digital HR systems, sustainable workspaces, and paper free processes, can be complex. Many organizations struggle with integration challenges, high costs, and a lack of expertise in implementing these technologies.

(IV) Suggestions

To strengthen Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM), organizations should integrate environmental considerations into their HR practices. Job descriptions should explicitly define eco-focused roles, including responsibilities related to environmental

management, health and safety, and sustainability initiatives. Additionally, the interview process should be customized to assess candidates' alignment with the company's sustainability objectives. A well-structured induction program should also be implemented to familiarize new employees with the organization's green policies and sustainability goals. These measures will ensure that employees are well-equipped and committed to creating an environmentally responsible workplace culture. The organizations should design and implement appropriate rewards for motivating employees to participate in green HRM practices. The government should introduce strict policies and incentives to encourage organizations to embrace Green HRM as a regular practice. The measures like tax benefits, grants, or recognition programs for the companies who implement sustainable HR initiatives may become useful in encouraging sustainability. Enforcing legal frameworks that mandate sustainable HR practices can drive compliance and accountability. Regulations should focus on eco-friendly recruitment, waste reduction, and energy-efficient workplace operations. Employees should be encouraged to carpool, use public transport, or adopt shared transport systems for significantly reducing carbon footprints. Leveraging social media campaigns can help spread awareness about Green HRM practices.

CONCLUSION

Amidst increasing environmental concerns, organizations are now adopting Green HRM as a key strategic element in achieving long-term sustainability and operational efficiency. It includes Green recruitment and selection wherein organizations emphasize recruiting employees who are passionate about sustainability, Green training programs for equipping employees with the necessary skills to contribute to the organization's eco-friendly initiatives, Green performance management in which environment performance metrics are incorporated with performance appraisals to encourage employees to adopt sustainable practices in their daily activities such as minimizing paper consumption, digital documentation, use of energy saving equipments, carpooling etc. Implementing Green HRM practices benefits both the organization and the environment, fostering a sustainable corporate culture while ensuring long-term ecological and business success.

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