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Green Human Resource Management an Innovative Tool for Organizational Sustainability

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Abstract

Sustainable Development has become an inevitable part of organizations not only for its survival but also for gaining the competitive edge. Employees are responsible for achieving sustainability goals of the organization. Hence, embedding Sustainability in the functional area of Human Resource Management is very important as it deals with the people management. Considering the growing awareness on greening and sustainability, a systematic review of the domain specific literature was carried out to identify the influence of green HRM practices on organizational sustainability. This work examines the green human resource management practices which helps the organizations in envisioning its sustainable development.

Keywords: Green HR Practices, Sustainable HRM, Green HRM, Organizational sustainability, Sustainable Development.

1. Introduction

Sustainable Development is very vital for business organizations to gain competitive edge. Organization success is not only measured in terms of its financial health, but also in terms of social as well as environmental health. Organizations are adopting various measures to reduce the negative impact of its business operations on environment. Green HRM can help the organizations to achieve its sustainability goals as it deals with people management who are responsible for achieving the goals of the organization.

Sustainability

From Hard HRM Model to Sustainable HRM Model.

There is a need for the organizations to attain its development through sustainable practices which gives them a competitive edge over their competitors. Thus, it becomes important for the organizations to adopt Sustainable HRM systems. Sustainable HRM systems provide support to business organizations in achieving their corporate sustainability objectives (Ehnert, Harry, & Zink, 2014) as these systems deals with people of organization who are responsible for achieving the corporate goals.

Cambridge Business English Dictionary defines Hard Human Resources Management as an employee management system in which workers are considered a resource that needs to be controlled in order to achieve the best possible profit and competitive advantage.

The features of Hard HRM are Regular changes in employee numbers, Little business transparency, Lower wages, little to no empowerment of employees and Appraisal systems that focus on good and bad

performance.

Cambridge Business English Dictionary defines Soft Human Resources management as an employee management system in which workers are considered an important resource for a company's growth, they are looked after, and their skills are developed.

The features of Soft HRM are long-term planning for its workforce, more business transparency, Competitive pay, relying on salary benchmarking and bonus packages, Employee empowerment, Appraisal systems that identify training opportunities and professional development.

Sustainable HRM

Ehnert et al. defines Sustainable HRM as “the adoption of HRM strategies and practices that enable the achievement of financial, social and ecological goals, with an impact inside and outside of the organisation and over a long-term time horizon while controlling for unintended side effects and negative feedback.”

The features of Sustainable HRM are long-term orientation, care of employees, care of environment, profitability, employee development, employee co-operation, fairness and equality.

Table1 given below distinguishes between Hard HRM, Soft HRM and Sustainable HRM Models. Table2 given below shows type1 and type2 sustainable Development.

HARD HRM	SOFT HRM	SUSTAINABLE HRM
Hard HRM model focuses on tight strategic control and defines HRM's contribution in terms of the economic performance of the firm.	Aims to enhance performance of the firm through a policy of high-involvement relationship management (e.g., reward systems, work-systems) in which behaviour is often self-regulated and based on a culture of trust and cooperation.	Helping “employees meet the expectations of role partners within the organization (i.e., supervisors, peers, subordinates),at organizational boundaries (i.e., customers and clients), and beyond (i.e., family and society)”
This one-dimensional purpose emphasizes the need to apply “best practices” in selection, appraisal, rewards, and HR development to increase shareholder value which is treated as the only purpose of the organization.	The HRM purpose is two-dimensional and incorporate wider, long-term consequences “individual well-being, organizational effectiveness, societal well-being”.	Natural resources and social capital are seen as valuable assets on a par with economic capital. Protection to these resources can be achieved through “HR-management practices that take the development of social, environmental and human capital into account”.
Broader societal or environmental stakeholder concerns are not considered.	However, broader global societal factors and ecological challenges were not yet recognized as important to HRM.	success is redefined in more sustainable terms of Triple Bottom Line and not just financial criteria.

Table 1: HRM Models (Source: Adapted from Ehnert, Matthews, Camen 2020)

Type 1 – Socially Responsible HRM	Type 2 – Green HRM
Socially responsible HR behaviour, practices, strategies, and culture, e.g., health and well-being initiatives.	Green HR behaviour, practices, strategies, and culture, e.g. Green recruitment, Green awareness training, Green rewards.

Table 2: Sustainable HRM Types (Source: Adapted from Ehnert, Matthews, Camen 2020)

Green HRM

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), is defined as ‘HRM activities which enhance positive environmental outcomes’. GHRM Practices involves all activities right from staff entering into the firm till exiting the work organizations. It was developed to influence and improve employees’ ecological awareness and behaviour and ultimately to both reduce an organization’s carbon footprint and contribute to its green credentials. As per Renwick et al., A key objective of it is to consider the environmental dimension in HRM by integrating environmental sustainability in existing HR functions. For example, green HRM practices such as green hiring, green training, and green compensation have been shown to have a significant impact on sustainable success.

According to Nejati et al., “Green HRM equips organisations with environmentally conscious, committed and competent employees which can help the organisation to minimize its carbon footprints through the efficient and effective use of existing resources, including telecommunication tools, less printing of papers, job sharing, and video conferencing”

As per Zaid et al. 2018, “GHRM bundle can be considered as a cohesive set of human resource practices, which has consequences for the performance of manufacturing firms through: green hiring, green training and involvement, green performance management and compensation”.

As per Tang et al. 2018. “Greening the human resources involves a set of policies and practices for protecting the environment such as green recruitment and selection, green training, green performance management, green pay and rewards, green involvement”.

As per Amrutha et al. 2019, from 2006 to 2015, the need for an environmental revolution in business was experienced in all functional areas like production, finance, operations, marketing, systems, and human resources. As a result, concepts like sustainability, corporate social responsibility, sustainable human resource management, and green human resource management gradually gained importance. They empirically proved the impact of GHRM practices on economic side of sustainability, suggesting that, increased concern for green imperatives and GHRM contribute to economic sustainability of organisations reflecting in higher levels of income, wealth, profit and better pay scale to employees. It was further explored that, GHRM practices are positively related to employee green behaviour and citizenship behaviour contributing to the multi-dimensional view of organisational sustainability and identified Green Employee Acquisition, Green Employee Training, Green Employee Appraisal, Green Employee Rewards, Green Employee Involvement as Green HRM Practices.

Green HRM Practices:

- Green Recruitment & Selection
 - Drawing candidates competent in ecology.
 - Approach to the process of recruitment, i.e., through limiting the use of paper throughout the process.

- Green Performance Management & appraisal
 - Including Green goals in performance appraisal.
- Green Training & Development
 - Training programme that impart environmental knowledge.
 - Training in waste reduction, environmental protection, renewable energy, and energy saving.
- Green Employment Involvement
 - Involving employees in ecological decision making.
- Green Compensation
 - Linking bonuses with the achievement of environmental goals.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the relationship between Green HRM and Organizational Sustainability.
2. To identify dominant Green HRM Practices for Organizational Sustainability.
3. To Evolve conceptual Green HRM Model for organizational Sustainability

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on secondary data. Archival method is used for a systematic literature review and literature related to the topic was collected from research articles from various journals, e-journal databases and other websites. A systematic review of collected literature was done in detail.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Jing Yi Yong et al. (2019): In their study titled “Pathways towards sustainability in manufacturing organizations: Empirical evidence on the role of green human resource management”, conducted on manufacturing companies in Malaysia, revealed that green recruitment and green training have positive effects on sustainability.

Wikhamn (2019): “GHRM is the adoption of HRM strategies and practices that enable the achievement of financial, social and ecological goals, with an impact inside and outside of the organisation and over a long-term time horizon while controlling for unintended side effects and negative feedback”.

Edyta Bombiak, Anna Marciniuk-Kluska (2018): Green Motivation, Green Job Design and Analysis, The shaping of green discipline at work, Green HRM procedures, Green Motivation, Green Recruitment, Green Performance Evaluation, Green Training and Development were the Green HR Practices which had the positive impact on sustainable development across the organization.

Tariq S, Jan F.A, Ahmad M. S (2016): Green empowerment involves encouraging staff to take ecological decisions as well as empowering them to take responsibility for their actions which translates into cost awareness, a sense of belonging to the same community, better performance, and improved relations between team members.

Sheopuri and Sheopuri (2015): found that Green HR initiatives help companies to find alternative ways

to cut the cost without losing their top talent; part time work, etc.

Renwick D.W., Redman T., Maguire S (2013): Policies and practices in the field of human resource management like recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, pay, compensation, rewards, and employee relations have become a powerful tool for aligning employees to organisational environmental strategies leading to long term sustainable performance. The inclusion of environmental management goals into the performance appraisal system is necessary, for it ensures regular feedback on employee progress in their attainment.

Vij P et al. (2013): Increased Savings, Improved Social Image and Greater focus on CSR is found in the Companies with Green Human Resource Management Systems compared to companies with Established HRM systems without Green Practices.

Zoogah D (2011): One more integral element of Green HRM implementation is environmental protection, renewable energy, waste reduction and energy saving training. Such training allows employees to gain ecological knowledge and raise environmental awareness.

Phillips L. (2007): Effective tools consist of awards and compensation for promoting environmental actions across organizations. Through the inclusion of elements of green management within the remuneration programme, managers may promote green attitudes amongst employees. Other non-financial incentives include, amongst other things, praise, diplomas of merit for the most active members, and grants for environmental projects.

Florida R., Davison D. Gainin (2001): Creation of a participative working environment, in which employees can freely present their ecological ideas contribute to more efficient resource use. Employee participation results in the enhanced effectiveness of environmental management systems, limited wasteful practice and reduced contamination.

4. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Literature review clearly explored that Green HRM is an essential and innovative tool for attaining organizational Sustainable Development.

As per Wikhamn and Bombiak et al., Green HR Practices like Green Motivation, Green Recruitment, Green Performance Evaluation, Green Training and Development has positive impact on organizational sustainable Development.

As per Sheopuri et al., Green HR initiatives help companies to find alternative ways to cut the cost without losing their top talent and gain competitive edge over other companies through organizational sustainability, As per Renwick, green recruitment& selection, green training, green appraisal, green compensation, green rewards, and green employee involvements results in organizational long-term sustainable performance.

Literature review further revealed that Green practices like Green Recruitment and selection, Green Training, Green Performance Appraisal, Green Compensation and Rearwards, Green Employee involvement results in Economic Sustainability, Social Sustainability and Environmental sustainability which are integral part of Organizational sustainability. From this, we can evolve the following Conceptual

Green HRM Model for organizational sustainability as shown in fig.1.

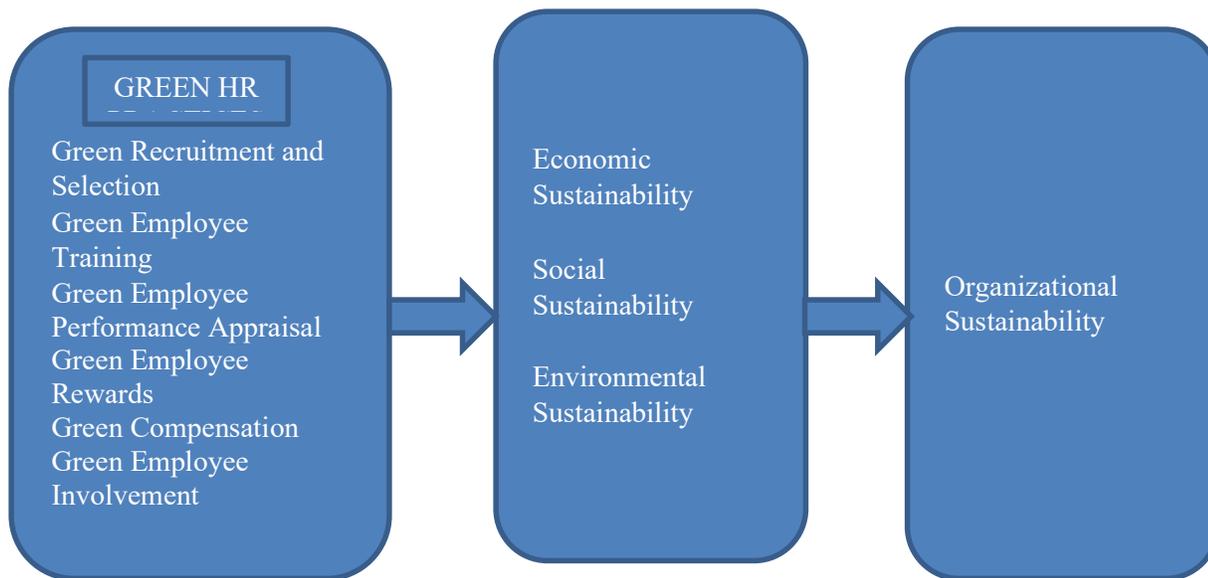


Fig1: Green HRM Model for Organizational Sustainability.

To conclude, Green Human Resource Management has positive relationship with organizational sustainable development. Dominant Green HR Practices for organizational sustainability are Green Recruitment and selection, Green Training, Green Performance Appraisal, Green Compensation and Rearwards, and Green Employee involvement. Organizations thus, can give importance to Green HRM to attain sustainable Development.

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