

Green Hrm: Enhancing Organizational Sustainability through Employee Engagement and Eco-Friendly Practices

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ABSTRACT

The term "Green Human Resource Management" (Green HRM) predominantly signifies the pivotal role of HRM policies and practices in advancing the broader corporate environmental agenda. It encompasses leveraging every employee as a proponent of sustainable practices while concurrently fostering heightened awareness and commitment to sustainability. Green HRM is operationally defined as the implementation of environmentally friendly HR initiatives that culminate in heightened organizational efficiency, reduced costs, and elevated levels of employee engagement. This paradigm embraces various green activities, such as video recruitment, online and video interviews, electronic reporting, car sharing, job sharing, teleconferencing, virtual interviews, recycling programs, remote work policies, online training, and the optimization of energy-efficient office spaces. The adoption of Green HR initiatives not only facilitates cost reduction but also contributes to the retention of top talent within organizations. Positioning Green HRM as a strategic initiative underscores its role in promoting sustainable business practices. The cultivation of a green culture is posited as a powerful influence on employee behavior, instilling values that contribute to the development of an internal culture aligned with environmental stewardship. It is posited that such environmentally conscious behavior is instrumental in establishing a culture of Green Human Resource Management and the adoption of formal environmental strategies. The integration of Green HR practices into HR processes, including recruitment, training, and compensation, is emphasized as a key element in realizing the full potential of Green HRM. This study captures the perceptions of 120 HR Managers from Pune regarding the benefits and efficacy of Green HRM, providing insights into its transformative impact on organizational sustainability.

Keywords: Green HRM, Organizational Sustainability, Employee Engagement, Eco-Friendly Practices.

A. Introduction

In the contemporary landscape of business, the paradigm of Human Resource Management (HRM) has undergone a profound transformation, ushering in an era marked by a heightened awareness of

environmental responsibility and sustainability. This metamorphosis is encapsulated in the concept of Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM), an innovative approach that integrates environmentally friendly HR

initiatives into organizational practices. Green HRM represents a strategic commitment by organizations to not only enhance operational efficiency and reduce costs but also to actively engage employees in fostering a sustainable workplace culture.

At its core, Green HRM entails a comprehensive set of practices aimed at minimizing the carbon footprint of an organization through astute utilization of resources. These practices encompass electronic reporting, car sharing, job sharing, teleconferencing, virtual interviews, recycling, remote work options, online recruitment and training, and the creation of energy-efficient office spaces. The holistic integration of these initiatives serves as a testament to the multifaceted benefits that Green HRM brings to the organizational forefront—efficiency gains, cost reductions, heightened employee engagement, and enhanced retention rates.

In the broader industrial context, Green HRM assumes a pivotal role in championing environmental concerns and

instigating positive change. Organizations embracing Green HRM principles not only craft and implement HR policies that underscore environmental consciousness but also undertake the crucial task of educating and training their workforce to elevate environmental awareness. Moreover, Green HRM aligns with and actively contributes to legal frameworks and regulations pertaining to environmental protection.

A critical facet of Green HRM is its impact on the brand image and reputation of employers and manufacturers. Through the adoption of eco-friendly HR policies, organizations stand to build a positive brand image that resonates with the growing segment of environmentally conscious consumers. The implementation of an environmental audit becomes instrumental in reshaping organizational culture, fostering strategic thinking around waste management, pollution mitigation, and societal responsibility.

In an era where consumers increasingly seek products and services aligned with green standards,

organizations that champion environmentally friendly HR policies are positioned not only to meet consumer expectations but to excel in the marketplace. Beyond the realm of consumer satisfaction, the indirect benefits of Green HRM extend to heightened employee and stakeholder awareness regarding the judicious use of natural resources, ultimately promoting the adoption of eco-friendly products.

This introduction lays the foundation for a comprehensive exploration of the topic "Green HRM: Enhancing Organizational Sustainability Through Employee Engagement and Eco-Friendly Practices." By delving into the intricate interplay between environmentally conscious HR initiatives, organizational culture, and societal impact, this study aims to elucidate the transformative potential of Green HRM in shaping the future of sustainable business practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interest in Green HRM has increased over the past decade with recognition as one possible green management strategy for a company

that can reduce its environmental "footprint" and make business more sustainable. Since 2016, the importance of green HRM research among scholars has noticeably increased (Dumont et al., 2016; Guerci, Longoni, & Luzzini, 2016; Guerci, Montanari, Scapolan, & Epifanio, 2016; Jabbour & Renwick, 2018; Yong et al., 2019; Yusliza et al., 2017). As a result, the study of Green HRM has increased exponentially.

Growing awareness of green issues has prompted HR to adopt green HR practices with a specific focus on paperless access, carbon footprint reduction and waste management (Ahmad, 2015).

HR plays an integral role in initiating environmentally friendly activities, engaging individuals in green initiatives as well as initiating changes in existing processes (Mishra et al., 2014). Green HRM can be understood as planned and continuous organizational change (Sawang and Kivits, 2014).

It is clear that HRM has great potential with regard to sustainability (Jabbour and Santos, 2008). However, the effectiveness of the

inclusion of environmental measures in the company requires different types of contributions from organizational functions, especially from HRM (del Brio et al., 2007).

According to Cohen et al. (2012), the HR function plays a key role in creating and implementing sustainable business strategies across the organization. The HR function can assist in formulating and achieving environmental and social goals, as well as balancing those goals with traditional financial performance metrics. The HR department can also serve as a partner in formulating corporate values and sustainability strategy.

B. Research Method

To draw meaningful inferences and conclusions, a minimum sample size of 100 is recommended (Alreck and Settle, 2003). Accordingly, 120 HRM Managers from Pune were surveyed through a questionnaire containing the 10 statements speaking of advantages of Green HRM as given below:

1. Helping companies to bring down costs without losing their talent.
2. Organizations have huge growth opportunities by being green and creating a new friendly environment, which helps in enormous operational savings by reducing their carbon footprint.
3. It helps in achieving higher employee job satisfaction and commitment, which leads to higher productivity and sustainability.
4. Create a culture of having concern for the wellbeing and health of fellow workers.
5. Improvement in the retention rate of the employee.
6. Improved public image.
7. Promote employee morale.
8. Improvement in attracting better employees.
9. Reduction in the environmental impact of the company.
10. Improved competitiveness and increased overall performance.

(Source: iEdunote.com, 2022)

Likert scales were used for response options. The response options were - 0 - Can't Say, 1 - Somewhat agree, 2 - Completely

agree, 3 - Somewhat Disagree, 4 - Completely Disagree.

Responses were received from 120 HR Managers. The questionnaire was tested for reliability and it returned a Cronbach Alpha score of 0.88 and hence was considered reliable. Following hypotheses were formulated:

- Ho: There are no benefits of Green HRM practices
- Ha: There are multiple benefits of Green HRM practices

The hypothesis was tested based on the average agreement/disagreement responses to the ten statements of the questionnaire. The average agreement/disagreement response of the 120 respondents for all the ten statements was taken as the sample mean and it was compared with a hypothesized population mean of 50% agreement/disagreement connoting an event by chance and not due to any statistical significance. A t-test was applied at 95% confidence level and based on the p-value the null hypothesis was tested for rejection or non-rejection.

C. Result and Discussions

31 respondents were from the Northern region of Pune, 53 were from the Eastern region, 12 were from the Western region, and 24 were from the Southern region. 44 respondents were from the age-group of <30 years, 36 were from the age-group 30-40 years, and 40 were from the age-group of >40 years.

Table 1 gives the ten advantages of Green HRM statements and their agreement ratings by the 120 respondents:

Table 1: Agreement percentages for 10 statements

Statement	Agreement
1. Helping companies to bring down costs without losing their talent.	90%
2. Organizations have huge growth opportunities by being green and creating a new friendly environment, which helps in enormous operational savings by	91%

reducing their carbon footprint.	
3. It helps in achieving higher employee job satisfaction and commitment, which leads to higher productivity and sustainability.	86%
4. Create a culture of having concern for the wellbeing and health of fellow workers.	85%
5. Improvement in the retention rate of the employee.	91%
6. Improved public image.	89%
7. Promote employee morale.	82%
8. Improvement in attracting better employees.	88%
9. Reduction in the environmental impact of the company.	79%
10. Improved competitiveness and increased overall performance.	90%

The average agreement for the ten statements was 87% and this was compared with the hypothesized population mean of 50%. Results were as under

Table 2: Summary statistics

Parameter	Value
Sample Mean (\bar{x})	87%
Hypothesized population mean (μ)	50%
SD of sample	1.0126
n (sample size)	120
t-value= $\text{abs}((\bar{x} - \mu) / (s/\sqrt{n}))$	4.00271
p-value = $\text{tdist}(t,(n-1),1)$	0.00005
Decision	Reject Null

Thus, the null hypothesis there are no benefits of Green HRM practices was rejected in favor of the alternate there are multiple benefits of Green HRM practices.

The findings presented in Table 1 provide a comprehensive overview of the agreement percentages among 120 respondents concerning various statements related to Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) practices. The respondents, representing different regions and age groups, have expressed their views on the perceived benefits of incorporating environmentally conscious HR initiatives within organizations.

The aggregated agreement percentage for the ten statements reflects a substantial alignment of the respondents' perspectives, with an

impressive average agreement of 87%. This suggests a widespread acknowledgment and positive reception of the outlined benefits associated with Green HRM practices. The respondents' collective affirmation underscores the importance attributed to these practices in the organizational context.

Upon subjecting the sample mean to a comparative analysis with the hypothesized population mean of 50%, as detailed in Table 2, the results reveal a statistically significant difference. The t-value of 4.00271, calculated based on the sample mean, standard deviation, and sample size, corresponds to a p-value of 0.00005. This p-value is significantly below conventional significance levels, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

The rejection of the null hypothesis signifies that there is substantial evidence to support the assertion that there are indeed multiple benefits associated with Green HRM practices. The respondents' collective agreement, coupled with the statistical analysis,

strengthens the argument that Green HRM practices contribute positively to various facets of organizational dynamics. These include cost reduction without talent loss, growth opportunities through environmental responsibility, heightened employee satisfaction and commitment, improved retention rates, enhanced public image, and increased overall competitiveness.

This study not only sheds light on the perceived benefits of Green HRM practices but also emphasizes their potential to contribute significantly to organizational success and sustainability.

The positive reception among respondents from diverse demographics further suggests a broad applicability and relevance of Green HRM practices across different organizational contexts. Organizations may find these results instrumental in guiding the adoption and implementation of environmentally conscious HR initiatives as part of their strategic endeavors.

D. Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this research underscore the significant impact and positive reception of Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) practices among a diverse group of 120 respondents. The statistical significance of the study also reinforces the assertion that there are indeed multiple benefits associated with Green HRM practices. The identified benefits encompass a spectrum of organizational dynamics, including cost reduction without talent loss, growth opportunities through environmental responsibility, heightened employee satisfaction and commitment, improved retention rates, enhanced public image, and increased overall competitiveness. These outcomes align with the broader objective of fostering organizational success and sustainability. The research also emphasizes the need for a contextually adaptive approach in the implementation of Green HRM practices. Acknowledging organizational size, functional roles, and operational factors is crucial for

addressing unforeseen challenges effectively.

Top management is encouraged to apply Green HRM practices flexibly, tailoring their adoption based on contextual nuances. Moreover, the study provides actionable insights for managers, suggesting strategies for recruiting employees aligned with environmental sustainability goals, focusing on continuous training and evaluation for pro-environmental behavior, and incorporating environmental performance into compensation structures. Such practices aim to cultivate an organizational climate that prioritizes environmental care, motivating employees to embrace environmentally friendly behaviors and ensuring the seamless integration of Green HRM practices. In essence, this research contributes valuable knowledge to the evolving field of Green HRM, showcasing its potential to drive positive change within organizations. The positive reception among respondents from diverse backgrounds highlights the broad applicability and relevance of Green

HRM practices across different organizational contexts. The insights gleaned from this study can guide organizational leaders in strategically adopting and implementing environmentally conscious HR initiatives, fostering a sustainable and environmentally responsible organizational culture.

FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

While the current research provides valuable insights into the positive impact of Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) practices, there are avenues for future exploration and development in this evolving field. The following areas present opportunities for further research and expansion:

- **Longitudinal Studies:** Conducting longitudinal studies to track the sustained effects of Green HRM practices over an extended period would offer a more comprehensive understanding. This could involve assessing the long-term impact on organizational sustainability, employee behavior, and the evolution of a green organizational culture.

- **Cross-Industry Analysis:** Extending the research to encompass a broader range of industries would provide a more diverse perspective. Different sectors may exhibit varying levels of responsiveness to Green HRM practices, and a cross-industry analysis could reveal sector-specific nuances.

- **Global Comparative Analysis:** Conducting comparative analyses across various geographical regions and cultural contexts would contribute to a more globally applicable understanding of Green HRM. This could involve exploring how cultural factors influence the reception and effectiveness of environmentally conscious HR initiatives.

- **Technology Integration in Green HRM:** Investigating the integration of technology, such as artificial intelligence and data analytics, in Green HRM practices could be a promising avenue. Exploring how technological advancements can enhance the implementation and impact of environmentally friendly HR

initiatives could be particularly relevant.

- **Employee Wellbeing and Pro-Environmental Behavior:** Delving deeper into the link between Green HRM practices and employee wellbeing, and how this influences pro-environmental behavior, would provide a more holistic view. Understanding the interplay between employee health, job satisfaction, and environmental consciousness could be crucial for organizational success.
- **Stakeholder Perspectives:** Expanding the study to incorporate perspectives from various stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and investors, could offer a more comprehensive evaluation. Assessing how Green HRM practices influence external perceptions and relationships could be instrumental for organizations in different industries.
- **Benchmarking Best Practices:** Investigating and benchmarking best practices in Green HRM across organizations could provide actionable insights for companies looking to enhance their sustainability efforts. Identifying and sharing

success stories could facilitate the adoption of effective strategies.

- **Legal and Regulatory Implications:** Examining the legal and regulatory landscape concerning Green HRM practices could provide a clearer understanding of the external factors influencing implementation. This could help organizations navigate compliance issues and adapt their practices accordingly.
- **Quantitative vs. Qualitative Analysis:** Exploring the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods could offer a more nuanced understanding of the subjective experiences and motivations behind the statistical trends observed in this study.
- **Employee Training and Development:** Investigating the role of training and development programs in promoting environmental awareness and responsibility among employees could be pivotal. Understanding how organizations can effectively educate and empower their workforce in this regard is a key aspect for future research.

By addressing these areas, future studies can contribute to the ongoing evolution of Green HRM practices, providing organizations with nuanced insights and practical strategies for fostering sustainability and environmental responsibility within the workplace.

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