

## **Green HRM – Importance and Factors Affecting Successful Implementation in Organizations**

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### **Abstract**

Organizations today understand the importance that they associate with Green Human Resource management practices. It is evolving rapidly as many see it as a necessity in today's context of global warming and climate change. Environmentalists, Scientists, and Governments across the globe understand the impact of climate change. Corporate houses have become more cognizant about the increasing significance of Human Resource Management practices that creates a sustainable environment management practices. This research is a study on Green HRM, its awareness, and factors that are critical to sustainable Green HRM practices in Organizations. It is well understood that Organizations cannot achieve anything without the support and involvement of its people. There are many factors that are associated with Green HRM practices in Organizations. Employee mindset / perception, organizational culture, cost lack of organizational resources, external factors like government rules and regulations etc. The study majorly focuses on factors that affect Green HRM practices in Organizations. The aim of the study is to understand which factors are of paramount importance that organizations need to focus on. The scope of the research includes understanding by means of a questionnaire, the awareness, importance and features, perceptions and functions of Green HRM being practiced in organizations. This research explores both secondary and primary data. The secondary data covers insights from various researchers and research done on the subject. The primary data covers responses collected from through online questionnaire surveys. Thus, the study will provide insights aimed at helping organizations, human resource executives understand how to create and increase the success ratio of implementing sustainable green HRM practices for maximum impact, gain insight into why particular aspects, areas, and functions are either working or not working as planned and how to best modify them.

### **Introduction**

Green HRM is the emerging topic in current scenario. Research is done on this topic but researchers argue that employees should be inspired, empowered, and environmentally aware of greening in order to carry out green initiatives. There is a growing need for strategic Green HRM – the integration of environmental management into HRM. An organizations Human Resource function can be influential in facilitating a comprehensive approach for creating a

culture of sustainability. The strategy involves implementing changes to the different functions of HR like recruitment, induction, training and development, conducting performance appraisal, and also determining employee compensation. Green initiatives within HR form a wider form of corporate social responsibility. Green HR involves two essential elements environment friendly HR practices and preservation of Knowledge capital.

Green HRM and Sustainability are two different things which now a days are linked with each other, this paper deals with the meaning of Green HRM ,Sustainability and their link and importance in today's scenario. Organizations are progressively more concerned with sustainability and Green HRM. The HR function is distinctively positioned to assist both developing and implementing Green strategies.

Secondly, Going green means Conservation of earth natural resources as well as supporting the "Preservation of your personal resources" i.e. your family, Friends, lifestyle, communities. So that we called Green HRM is the Conservation of Human resource their work life and Family life.

It means implementing determined lifestyle changes that will help individual to live in an eco-friendly way. For this every individual should be a more aware about the environment and changing their behavior, attitude and lifestyle to minimize the practices or activities that cause the degradation of the environment.

Any action that you take by keeping the sustainability of the resources it contributes a positive impact on the environment. Every small change by every individual in their lifestyle makes a Green work-life and green environment for us and for future generations.

Why should an organization go green? What are the benefits of it? Is it feasible?

These are many questions that come to mind when we talk of Green Organization. Going green has many benefits attached to it.

1. Increased employee satisfaction that translates to job satisfaction, better productivity and retention (lower employee turnover ratio)
2. Improves efficiency and effectiveness in the way we do things
3. Lesser consumption of energy, water, and raw materials
4. Mitigating risk and protecting the Organization dependence on energy and water needs
5. Creating sustainable green practices that become a competitive edge as well as a brand image for the Organization.

Going green is a strategy that organizations adopt as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative. Some organizations do it so as to create a competitive edge and create a brand image. Today Organisations that are not innovating and implementing

policies that ensure environmental protection are losing out to their competitors not only in terms of branding but also in terms of employee retention. Organizations like Google are coming out with green human resource management policies that sound hip or fancy to employees. Subsidies are provided for hybrid cars, on-site farmers markets, Green commuting vouchers, Organic dry cleaning by organizations. These unique initiatives they are coming up with is to encourage and retain employees by adopting green practices in their operations.

**Some of the techniques adopted by organizations are:**

1. Discourage the use of paper or if required use recycled paper for filing of records and other pertinent information through the use of technology like electronic / digital filing instead of physical documents and file.
2. Carpooling / Bike pooling or sometimes provide transportation to employees for their daily commute to the workplace so as to save fuel, lessen traffic thereby ensuring faster commute and reduction in carbon emissions. Sometimes, even encourage employees to cycle to work, wherever possible.
3. Minimum usage or nil usage of lights and allowing sunlight during the day wherever possible. Using energy efficient LED (Light Emitting Diode) bulbs in the night so as to save electricity. Using recycled and refurbished products and ensure products are disposed of for recycling, construct buildings, and workspaces that support a green architecture by allowing natural lighting, heating, and cooling and get it certified.
4. Implementing a smoking free office.
5. Rewarding employees for coming up with sustainable green ideas and strategies.
6. Plant trees and conduct green awareness for employees.
7. Awareness and training electronic waste, bio-medical waste for employees

**Objectives of Study**

This paper's focus is to explore Green HRM practices as well as understand the extent of awareness of Green HRM, its importance, different sustainable practices that companies have adopted and the effectiveness across different organizations in different Industries.

To Summarize we can limit them to as below:

1. Urge to implement the Green HRM Policies by the Companies.
2. Need and Knowledge about the Green HRM by the HRs
3. To focus on the implement of Green HRM by the Companies
4. Understand the difference between Sustainable and natural business practices
5. To study the awareness level among the employees with regard to the Green HRM

6. To understand the factors affecting implementation of sustainable Green HRM practices

### **Review of Literature**

A lot of literature has been done on how organizations have benefitted from adopting an organizational culture that encourages sustainable green practices. These benefits have been both in terms of economic as well as environmental benefits for the organization. This benefit has then translated into a competitive advantage as well as a strategic advantage for the organizations. Some of the common green human resource management programs that are being practiced in a majority of the organizations include

1. Videoconferencing, teleconferencing and other internet applications used for meetings thereby bringing down business travel
2. Online and electronic documentation as opposed to traditional paper / hardcopy documents Reduction in paper usage and even so use recycled paper and materials
3. Teleworking and work from home options to employees
4. Car / Bike pooling programs, Transportation provided by the company
5. Electronic filing wherever possible
6. Recycled trash bins
7. Recycled water for use in gardens
8. Energy efficient air conditioners and heaters

Green HRM is the use of HRM policies to promote the sustainable use of resources within organizations and, more generally promotes the causes of environment sustainability. This paper focuses on role that HR processes play in translating green policy into practice. This paper also examines the nature and extent of green HR initiatives undertaken by different companies.

### **Sustainability**

Sustainability is defined as opportunity for businesses to provide long lasting solutions that will help enhance the socio-economic landscape while continuing to create jobs and economic wealth well into the future. Green business practices were defined as those that addressed environmental stewardship and social responsibility. The term Sustainability, Sustainability development, corporate sustainability and Corporate social Responsibility are frequently interchangeable. The term Sustainability can be defined “as the development that meets the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. It is well defined that there are three components for sustainability development being environmental protection, economic growth and social equity. Sustainable development is indeed mostly identified by referring to this creation of a balance between

Profit, Planet and People. A Sustainable organization can be defined as an enterprise that simultaneously contributes economic, social, and environmental benefits- known as the “Triple bottom line”. Sustainability is seen by many as increasingly essential to creating shareholder value, as investors and employees look to organizations to be good corporate citizens.

### **HR and Sustainability**

Organizations are increasingly concerned with sustainability and corporate social responsibility. The HR function is uniquely positioned to assist in both developing and implementing sustainability strategy. The HR function can serve as a partner in determining what is needed or what is possible in formulating corporate values and sustainability strategy. The Human resource department of a company has the capability to play a significant role in the creation of their company’s sustainability culture (Harmon, Fairfield and Wirtenberg 2010). The role of HR in creating sustainable business is two- pronged. As a part of business strategy, HR will have to embrace a more sustainable approach to managing its people. HR will have to learn to manage the whole gamut of issues ranging from employee wellness, healthy, and safety workplace diversity. The HR staff is likely to be the only department that is resourcefully trained to change the attitudes and behaviours of the executives, managers, and employees by modifying their many Human Resource systems. In many organizations the HR department is the “Custodian of the culture”. Configuring HR Practices to the principles of sustainability need not necessarily mean changing the HR function. It means that HR People will have view all HR decisions through the prism of shareholders viewpoint.

Examples of Sustainable HRM practices include:

1. Assisting employees in identifying ways to recycle products that can be used for further reuse.
2. Encouraging employees, through training and compensation to find ways to reduce the use of environmental damaging materials.
3. Emphasizing long term employment security to avoid disruption for employees.

**There are few steps for creating the Sustainable HR Practices in the organizations the steps are shown as below:**

#### **1) Evaluate - It is important to evaluate**

Whether the company’s corporate culture, strategic intent and underlying values support the sustainability goals? The culture and underlying values will have to support each other in order to create a Green HRM function. Is the firm involved in any

community services to balance the lack of sustainability in products or services. Do the job description and the corporate website of the company support the green agenda.

## **2) Eliminate**

HR has to support green movement by cutting cost which will help in eliminating the waste. HR will have to introduce the concept of using the recycled paper, back to back printing, promote online recruitment.

## **3) Illuminate**

HR will have to develop a consistent and authentic employment brand that will go a long way in helping the company find, retain and repel talents. HR will have to boost the employees to use eco-friendly products so that the brand is established.

## **4) Implement**

HR will have to implement the sustainable strategies by painting every phase of the employee life cycle with green, starting from recruitment to compensation. HR of the organizations will have to roll out live virtual interview or video conferencing for recruitment which reduces the travel cost as well use of paper. HR can buy the PCR paper which is made of post consumer recycled stuff which is high in quality. HR can implement the strategy of rewarding the employees for using the eco-friendly initiatives within the organization.

## **Findings**

The following things were observed:

### **A. In terms of understanding Green HRM**

- A whopping 99% of the respondents understood Green HRM and its importance.
- Similarly, they also welcomed Green HRM practices in their organizations.

### **B. In terms of effectiveness of Sustainable Green HRM practices**

Green HRM is effective in some organizations with but about 10% feeling otherwise. And of 93% from the Services Industry feel happy with their Green HRM Practices with only about 80% from the Manufacturing Sector.

### **C. In terms of factors affecting Implementation of Green HRM**

Based on the findings the correlation coefficients for each factor were analyzed. These questions were then narrowly focused to two key factors – Organizational Culture and Employee Perception and mindset. Most of the smaller organizations find cost as a factor for implementing Green HRM practices. There wasn't any significant difference of opinion

between HR and Non-HR respondents and factors like Government rules and regulations, lack of organizational resources wasn't seen as much of an issue as compared to

### **Suggestions**

1. Top management should support and encourage Human Resources and all stakeholders to create a positive change and impact by reducing the carbon footprint at the workplace. Human Resources should use different technologies and communicate trust and credibility of themselves as a function, the way they do business both internally and externally.
2. Human Resources should also understand that employees are likely to be more productive and work towards a green initiative only with a better awareness and learning structure put in place. Thus, they should focus on creating strong policies, processes and support systems so as to achieve a sustainable Green HRM in the organization.
3. Since the business functions under the purviews of the Legal jurisdiction of the State and Country, Businesses should understand and engage with the Government bodies and Institutions to come up with environmentally friendly systems so that efficiency and effectiveness on a sustainable Green HRM is achieved.
4. Finally, a comprehensive recognition and reward system, awareness, motivation and continuous training and development programs would ensure that employees participate wholly towards a sustainable Green HRM initiative across the organization.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of this paper is to provide a knowledge how Green HRM can help or affects the employee and their organization practices and behavior against environment. Employees learn so many things either from work life or private life and due to these learning individual behaviors varies toward environment. This is only possible by the effective implementation of green HRM within the organization. It makes intuitive sense that offering Green HRM practices would attract individuals to an organization and by implementing these practices would result in improving employee attitudes and behaviors within the organization. Future research needs to provide empirical evidence while the Green HRM deliver the positive outcomes.

Human resource play very important role in managing employee from entry to exit. Now the corporate are focusing on greening the business, so the Human resource department have the additional responsibility of go green along with HR policies.

The green human resource management has the responsibility to create green awareness among the new talent and the existing employee working for the organization, encourage

their employees for helping the organization to reduce the causes of environmental degradation through green movement, green programs and practices, retain the resources for future generation. Green HRM can develop willingness, inspiration and commitment to employees to contribute their efforts, ideas to the greening of their organization. The green HRM efforts results in increased efficiencies, sustainable use of resources, Less wastage, Improved Job Related Attitude, Improved Work/Private life, lower costs, Improved employee performance and retention which help organization to reduce employee carbon footprints by the mean of Green HRM.

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