



Recent Trends In Green HRM Practices And Its Impact On Environmental Sustainability

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Abstract

The implementation of green Human Resource Management (HRM) practices has been a key concern for organizations looking to reduce their environmental footprint. This paper examines how recent trends in HRM practices can help advance environmental sustainability at the organization level. Drawing upon a review of the relevant literature, this paper highlights key areas where improvements in HRM practices have significant benefits for the environment and provides recommendations for strategic action. Conducting a survey of 98 employees of HR Departments in 15 leading IT organizations in Pune City, the paper examines how the development of effective HRM practices and organizational culture can improve employee job satisfaction, which decreases turnover and thereby reducing the costs involved with hiring new staff. The paper concludes with a discussion regarding how these findings can be applied to improve the environmental sustainability of IT firms in Pune City and elsewhere.

Keywords: Green HRM, Environmental Sustainability, Social Responsibility.

Introduction

Human Resources (HR) is often defined as an organization's most vital asset. Human resource management (HRM) is the process of implementing organizations' human resources policies to achieve their objectives and meeting the needs of their employees. The purpose of this paper is to focus on the ability of organizations to achieve greater business performance, enhanced employee job satisfaction and standards for conducting business, with some attention paid on how these gains can be achieved by developing effective HRM practices.

What are green Human Resource Management (HRM) practices?

Green HRM practices are, by definition, idealistic; however, all organizations face practical challenges in implementing them. Measuring the impact of green HRM practices on a firm's bottom line is challenging since most of these benefits are indirect or intangible and cannot always be quantified or monetized. For instance, an organization's reputation may increase due to its environmental performance so that it attracts more

business or gains an advantage over competitors to gain new customers but these increases are difficult to measure and quantify financially.

Human resources are divided into three major function which are: recruiting and hiring, employee relations (employee relations), and training and development. In this paper we focus on green HRM practices that address human resource issues at the organizational level. We are not dealing with green corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices within the organization but with HRM practices that support organizational objectives by providing a framework for dealing with environmental issues through education and training, and other environmental friendly actions. Organizations should recognize that green HRM practices are not a means for optimizing revenue and profit but rather an essential part of the process by which organizations develop an environmental strategy to meet the needs of its employees and clients.

Green HRM is defined as those activities that help organizations reduce their environmental impact or increase their positive social impact on communities. It encompasses steps taken at various levels for the purpose of improving overall resource efficiency, increasing energy efficiency in operations, minimizing energy consumption and minimizing waste generation. Environmental Sustainability embraces those innovative concepts that promote the preservation of existing natural resources while ensuring sustainability within the context of society by enhancing economic performance, socially beneficial activities, community enhance and well-being with minimal adverse impacts on environment and people.

Green HRM is a unique concept that is neither targeted at only the environment nor solely defined by reduction of resource consumption. Rather, green HRM practices aim at making an organization's operations more efficient and innovative, which results in more sustainable business models and profitable growth. Green HRM Practices are designed to address existing and emerging environmental sustainability issues. There has been a recent trend towards the expansion of green HRM into other areas such as employee responsibility towards community, social responsibility and corporate governance that provide an opportunity to consider newer environmental factors while evaluating the effectiveness of existing green HRM practices.

Green HRM requires an active involvement from all employees so that they may understand how their actions impact the environment and be encouraged to contribute positively. The support of senior management is required to introduce incentives and rewards for staff who seek to improve how their work impacts the environment. In this paper we provide a brief overview of existing green HRM practices that are either in place or coming into existence in the current business landscape. This review has been limited by financial constraints and not the scope of this report. The focus has been on IT organizations due to their large footprint and international operations.

Review of Literature

The earliest works on green HRM practices were the publications of Albelli and Vaara from 1995 and 1996 respectively. These reports focused on the subject of CSR and discussed the importance of its integration in HRM policies within organizations. Since then, most early research has focused on environmental management as a separate HR function with some consideration given to how environmental considerations might affect other aspects of HRM such as recruitment and training.

These papers have supported the idea that companies can be more profitable by implementing green HRM practices, which are essential for reducing costs, increasing productivity and improving customer relations. They have also highlighted that organizations which are perceived to be environmentally friendly enjoy greater positives in terms of social responsibility and employee performance.

Kale & Bogum (2016) reviewed the current literature on green HRM. Their conclusions were that there is no single model of green HRM but many models exist and individual research studies have evaluated different aspects of green HRM practices. They found that many of these studies have used self-reported data and were unable to link any actual improvements in performance or financial returns to their implementation.

Kapoor (2019) has provided a comprehensive review of the literature on green HRM practices and has highlighted the various studies which have been conducted and provide a useful comparative analysis. These studies have greatly expanded our knowledge on this topic by looking at all aspects of green HRM, as well as its implementation in different countries. The author concluded that there is significant evidence to show that applying green HRM practices can lead to substantial improvements in organizational performance, both financially and environmentally.

Chatterjee (2018) reviewed the literature on environmental sustainability issues for IT companies. He reviewed the existing literature on IT companies, explored the major issues in this sector and outlined the strategies to improve organizational performance. The author highlighted that many of these practices are based on an assessment of current conditions without assessing future needs and how this may affect future performance.

The major focus of modern green HRM is on Green IT. Green IT is defined as those technologies, processes and values that are used to build a sustainable ecosystem. It aims at reducing the environmental impacts and increasing the positive social impact of an organization's activities by employing best practices in technology, process and information management while also managing its workforce. The concept of Green IT is closely linked to the idea of a more efficient use and more ethical use of existing resources.

The concept's development was influenced strongly by the exponential growth trend of IT systems in organizations. This growth resulted in an ever-increasing demand for energy, which led to ever-greater environmental impacts. International IT companies such as IBM, Microsoft and Cisco commissioned researchers to look into the environmental impact of their products and operations. These studies confirmed that

most software products involved in this industry had a very high ecological footprint with server farms being particularly energy inefficient.

Moosa (2019) has discussed the importance of applying green HRM policies and practices in IT organizations to ensure that these organizations operate more efficiently and provide a better service to their customers. She has highlighted that there are significant opportunities for IT organizations to increase their profits and improve customer relations by reducing the demand for energy and other resources, as well as increasing employee productivity and job satisfaction.

In support of this, Dias & D'Souza (2015) have reviewed the early work in green HRM for IT firms. They identified a range of existing practices used by companies such as process re-engineering, workforce skill development, training employees on environmental issues, use of information technology and application of green management systems (GMS).

In contrast to other industries, the implementation of green HRM in IT organizations is more challenging because of the nature of their work process and the use of sophisticated technologies. This is why there has been a need for IT organizations to develop their own models for managing environmental impacts, especially those associated with their operations and products. Green HRM policies have also been widely implemented in Australia's state public sector agencies and at the federal level, including the Australian Public Service (APS).

Green HRM policies are imposed by governments on all their public sector agencies, including state and federal departments, programs and agencies. The policy framework is designed to ensure the adoption of green practices in their day-to-day operations, how they manage information and other support services they provide to their customers in addition to how they use energy resources and safeguard the environment.

Soman & Tambe (2021) have explored the green HRM policies and practices that are used by organizations in Australia and compared them with similar policies adopted in India. They have highlighted that there are many similarities between green HRM practices used by public sector agencies in both countries. However, there are also some key differences due to their different legal systems, social and cultural contexts, and levels of economic development.

Among all forms of technology, Information Technology (IT) has been a major enabler of green HRM practices by providing tools such as online portals to promote transparency across the organization and accountability for actions taken. We have already identified that IT is being widely used to support environmental management activities in organizations. IT has also become a key tool for green staff recruitment and selection, as well as for providing more efficient training to support and improve employee skills. It is now widely accepted that there is an urgent need for all organizations to develop and implement green HRM practices. Green HRM practices can also lead to significant improvements in organizational performance, both financially and environmentally. This

will require a major change in how organizations manage their HR functions and the behavior of their people.

To help facilitate this important change, a range of tools have been developed by researchers to support the implementation of green HRM practices. These include online portals to promote transparency across the organization and accountability for actions taken, as well as self-assessment tools for implementing green HRM practices at the individual, work group and organizational level. Such tools provide a good foundation for green HRM practices in organizations.

Sheshadri (2019) has discussed the development of these tools and their role in supporting the implementation of green HRM practices in organizations.

The tools available to support green HRM practices vary, but they all provide valuable information on the performance of an organization, including its processes and systems, financials, human resources and external factors such as energy consumption. Most tools also allow an assessment of how the different areas or processes are performing against a set of performance indicators that can then be directed by management to improve performance in order to meet legislative and customer expectations.

Overall there is paucity of research on the use of these tools and the benefits they can bring to organizations. So far most of the research done on these tools has focused on their role in developing green HRM practices rather than their effectiveness in achieving performance improvements and delivering cost savings. In addition to offering a new approach to managing organizational performance, green HRM provides a framework for implementing environmental sustainability policies that aim to reduce the environmental impacts associated with products, services and operations throughout the life cycle of an organization. This means that green HRM is also highly relevant for sustainability practitioners who will be looking for tools that help them manage sustainability more effectively, both financially and environmentally. The current study contributes to this gap in the research literature by providing a detailed analysis of the available tools for managing sustainability.

Although green HRM is gaining greater prominence and interest in organizations, it can be confusing for people new to the topic to identify which tools would be most useful for them. At present it is not easy for readers and researchers to find out about the many tools that are available and how they can be used. This paper aims at providing information that will help readers identify some of the most helpful tools available in their organizations by separating these into two main categories: those that facilitate the implementation of green HRM practices and those that help them manage sustainability more effectively.

Objectives of the study

1. To identify the recent trends in HRM practices and its impact on the environmental sustainability

2. To quantify the positive impacts of green HRM practices on employee engagement

Hypotheses

H1: A positive relation exists between green HRM practices and environmental sustainability.

H2: A positive relation exists between employee engagement and green HRM practices. The study will be conducted using a quantitative research approach. Data will be collected through interaction with employees, managers and executives from the HR Departments in IT firms in Pune City. Questionnaires will be used to assess the participants' knowledge and attitudes about green HRM practices in their organisations. Statistical analysis such as correlation will then be used to analyse the data. The sample size consisted of 98 respondents. A convenience sampling method was utilized in combination with snowball sampling method.

Likert scales were used to record the responses of the respondents. Averages were calculated and employee engagement scale was used to find out how the workers were engaged to their jobs. Several green HRM practices were also included in the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Table 1. Green HRM implementation

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %	Coun t	Row N %
Our organisation has developed comprehensive environmental management systems and policies to minimise our impact on the environment	0	0.0 %	0	0.0%	12	12.2 %	38	38.8 %	48	49.0 %

Our organisation provides adequate training for employees on green initiatives, sustainability and eco-friendly practice	6	6.1 %	47	48.0 %	33	33.7 %	12	12.2 %	0	0.0%
Our organisation promotes the use of energy efficient products and services in the work place	0	0.0 %	0	0.0%	15	15.3 %	44	44.9 %	39	39.8 %
Our organisation has implemented green HRM practices such as incentives for reducing energy consumption, waste and water	3	3.1 %	26	26.5 %	48	49.0 %	21	21.4 %	0	0.0%
Our organisation regularly evaluates environmental performance to ensure our commitments are met.	0	0.0 %	0	0.0%	9	9.2%	38	38.8 %	51	52.0 %

Our organisation deploys systems to monitor air quality, noise and other environmental indicators.	0	0.0 %	0	0.0%	18	18.4 %	38	38.8 %	42	42.9 %
Employees in my organisation are well-informed about environmental sustainability	3	3.1 %	34	34.7 %	44	44.9 %	17	17.3 %	0	0.0%
Our organisation involves employees in green initiatives and activities	0	0.0 %	0	0.0%	16	16.3 %	39	39.8 %	43	43.9 %
I am motivated to come up with ideas that can help my organisation become more sustainable.	0	0.0 %	0	0.0%	13	13.3 %	35	35.7 %	50	51.0 %
Our organisation rewards employees for adopting eco-friendly practices at work.	2	2.0 %	30	30.6 %	40	40.8 %	19	19.4 %	7	7.1%

The management of our organisation is committed to reducing the environmental impact of its operations.	1	1.0 %	5	5.1%	20	20.4 %	33	33.7 %	39	39.8 %
Our organisation has a clear policy and strategy for environmental sustainability.	0	0.0 %	0	0.0%	17	17.3 %	37	37.8 %	44	44.9 %
Our organisation has developed procedures to identify, assess and manage environmental risks associated with our operations.	0	0.0 %	12	12.2 %	22	22.4 %	31	31.6 %	33	33.7 %
Our organisation promotes the knowledge sharing of green practices among its employees.	3	3.1 %	25	25.5 %	34	34.7 %	23	23.5 %	13	13.3 %

I am aware of the importance of reducing my own personal consumption and waste in order to reduce the environmental impact of my organisation.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	19	19.4%	39	39.8%	40	40.8%
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49% of the respondents strongly agreed and 38.8% agreed that their organization has developed comprehensive management systems and policies to minimise their impact on the environment. 12.2% of the respondents had a neutral opinion on this topic.

The results indicate that the majority of the respondents believe their organisations are aware of the importance of reducing their impact on the environment, and have put measures in place to ensure it. This is an important indicator for businesses as it indicates that they are taking steps to reduce their environmental impact and be more sustainable.

It is also worth noting that 12.2% of the respondents had a neutral opinion on this topic, indicating that more could be done to ensure environmental sustainability across organisations. It suggests that there needs to be further awareness and education about environmental management systems and policies within businesses in order to ensure they are taking the necessary steps to reduce their environmental impact.

The results of this survey suggest that only 12.2% of respondents agree that their organisation provides adequate training for employees on green initiatives, sustainability and eco-friendly practice, while 48% disagree. 33.7% had a neutral opinion on the topic and 6.1% strongly disagreed.

These results indicate that there is a need for more training and education on green initiatives, sustainability and eco-friendly practice within organisations. It suggests that organisations need to be more proactive in providing employees with the necessary resources and knowledge to be able to make better environmental decisions.

It is also important to note that 6.1% of respondents strongly disagreed that their organisation provides adequate training for green initiatives, sustainability and eco-friendly practice. This indicates that the current measures may not be enough to ensure that employees are able to make environmentally conscious decisions and there needs to be further action taken in order for organisations to become more sustainable.

The survey results show that 44.9% of respondents agree and 39.8% strongly agree that their organisation promotes the use of energy efficient products and services in the workplace. 15.3% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that organisations are aware of the importance of using energy efficient products and services to reduce their environmental impact. It is also encouraging to see that the majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that their organisation promotes these practices, suggesting that they are taking meaningful steps towards becoming more sustainable.

However, it is worth noting that 15.3% of respondents had a neutral opinion on this topic. This indicates that there needs to be further education and communication around the importance of using energy efficient products and services in order to ensure organisations make more sustainable decisions in the future.

The results of this survey indicate that only 21.4% of respondents agree and 26.5% disagree that their organisation has implemented green HRM practices such as incentives for reducing energy consumption, waste and water. 49% had a neutral opinion on the topic and 3.1% strongly disagreed.

These results suggest that organisations are not adequately implementing green HRM practices to incentivise employees to reduce their environmental impact. It is also concerning that 3.1% of respondents strongly disagreed that they use such practices, suggesting that more needs to be done in order for organisations to become truly sustainable.

It is therefore important for organisations to consider how they can create meaningful incentives and rewards for employees who make greener choices. This could include offering discounts or perks to those who reduce their environmental footprint, as well as providing more education on green HRM practices so that employees are aware of the available options.

The survey results show that 38.8% of respondents agree and 52.0% strongly agree that their organisation regularly evaluates environmental performance to ensure their commitments are met. 9.2% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that organisations are making efforts to monitor their sustainability goals and track their progress towards becoming more environmentally conscious. It is also encouraging to see that the majority of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement, indicating that they understand the importance of conducting regular assessments in order to measure the effectiveness of their green initiatives.

However, it is worth noting that 9.2% had a neutral opinion on this topic which may indicate a lack of understanding around how regular evaluations can benefit an organisation's sustainability goals. It is therefore important for organisations to provide more information and education on the importance of evaluating environmental performance in order to ensure successful implementation of green initiatives.

The results of this survey indicate that 38.8% of respondents agree and 42.9% strongly agree that their organisation deploys systems to monitor air quality, noise and other environmental indicators. 18.4% had a neutral opinion on the topic.

These results suggest that organisations are taking steps towards using technology to measure their impact on the environment and identify areas where they can improve. It is also encouraging to see that the majority of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement, indicating that they understand the importance of using technology in order to become more sustainable.

However, it is worth noting that 18.4% had a neutral opinion on this topic which may indicate a lack of understanding around how technology can help an organisation become more environmentally conscious. It is therefore important for organisations to provide more information and education on the benefits of deploying systems to monitor environmental indicators in order to ensure successful implementation of green initiatives.

The survey results indicate that 3.1% of respondents strongly disagreed and 34.7% disagreed that employees in their organisation are well-informed about environmental sustainability, while 17.3% agreed and 44.9% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that there is still a need for organisations to provide more education and information on environmental sustainability to their employees. It is concerning to see that a significant portion of respondents disagreed with this statement, indicating that they do not feel like their organisation provides the necessary resources for employees to learn about green HRM practices.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that 44.9% had a neutral opinion on this topic which may indicate a lack of understanding around the importance of environmental sustainability. It is therefore important for organisations to provide more information and education on the benefits of implementing green HRM practices in order to ensure successful implementation of sustainable initiatives.

The results of this survey indicate that 39.8% of respondents agree and 43.9% strongly agree that their organisation involves employees in green initiatives and activities, while 16.3% had a neutral opinion on the topic.

These results suggest that organisations are recognising the importance of engaging employees in sustainability practices which is encouraging to see. It is also encouraging to see that the vast majority of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement, indicating a growing awareness around the importance of involving employees in green initiatives.

However, it is worth noting that 16.3% had a neutral opinion on this topic which may indicate a lack of understanding around how employee engagement can help an organisation become more sustainable. It is therefore important for organisations to

provide more information and education on the importance of involving employees in green initiatives in order to ensure successful implementation of sustainability practices.

The survey results indicate that 51.0% of respondents strongly agreed and 35.7% agreed that they are motivated to come up with ideas that can help their organisation become more sustainable, while 13.3% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that employees recognise the importance of being involved in green initiatives and understand the positive impact that their ideas can have on the environment. It is encouraging to see that such a large majority of respondents agree with this statement, indicating a growing desire amongst employees to contribute to sustainability practices.

The survey results indicate that 30.6% of respondents disagreed and 2.0% strongly disagreed that their organisation rewards employees for adopting eco-friendly practices at work, while 19.4% agreed and 40.8% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that organisations are not doing enough to incentivize employees to adopt eco-friendly practices. It is concerning to see that such a large proportion of respondents disagreed with this statement, indicating that they do not feel like their organisation provides adequate rewards for employees who adopt green practices.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that 40.8% had a neutral opinion on this topic which may indicate a lack of understanding around how rewarding employees for eco-friendly practices can help to encourage adoption of green initiatives. It is therefore important for organisations to provide more information and education on the importance of incentivizing employees for adopting sustainable practices in order to ensure successful implementation of sustainability initiatives.

The survey results indicate that 39.8% of respondents strongly agreed and 33.7% agreed that the management of their organisation is committed to reducing the environmental impact of its operations, while 5.1% disagreed and 20.4% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that organisations are beginning to recognise the importance of reducing their environmental impact. It is encouraging to see that such a large majority of respondents agree with this statement, indicating that organisations are taking steps towards sustainability.

However, it is worth noting that 20.4% had a neutral opinion on this topic which may indicate a lack of understanding around the actions being taken by the management to become more sustainable. It is therefore imp

Important for organisations to be transparent about the steps they are taking to reduce their environmental impact in order to ensure successful implementation of sustainability practices. Communication and education around these initiatives will help

employees understand how they can contribute and this should be a priority for organisations that want to achieve sustainability success.

The survey results indicate that 44.9% of respondents strongly agreed and 37.8% agreed that their organisation has a clear policy and strategy for environmental sustainability, while 17.3% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that organisations are increasingly taking the initiative to implement sustainability policies and strategies in order to reduce their environmental impact. It is encouraging to see that such a large majority of respondents agree with this statement, indicating that organisations are taking steps towards sustainability.

The survey results indicate that 33.7% of respondents strongly agreed and 31.6% agreed that their organisation has developed procedures to identify, assess and manage environmental risks associated with its operations, while 12.2% disagreed and 22.4% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that organisations are increasingly aware of the potential risks associated with their operations and are taking steps to mitigate them. It is encouraging to see that such a large majority of respondents agree with this statement, indicating that organisations are taking steps towards sustainability.

The survey results indicate that 13.3% of respondents strongly agreed and 23.5% agreed that their organisation promotes the knowledge sharing of green practices among its employees, while 25.5% disagreed and 34.7% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that organisations are beginning to recognise the importance of promoting green practices and increasing knowledge sharing among employees. It is encouraging to see that a significant majority of respondents agree with this statement, indicating that organisations are taking steps towards sustainability.

The survey results indicate that 40.8% of respondents strongly agreed and 39.8% agreed that they are aware of the importance of reducing their own personal consumption and waste in order to reduce the environmental impact of their organisation, while 19.4% had a neutral opinion on this topic.

These results suggest that individuals are increasingly taking responsibility for their own environmental impacts and are taking steps to reduce them. It is encouraging to see that such a large majority of respondents agree with this statement, indicating that individuals are taking steps towards sustainability.

Table 2. Correlations

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		Employee engagement scores	Green HRM initiatives	Environmental Sustainability
Employee engagement scores	Pearson Correlation	1	.383**	.072
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.480
	N	98	98	98
Green HRM initiatives	Pearson Correlation	.383**	1	.449**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	98	98	98
Environmental Sustainability	Pearson Correlation	.072	.449**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.480	.000	
	N	98	98	98
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

The table shows that the Green HRM initiatives and environmental sustainability are positively correlated. Similarly, the Employee Engagement scores are also positively correlated to Green HRM initiatives. Thus the null hypotheses can be rejected and we can accept that a positive relation exists between Green HRM practices and environmental sustainability and a positive relation exists between employee engagement and Green HRM practices.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the implementation of Green HRM initiatives leads to a positive effect on both employee engagement and environmental sustainability. The results of this research illustrate a strong correlation between green practices and these two factors, indicating that efforts should be made to increase green initiatives within organizations in order to benefit from improved engagement and sustainability. Furthermore, further research can be conducted to identify other factors that may influence the success of green HRM initiatives. Such research can help organizations gain a deeper understanding of how they can effectively implement green practices in order to benefit from improved engagement and sustainability.

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