



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Economics

CONCEPTUALIZING GREEN HRM FOR SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

KEY WORDS: green human resource management, green organizations, organizational development, sustainability, strategy.

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ABSTRACT

To compete in this ever-changing world of business, every organization is in the quest to capitalize the opportunity of using sustainability as a brand image for their businesses. Since last decade, the role of hr has been transformed. The competitive and knowledge-based economy demands strategic implementation of organizational HRM policies to succeed with respect to sustainability. Therefore, a new approach to Human Resource Management (HRM) has been evolved due to the growing concern for the integration of environmental management into Human Resource Management (HRM). This conceptualisation is referred as Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) which links HRM and sustainability together for an organisation development. So, HR manager should work in a manner to produce sustainable high performing, changeable organization. In this context, the present paper highlights GHRM, relevance of adopting green strategy& green HR functions and recommendations for corporate greening.

INTRODUCTION:

Under this competitive and knowledge based economy, Green HRM (GHRM) is the emerging topic. There is a growing need to transform strategic HRM into GHRM which integrates HRM with environmental management. For creating a culture of sustainability, organizations' human resource function plays an influential role. Human resources managers are expected to be the leaders of organizational change activities for effective organization development. Effective HRM function can actually help and make sustainable business methodologies all through the organization by using its human resource capabilities for shaping culture, bringing change in organizational procedures.

Green HRM

Marhatta & Adhikari (2013) and Zoogah, (2011) referred 'GHRM is the use of HRM policies and Practices to promote the sustainable use of resources within business organizations and generally promotes the cause of environmentalism'. GHRM is directly responsible in creating green workforce and maintains its green objectives all throughout the HRM process of recruiting, hiring, training, compensating, developing, and advancing the firms human capital. More progressive organisations pursue GHRM as a distinctive business strategy to achieve corporate sustainability.

Sustainability

In the citation of Cohen, Taylor & Muller (2004), sustainability is often defined as the "ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (WCED, 1987). A Sustainable organization can be defined as an enterprise that simultaneously contributes economic, social, and environmental benefits known as the "Triple bottom line". The term sustainability, sustainability development and corporate social responsibility are frequently interchangeable.

HR and Sustainability

Green HRM and Sustainability are two different things which now-a-days are linked with each other. Fayyazia et al. (2015) said that there is a requirement for the amalgamation of environmental management in Human Resource Management (HRM) because it is essential rather than just desirable. Successful environmental management in an organization needs special efforts of human resource management (Rothenberg, 2003). The HR function is uniquely positioned to assist in both developing and implementing sustainability strategy. The Human resource department plays a pivotal role in the creation of their company's sustainability culture (Harmon, Fairfield and Wirtenberg 2010). In many organizations the HR department is called as "Custodian of the culture". HR will have to embrace a more sustainable approach for formulating its business strategy and people management. Configuring HR Practices to the principles of sustainability need not necessarily mean changing the HR function. It means that aligning the hr policies and practices with green objectives. The term green

human resource management is mostly related with aligning employee management strategies and activities under the wider agenda of corporate sustainability (Rani & Mishra, 2014). The significance of green human resource management practices is crucial to increase the employees' motivation and this could be advantageous for both the organization and the employee. Some of the 'Go Green' benefits for organization development are as follows:

'Go Green' Benefits for Organization Development

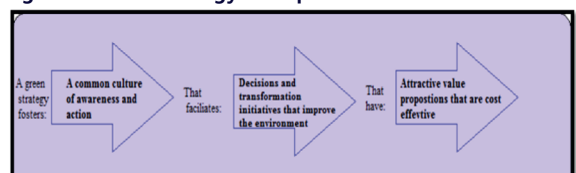
- Increased employee satisfaction that in turn, enhances job satisfaction and better productivity.
- Increasing the ability to retain the employees.
- Improves efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.
- Increasing brand recognition and improving the competitive position & status of the company.
- Mitigating risk and creating sustainable green practices within the organization.

In order to orient the company towards sustainability, management of the organisation must see its human resource as an essential contributor of change. Human resource professional must upgrade their methodology from transformational HRM to sustainable HRM.

Defining a Green Strategy in an Organization

As environmental consciousness has grown over the recent decades, businesses of all forms are being forced to incorporate sustainable/green strategies to carry out their business activities and functions. Green strategy refers to the adoption of new and innovative technology/processes in the whole business process which is eco-friendly and have positive impact on the environment. It mitigates environmental risks, ecological scarcities and helps in ensuring human well-being as well as social equity. The three standards indicated in the following figure can act as rules of any organization's green strategy.

Figure:1 Green Strategy Principles



Source: Eric G. Olson, *Creating an enterprise-level "green" strategy*, 2008, p. 23.

1.A green strategy promotes a culture of green awareness and action: Organizations should work to establish a culture where environmental awareness and proactive behaviour is a part

of an employees' routine activity. Moreover, employees and stakeholders should be given appropriate tools and training, so that staying in this pro-environmental culture is easy, fun and rewarding.

2.A green strategy empowers decision making and transform initiatives to improve environment: The ability to make decisions based on the effect they have on the environment should be integrated with other existing criteria's for facilitating sound, rational and realistic decision-making. Establishing a clear vision and procedure can inspire individuals to improve their choices. HR professionals must make green strategy and set priorities considering the integration of business, operations and environmental segment into it.

3.A green strategy attracts value propositions that are cost-effective in long-run: Organization needs to focus on the strategy that identifies benefits to both top-line benefits and bottom-line costs. Today, many organizations are actualizing a strategic mechanism known as an environmental management system to increase competitive advantage.

INTEGRATION OF GREEN ELEMENT INTO HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Green HRM Functions:

- **Recruitment and Selection:** The recruitment and selection process should indicate the corporate environmental culture of the company. In this regard, Wehrmeyer (1996) suggests that the 'the ecological part, health and safety occupations and other roles related with the environment are recommended to be specified in the job descriptions'. Organizations need to focus on green recruitments wherein resumes are invited and submitted online, company websites and online portals are used by candidates to search for jobs, which substantially helps in reducing waste generated from printing and mailing resumes.
- **Sourcing and acquisition of human resources:** HR Department can make job descriptions and specifications for their employees inclusive of 'green' component. In selection criteria, preferences should be given to the candidates who are 'Green aware' and the same criteria must be a part of HR acquisition policy
- **Induction:** The program for induction should be established to give new employees information about the policies on environmental management systems and the organization's green objectives and green concerns for employees' health, safety and well-being.
- **Training and Development:** To sustain in the race market, competitive edge can only be gained through training and development. Extensive use of online, web-based training modules and interactive media should be exercised for all functional areas including the area of environment management such as safety, energy efficiency, waste management and recycling etc.
- **Compensation and Rewards:** Compensation and reward is another powerful tool for supporting environmental management activities which may help in the attainment of environmental goals (Milliman and Clair, 1996). Monetary, non-monetary or recognition based rewards can also be used for green achievements of employees who depict green and pro-environmental conduct for their work execution.
- **Performance Management:** Green performance management covers the issues related to policy, guidelines of the organization and environmental framework. Performance management systems (PMS) should include 'green' targets in the key performance areas (KPA) which can be translated into green performance standards and green behaviour indicators expected out of the employees. Hence, it becomes yardsticks in appraising their performances.
- **Exit:** Exit interviews should be conducted to gauge employee's perceptions about the organizations green practices. Unethical or environmentally negligent behaviour may constitute breach of contract and can prepare the possible ground for dismissal.

CONCLUSION:

Human resource department of an organization plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational culture and designing organization's sustainability. 'Green' is in vogue today and greening is the way to a sustainable future for organizational development. Thus, every organization is willing to operate in an environmentally sustainable way, so that environmental and societal needs are met besides profitability and performance efficiency. Working in a sustainable manner will help organization to capitalize the opportunity of using 'sustainability' as a brand image for their businesses. Moreover, it is a source for competitive advantage. HR professionals sensitise employees with the concept of GHRM, adopt green strategy and reinforce the green culture within the business systems. Building processes with sustainability as one of the core value will create win-win situation for both HR professionals and organization as it increases efficiency while promoting a positive, environmentally conscious brand image to the employees, stakeholders, fellow companies and society at large.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- As a response to the ever-changing way of doing business, organizations need to adopt newer methods, processes and tools to create a positive impact towards the environment. Following are the recommendations which can be adopted for corporate greening:
- Top management must support green philosophy within the business systems and incorporate it in their own company's mission statement.
- Organizations should build sustainability practices and procedures into its major HR activities.
- HR professionals should focus and translate green policy into practice.
- Employees' awareness and sensitisation can be done by the HR department towards green movement across the world. Readiness for change can be created so that employees' support sustainability and be responsive with the problems of sustainability.
- To implement green ideologies, training programs can be conducted for the employees. Aspects on the environment such as safety, energy efficiency, waste management and recycling etc. can be taken which become the focal points of green training.
- Businesses should associate with government bodies and institutions so that new processes, policies, products and tools are actually ensuring legal, environmental compliance and improve productivity too.
- Managers must encourage employees and create linkages between participation and involvement in eco-friendly management programmes to improve organizational sustainability by focusing on green practices.

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