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# SUSTAINABLE GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

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## ABSTRACT

The current global landscape is plagued by rising social and income disparities as well as environmental crises, making sustainable development an urgent necessity for businesses. In this context, Human Resources (HR) play a pivotal role in any enterprise. Adopting sustainable practices to manage Green HR is imperative for achieving organizational sustainability. This is because Human Resource Management (HRM) can significantly impact a company's relationship with both its internal and external environments, particularly with society and the ecosystem. Green HR focuses on developing, implementing, and maintaining activities that foster employee support and commitment towards sustainable goals. It involves the establishment and implementation of policies and practices that directly influence employee behavior, guiding personnel to engage in pro-environmental actions at work that are necessary for the long-term survival of the business. These sustainable practices can improve employee attitudes and behaviors within the organization, resulting in a competitive advantage for the business.

**Keywords:** human resources, management, strategy, green human resources management, competitive advantage, sustainability.

## INTRODUCTION

For many years, business management has focused on achieving short-term economic goals. However, due to the industrial revolution and population crisis, it has become impossible to sustain this short-term growth system. Instead, there is a need to perform business activities that respect the environment and society. Human resources are an extremely important unit of any organization, and personnel can significantly change their working environment by engaging in certain behaviors, such as applying environmental initiatives into their working routine.

Recently, there has been an increasing awareness within business communities of the significance of going green and adopting various environment management techniques. As the world is globally transforming, businesses are experiencing a shift from traditional financial structures to a modern economy that is ready to traverse green economic facets of business. Green HR focuses on the development, implementation, and maintenance of all activities aimed at making staff members supportive and committed to sustainable goals. Sustainability is something that every forward-thinking company should consider for individual, economic, social, and environmental (internal and external) benefits in the long run.

The role of sustainable HRM is to encompass HR processes of staffing, performance management and appraisal, training and development, and employment relations aligned with the organization's sustainability goals. However, Green HRM is the use of human resource management policies to promote the use of resources within business organizations and, more generally, promotes the cause of environmental sustainability. Green HR essentially consists of two major elements: environment-friendly HR practices and the preservation of knowledge capital.

In the words of Mathapati "GHRM is directly responsible for creating a green workforce that understands, appreciates, and practices green initiative and maintains its green objectives." Developing a green culture affects employee behavior and introduces certain values that build an internal and external culture. It encourages alternative ways to cut the cost of companies without losing their talent and important resources, improves

employee morale, builds a stronger public image, increases customer confidence, employee loyalty, and builds brand recognition.

Existing studies suggest that "Green" HRM has become an essential strategic thinking process for organizations, in which human resource departments play an important role in going green and improving the company's performance. Green HRM systems attempt to gain a broad range of outcomes, which are highly vital to firms, making it the most prominent phenomenon for forward-thinking businesses. Good green HRM practices help in meeting sustainable development goals. Sustainability is all about making a society that gives the utmost precedence to the dignity of life--the dignity of each member of the present as well as the forthcoming generations and the biosphere that nurtures us. The need to create sustained economic growth to improve the standard of living of millions is required for the developing economy.

Green sustainable HRM policies make organizations commit to an environment-friendly environment along with empowering themselves and others about sustainability. However, environmental forces such as customer boycotts, forceful preferences, and new consumer requirements have affected the tactics of businesses. Thus, there is a growing need for the integration of environmental management into human resource management (HRM) - green HRM- with a goal of sustainability.

Cherian and Jacob (2012) concluded in their findings that green HRM practices improve competitive advantage and overall performance by enhancing employee morale, retention of employees, better public image and attracting employees, increased productivity, and sustainability. Yusliza, Ramayah & Othman (2015) found that the human resource is the most important asset of an organization that plays an important role in managing employees. Modern human resource managers have been assigned with the additional responsibility of incorporating the green human resource philosophy in the corporate mission statement along with human resource policies. Green human resource efforts have resulted in increased efficiencies, cost reduction, employee retention, improved productivity, and other tangible benefits. Green HR policies and practices involve environmental, social, and economic balance. According to Auranzeb (2016), organizations are primarily focused on waste management, recycling, and the use of green products, with the concept of green management being a relatively new approach. Longoni et al. (2018) found that the implementation of Green HRM practices can positively impact both financial and environmental performance. Battu and Lakshmi (2018) define Green HRM as the use of Human Resource Management policies to promote sustainable resource usage within organizations and support environmental sustainability.

Green HRM encompasses various activities such as on boarding and acquisition of human resources, induction, performance appraisal and management, training and development, and pay and reward management.

This chapter highlights the Green Human Resource Practices pursued by organizations worldwide, their implementation, and benefits. The study also adds to the literature review of GHRM functions, and suggests potential HR policies for Green organizations.

### **WHAT ARE GREEN HR PRACTICES**

1. Amidst a multitude of corporations today, sustainability initiatives are on the rise as a response to the dangers and unpredictability brought about by climate change. One effective approach towards reducing the utilization of environmentally harmful substances in their goods is through employee education, training, and incentives.
2. Instilling in employees a sense of compassion for people and a commitment to preserving their immediate surroundings is essential. A way to demonstrate this compassion is by creating playgrounds using recycled materials for children who lack access to safe play areas. This small gesture can make a significant impact on their lives.
3. Creating an HRM system that prioritizes the welfare of both employees and the community can positively impact a company's long-term health and sustainability. Ensuring long-term job security and offering retirement benefits can prevent disruptions for employees, their communities, and families.