

Green Human Resource Management - A Pace towards Sustainability

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Article Info

Volume 82

Page Number: 16159 - 16166

Publication Issue:

January-February 2020

Abstract:

Green HRM comes out to be an engrossing study that amalgamate management of environment with management of human resource. In the present scenario adopting of Green human resource management by an organization is consequential for its survival. Every employee working in an organization owe a responsibility not only towards the organization but also towards the environment. An organization should make provision to impart training to its employees regarding environmental aspects, consequences of degrading the natural resources, danger of polluting the environment on community so that goals are achieved renewably an with minimal environment impact. The paper provides an overview of how organization can make its employees green and earth conscious. Various HR practices are being discussed in a green manner. Companies following green human resource practices are studied. It also include challenges which companies face while implementing green strategies and ways how resistance by employees can be defeated by organizations.

Article History

Article Received: 18 May 2019

Revised: 14 July 2019

Accepted: 22 December 2019

Publication: 28 February 2020

Keywords: Green HRM; sustainable practices; organization culture environment; green management; green firms.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of Green human resource management is positioned on saving the earth from the mishap caused by the organizations in the greed of earning more and more profits. GHRM approach will play a nitty-gritty role in organizations to encourage the Green practices by adopting it in HR functions, educating employees and execution of legal laws related to environment protection. With the help of Green audit and adherence to ISO 26000, the organizations will be able to construct good brand in the market.

2. MEANING OF GREEN HRM

HRM is an important area of study and is a process of effectual use of human assets so as to achieve the goals of an organization(Arulrajah & Opatha,2016). The HR role is the only credible division that is nimbly dexterous to attune the egotism, pride, achievements of both executives and employees by transmuted their HR structures(Trivedi, 2015).

Today's executives of HR are discrete than earlier personnel managers. They have superior knowledge about organization and industry. They can victoriously execute dynamic efforts required to construct clean- oriented work environment (Liebowitz, 2010)

The term HRM and Sustainability has become the current interest topic as consciousness about environment practices in steadily growing among the organizations. The term HRM and Sustainability has not been confined only to the awareness but social and environmental aspects of both organization and staff are also undertaken within an extensive search(Ahmad,2015). According to Renwick.et al., (2008) the homogenization of Corporate Ecological Management into Human Resource Management is termed as Green HRM. Jabbour (2011) defined GHRM as the quantum of human resource practices which involves biodegradable aspects . Daily and Hung, (2001) says if organizations have fair people

with righteous skills only than environmental management system can be fruitfully administered.

Sustainability means promoting the use of resources in such a manner that it meet the necessities of today without accommodating the potential of upcoming generation to encounter their own demands (Bertels,2010). In an organization, employees can take care of planet earth only if organization inspire their arrangement. This is possible when HR practices like recruitment, job description, selection, training and development, learning, performance appraisal and others consolidate Sustainability issues(Jose & Jabbour,2011). Green human resource practices include- car pooling, giving transportation passes free (Gill, 2012), online interviews, web training, computerized filing, rewards for achieving environmental targets, paperless office, green performance appraisal and many others (Trivedi,2015). Even companies can opt for casual wear policy at workplace. This means not dressed up in suits will require less dry cleaning, which is better environmentally, financially and will keep employees in good health too (Vimala & Ambli, 2018)

There is an increasing worry about the global warming issues. The only ultimatum is the impurities from industries and the release of carbon which is hazardous for the environment. Thus resulting into Environmental imbalance. Therefore the prime concern for the organizations is the acceptance of sustainability. For this purpose, today, organizations are not only investing in Corporate Social Responsibility but also endeavour in making employees green(Yadav,2017) In organizations, the department of HR can play a remarkable role in refining the outlook of other stakeholders towards sustainability(Rani & Mishra,2014). HR masters in order to mould the behaviour of other stakeholders should clutch sublime communication skills. The chief purpose of GHRM is to use green devices to magnify communal, productive and environmental benefits so as to attain employees Tri-state harmony i.e. psychological, human and ecological harmony(

Liu & Xie, 2013). *Psychological harmony* includes mental health of employees and righteous adjustability. *Environmental harmony* is moving along with the earth. *Human harmony* encompasses cordial relation between organization and its employees. It is seen that the emergence of green squads within the organization aids in promoting benefits of saving energy, reusing and recycling of unwanted materials among employees. Green Squads not only help the staff to reduce environmental hazards impact but also prepare them to follow same sustainable practices at home too(Cohen & King,2017).

3. ROLE OF HR IN MAKING ORGANIZATIONS GREEN:-

The dynamisms of Green HR provides aid to an organization by diluting their cost without defeating their paramount talent. HR role in making organization green from different authors dogma can be that the prime role that HR executives play in making their organization green is to clinch synergy from staff in discharging sustainable policies (Renwick, 2008) The mantle of HR is to strengthen its own affairs so that organization sustainability strategies can be muscular. HR can assist the organization in changing its culture towards sustainability programmes so that it becomes an intrinsic part of an organization and does not look like add-on activity (Lawler & Mohrman, 2014)

Cohean, King (2017) opined that today many companies are giving green light to sustainable practices within and outside the organization. This is so because existing as well as new employees have developed their mindset to “go green”. A specimen of it can be if an enterprise wants to set up an advance manufacturing plant following green norms. Now starting from architect work to recycling process, complete installation requires staff who have green or ecological knowledge. Thus, human assets play a vital character in making employees green. To execute green initiative HR manager plays an acute role as they are drilled to spread ecological

values among employees (Mazur, 2015). The function of HR is specially placed to provide aid in executing green strategy. Organizations that adhere to green practices can confront solid effect on HR activities like – dedication, self-esteem, work life quality and retention of employees in the enterprise (Prasad, 2017).

Cohen, Taylor and Camen, (2012) had figure out three ways in which HRM tools can be used to implant Sustainability through Partnering, Engaging & Aligning. *Partnering*, an effective HRM can help organization in demonstrating the position of an organization in society by depicting that mere earning profits is not enough for sustainability but taking sustainable initiative can benefit organization in long run. *Engaging*, HR should encompass stakeholders in discovering the ways in which organization can donate Environmental benefits to society by its actions. *Aligning*, HRM practices from Entry to Exit i.e. recruitment, selection, training, motivation, compensation, participation and others must support sustainable strategies of an organizations.

4. HR PRACTICES ADOPTED BY ORGANIZATION TO GO GREEN:-

There are many HR practices which organizations should adopt to make planet earth green, healthy, clean, sustainable. Some of the universal practices incorporated are as follows:-

1.Green Recruitment:- Green or E- recruitment is a process where individuals are attracted, stimulated in a paper- free environment (Arananathan, 2018). Organizations are now acknowledging the reality that captivating modern candidates through green employer brand is a fruitful method (Ahmed,2015). Even most of the organizations in their recruitment meetings are discussing to introduce green job descriptions (Arananathan, 2015). There are number of green recruitment practices which organizations can incorporate such as- companies own job portals, recruitment software, resume scanners (Diana, 2016).

2.Green Selection:- Green Selection is a process of choosing candidates who have concern, affection, tenderness in environment initiatives. The paradigm for green selection can be holding of virtual interviews, hunt- for environment related questions, inspecting the awareness for sustainability programs (Arulrajah, Opatha & Nawaratna, 2015).

3.Green Induction & Orientation:- When respective candidates are hired, than only they should be enlightened with organization environmental programs, environment policies and practices, environment mission (Leibowitz, 2010). Candidates should also be familiarized with existing green behaviour of employees so that they too can be indulged in green activities (Arulrajah, Opatha & Nawaratna, 2015).

4.Green Training & Development:- The foremost function of HR department is to deliver environment training to its staff so that members can flourish with required skills and competencies in green practices of an organization (Arulrajah, Opatha & Nawaratna, 2015). Today, more and more individuals are feverish about clean management and they cherish the moment to get training in this aspect (Leibowitz, 2015). Many, companies consider training on environmental aspects as an investment as per (Jose & Jabbour, 2011)

5.Green Remuneration:- To fortify long- term environmental performance, employees should be rewarded in profusion. To pillar up organization environmental performance, monetary and non-monetary incentives is a probable tool (Ahmed, 2015). Also, employees not achieving sustainable targets can be suspended, criticized or their remuneration can be cut so that further environment improvements can be made (Jain, 2016)

ESTABLISHMENTS TAKING RIDE ON GREEN SIDE:-

There are different instances of different organizations which have incorporated green hrm at their office. Some of these are *One World Health*, a

non-profit pharmaceutical company make medicines that are safe and economical for people suffering with disease in developing world (Collier & Esteban,2007). *Philips Healthcare* impart training to its employees on various aspects that can be recycled, reused. *Cipla*, a leading pharmaceutical manufacturing company disburse an amount of 13.43cr on corporate social responsibility (CSR). It has also launched many sustainable operations like use of solar heaters, LED lightning and many more. The employees are continually following conservation principles such as – recycling of waste, compliance to regulations of State Pollution Control Board (Cipla Business Responsibility Report, 2015).

ITC had trained and generated consciousness on several environmental issues of above 2000 managers. *Infosys* had won award for conservation of energy efforts in 2012(Sindhvani & Saxena, 2015). *Walmart* has generated green revenues by focusing on their society and environment. *Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL)* is rated as foremost energy saving company. It is the invulnerable public enterprise with no instance of manufacturing threat in any of its plant (Lather, Garg & Vikas 2014). *General Electric* is engaging its employees to consolidate biodegradable activities into the culture of company sequencing from enrolling practices and educating to employees safety programs. *Adobe*, a program company is using inexhaustible power technologies and aims at reducing energy requisites. *Google* uses virtual recruiting techniques because it consider that young and talented people gets attracted because of it. India's largest energy efficient donor, *Suzlon Energy Ltd* has valuable green building with renewable system of lighting, practices of management of waste, treatment of waste water, ride share and other green hr practices. *HCL Technologies* executives are 3bouncy associates of Sustainable Development Council. *Idea Telecom* is transmitting eco friendly message through plants potted at bus shelters. *TATA Metaliks Ltd* practice green practices as lights are

switched off during day time and whole organization rely on sun light (Jain, 2016). *Samsung* uses no baleful chemicals and it has advocated LED backlights which consume 40% reduced electricity. *Nike*, will be able to achieve 25% dwindle in carbon emission by 2020 in most of its operations (Vimala & Ambli, 2018).

STRATEGIES TO MAKE EMPLOYEES GREEN (Anderson and Cleveland, 2013 Sustrana)

There are diverse techniques to animate employees to go green like *Gamification*, this strategy transforms “Employees” into “players”. It is the concept where employees can be engaged in Green performance to save planet Earth. Games can be organized within the organization to test employee creativity and knowledge to go green. The objective of Gamification is to instil among employees, the fact that sustainability or Going green does not forfeit profits for the sake of Environment but it is a business strategy to safeguard long-term survival, viability in a swiftly changing planet. The other can be *Green Squads* are comparatively simple to nurture large- scale interaction on Environment sustainable programmes and can be one of the vital factor for implementing change in business Organizations. With the help of Green Teams, distinct perception on sustainability can be bought up and worked upon. The foremost requirement is that “Green Squads” must be clear of their roles, activities, duties so as to avoid topsy-turvy activities. The task of Green Teams include- setting sustainable goals , spotting out suitable projects, collecting data, writing up of reports, frequent communication among team members and making sure that everyone working in the organization is aware of their responsibilities and duties. Though, *WarmCompetition* between employees, departments, Managers, individuals can help the organization in achieving sustainable goals. The way Managers perceive things is different from what employees perceive because Managers or Executives occupy a vital position as compare to employees who engage themselves in day-to-day activities. A Warm

Competition puts employees think in a way- How can I make improvement towards sustainable goals that others can't? Thus, attitude of commitment on Green Goals creep into all levels of an organization. For, *Inducements* organizations should make provisions for rewarding their employees for changed behaviour. This may include monetary incentive or gains for buying electric cars or distributing savings realized from decreased consumption of Energy. This can serve as a driver for accepting change in an organization. Even non-monetary incentives such as- appreciation letters, recognizing Green Employees, giving awards and choosing sustainable leaders etc can also be encouraged while implementing sustainable or green change or making employees green. The other strategy can be *Education & Training*, to make employees green is to inflate the awareness level and sustainability knowledge through casual ways like- Company's newsletters, bulletin boards, should include information on environment issues. Organizing symposiums, seminar, workshops on sustainability. Inviting Environmental experts in organization to throw light on how employees can contribute in making organization environment friendly.

Even with *Conventions & Discussions* organization can inflate the skills of their employees on sustainable issues and enlighten them the importance of making organization environmental friendly. Through conventions employees can also contribute through their own ideas, plans and strategies to engage themselves in Green activities. Also, *Visualizations*, can serve as a strong communication tool for employees because there are some employees who consume data better in imagery and graphic form. Organization can make better use of marks or logos for eco friendly activities. Eco friendly images, icons, logos can be shown to employees and training can be imparted as to how they can practice it in their day-to-day activities. Nowadays by way of *Webbing*, the intranet of organization can be used to merge environment

related information into one place. The intranet or organization webbing can be a store house of training matters, directions to make employees Green, informational videos on saving planet etc which can provide aid to employees so that they can upgrade their knowledge on topics related to sustainability. With the help of intranet employees can co-relate environmental aspects into their departmental work. *E-mail Octopus* can also be designed by business organizations to send sustainability messages to employees scattered at different places and also to obtain suggestions and recommendations on taking Green initiatives. With E-mail Octopus, employees develop a sense of belongingness towards organization because they feel that their contributions regarding sustainability are being valued. *Celebrating Occasions* can also be an innovative strategy to make employees green or environment conscious is to celebrate green occasions such as – “World Environment Day”, “World Water Day”, “Earth Day”, “Energy Conservation Day” etc. Such occasions are not only amusing but inspire employees to take sustainability initiatives as a part of organizational goals.

Major Challenges For Executing Green Enterprise Practices

In a report of role of HR in driving sustainable business practices (2013) the major challenges that can appear in green enterprise practices can be- Absence of support from leaders, the executives of the organization consider ecological aspects as subordinate to profitability of the firm. There is also unease in measuring yield on sustainability investment, it is difficult for the organization to measure the return on sustainability investment from the expense incurred to build a sustainable organization. Some organization consider that sooth derived from sustainable initiatives is much beneath than the other initiatives. Sometimes, lack of Communication or there exist no communication within the employees and employer, between different levels of organization due to which achievement of sustainability objectives get

hampered. It is also argued that HR masters are not artist on nature issues, they are not experts in conservation of environment and its parallel zones. They do not possess necessary adroitness, prowess, and time to execute green projects in an organization (Mtembu, 2018). Some consider that Green HR is an incommodious process, to evolve a culture of green human resource management in the complete organization is a clumsy process (Arumugam & Vijai 2018). As per Mtembu (2018), the vital and foremost barrier in making employees work for sustainability is staff resistance in accepting change. They do not like to work for activities that are beyond their job description. The reason for resistance can be- loss of job, poor communication, faulty implantation of policies and many others. This resistance increases the job stress among the employee, thus resulting in job dissatisfaction and increase in labour turnover ratio. To waive off these hurdles organizations need to devote time for staff to work on green programs and incorporate sustainability in job description, and other HRM practices. The other ground for opposition among employees is that HR department is flooded with so much work and responsibilities that they are not ready to accept green change in their routine activities. So their perception is to get themselves engaged in primary HR activities and leaving environment initiatives to the masters of environment. HR employees consider that eco friendly or environment initiatives are for units such as manufacturing and operation but not HR. This is the reason that human resource department draw separation from any kind of green struggle in an organization. Therefore top officials are required to figure out their own culture of an organization so as to execute environmental initiatives adequately. Only the adherence from top management is not enough as there must be continuous communication between management and employees.

CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS:-

In nutshell, it can be said that the present study adds to the sustainable literature by targeting employees

and executives who are considered as a major player in making organization green. There are numerous HR practices which gives limelight to green programs. Today, corporate which contemplate green goals in their mission and vision will not only gain competitive advantage but will earn a massive reverence in the community. Organizations should built green gang in every department to generate awareness and consciousness for environmental aspects. No doubt, employees resist for green change but through proper support from top authorities and regular communication, their resistance can be waived off. Green HRM if holistically carried out, it will be able to eliminate environment havoc. Time has come when all individuals working in an organizations should get ready to carry out sustainable practices efficiently.

5. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:-

The study undertaken possess certain limitations like job positions cannot include sustainable facet structurally and there are still many companies that do not view environmental standards while scrutinizing employees. Mostly, the researches done on green HRM are based on secondary data. There is an urge to fix E-HR so that people working in an organization can keep record of their own carbon emission.

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