



# GREEN HRM: A STEP TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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## ABSTRACT:

Health of human beings is directly linked to environmental health. According to WHO, 24% of deaths on earth could be avoided if the environment is protected. Environmental sustainability refers to the responsibility to save natural resources and conserve nature for meeting the needs of today as well as tomorrow. The government, organisations, employees, customers and citizens of every country are today worried about achieving environmental sustainability. In fact, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines it as “meeting today’s needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.” Nowadays, organisations are making efforts towards making their practices and policies more eco-friendly. The HR Department is playing a key role in implementation of green practices through practicing policies related to GREEN HRM. This paper explains the concept of Green HRM and provides an insight of how companies in India are implementing Green HRM through Green Recruitment, Green Compensation, Green Rewards, Green Training and Development, etc. Secondary data was used for this study. The paper also showcases the importance of HRM in implementing Green Culture in organisations.

**Keywords** Green HRM, Environmental Sustainability, Green Culture, Green Recruitment

## INTRODUCTION

Sustainability refers to satisfying the requirements of the current generation without sacrificing the needs of the future generations. The whole world has realised the importance of going green and nowadays, organisations are implementing green practices. Green Human Resource Management helps in implementing green policies and thus helps in preserving and protecting the environment. GHRM has become an area of HRM where focus is on environment friendly practices. According to Wikiredia, Green HRM is defined as a set of policies, practices, and systems that stimulate the green behavior of a company’s employees in order to create an environmentally sensitive, resource-efficient, and socially responsible organization.

## OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The objective of this paper is to explain the concept of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) and to explain the role that HRM Department of an organisation can play in designing and implementing ecological practices and in maintaining Green Culture in organizations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Opatha and Arulrajah(2014), Green HRM is referred to all the activities involved in development, implementation and on-going maintenance of a system that aims at making employees of an organization green i.e. environment-friendly. It is the side of HRM that is concerned with transforming normal employees into green i.e. environment-friendly employees so as to achieve environmental goals of the organization and finally to make a significant contribution to environmental sustainability. Zoogah,D,(2011) said that GHRM refers to the policies, practices and systems that make employees of the organization green for the benefit of the individual, society, natural environment, and the business. Green HRM is the use of HRM policies, philosophies, and practices to promote sustainable use of resources and prevent harm arising from environmental concerns within business organizations. According to Mandip,G(2012), Green HRM is the use of Human Resource Management policies to promote the sustainable use of resources within business organizations and promote the cause of environmental sustainability.

Sakhawalkar, & Thadani (2015) has done descriptive research on all IT companies in pune where non-probability – convenient sampling was used & structured questionnaire was filled by employees of IT companies in Pune City. The study reveals the awareness among employees in IT companies & implementation of various green hr practices. The study found that companies are going towards the environmental friendly initiatives that reduce an employee's carbon footprint. The results included: electronic data filing, Vehicle sharing, video conferencing and virtual interviews, recycling, telecommuting, online training, Work at home and developing more energy efficient office spaces. The study also found that respondents are aware about the electric & hybrid vehicles; however people, who are not aware about - Green HRM\*, are aware of the practices and know that their organization is following such practices.

Aggarwal & Sharma (2015) highlighted the concept of Green and Green HRM, along with focusing on its importance, advantages and limitations for an organization which have an impact on sustainability. Sheopuri and Sheopuri (2015) also found that Green HR initiatives help companies to find alternative ways to cut the cost without losing their top talent; part time work, etc. The study also says that today companies could get competitive advantage over it.

Pillai and Sivathanu (2014) focused on the various Green HR Practices followed by the organizations globally. The study also highlighted the challenges and benefits of green HRM. The survey was done through interview session with HR managers in order to understand the implementation of green HR practices at the workplace. Marjan, Saeed, Zahra and Shahbazmoradic (2014) have done their study to identify the barriers of green human resource management in Iran's oil industry. In the study, 12 experts & HR Managers from Oil industry were interviewed; it was found that there is lack of comprehensive plan to implement green HRM & ambiguous Green values were considered as barrier to Green HRM. Addition to this, study also reveals that staff resistance had the lowest importance.

Jabbar and Abid investigated the factors that motivate employees towards organizations environmental performance. By adopting Green human resource management practices (GHRM), firms can play a pivotal role in promoting environment related concerns. In this study, investigation has done on the factors that trigger the employees to be involved in green HRM practices. The 178 respondents (employees) of the firms that use GHRM practices have taken for research. Convenient Sampling was used for data collection. The result of the study reveals that HRM practices influence employee motivation to become involved in environmental performance of the organization. The study also found that employees are more motivated through monetary rewards rather than non -monetary. Supervisors support also enhances the morale of employee to take initiatives towards environmental sustainability. Furthermore, rewards have positive impact on employees' motivation towards eco-initiatives.

Kim (2009) investigated how employees of the hotel industry perceived green practices. The Data was collected from 220 employees working in eight green certified hotels in Orlando where results found

that performance levels of green practices implemented by hotels were lower than the importance levels of those same green practices as perceived by hotel employees. The study also reveals that there is positive correlation between organizational commitment and green practices.

Yusoff, Othman & et al (2015) has done an exploratory study in order to attempt a conceptual understanding of the concept of Green Human Resource Management (HRM) in multinational companies in Malaysia. The study found that most of the companies are focusing on Green HRM with special attention on five concepts namely: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Electronic HRM (E-HRM), Work-life Balance (WLB), Green Policies and Extra Care Program.

## **GREEN HRM PRACTICES**

### **1.GREEN RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

Nowadays, organisations are implementing green hrm practices in recruitment and selection like:

- Conducting Online Interviews on Zoom, Google meet, Skype and MSTeams and having online meeting with subordinates and higher authorities
- Sending online Offer letters and acceptance letters and giving joining letter in soft copy.

### **2. GREEN TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

- Giving online training to employees and sending reading materials for training on e mails and conducting video conferencing for trainings and conducting webinars and online workshops for employees from time to time.
- Providing training for reducing paper work, reducing wastage of power and conservation of resources.
- Conducting Executive Development Programs online.

### **3. GREEN PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM**

- Conducting performance appraisal of employees online. Reducing paper work and wastage of resources and thus protecting the environment.
- Appreciating those employees who reduce paper wastage and preserve electricity.
- Maintaining Green practices should be made as a criteria for green performance appraisal.

### **4.Green Culture**

- Promote riding transport pooling and sharing.
- Promote team work for environmental sustainability.
- Promote greenery around the company.

### **5.GREEN REWARDS AND COMPENSATION**

- Giving appreciation letters in soft copy and green rewards like vouchers of amazon, flipkart ,etc to employees.
- Giving recognition to those employees who saved electricity in the last month and year as well as to those who saved paper and reduced paper wastage.

## 6.Green Practices:

- Use of Jute bags in office instead of plastic bags
- Giving Work From Home facility to employees
- Providing Flexi time facility.

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