

GREEN HR PRACTICES OF THE IT FIRMS IN COIMBATORE

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Abstract

Carbon emissions and pollution have been increasing at an alarming rate. To limit the effects, corporate world has started taking initiatives to promote environment friendly practices. The study was done on a sample of 120 employees and 5 HR managers in major IT firms in Coimbatore. The process adopted for the study involved interaction as well as e-questionnaire. Most of the respondents were aware of the environmental management systems in their respective companies and the HR managers agreed to the fact that green HR policies had contributed in increasing the profit share of the company. According to the research, the major barriers to the implementation of sustainable policies were cost of implementing programs and the cost of maintaining programs. It was found out that majority of the employees are aware of the practices followed and they do think that it is an important step towards sustainability. Green HR is an integral part of an organization as it is very important for a sustainable future. It is a positive step towards energy conservation and is the need of the hour.

Key words: Green human resource management, human resource information system, environmental sustainability, carbon emissions, sustainable practices, etc.

1. Introduction

Green HR is about focusing on recruiting, managing, giving direction to and retaining people while eliminating or reducing workplace inefficiencies. Companies now realize that they have to develop a powerful social conscience and green sense of responsibility where corporate responsibility is not just a tool for brand building but a factor essential for business development. Many companies, which are taking a greener approach inside their organization, are experiencing a positive and congenial effect on the patterns of employee relations in the organization. This has a positive influence on the mindset of employees as they feel that apart from their functional contribution on the job, they have an important responsibility in preserving the environment. The responsibility of the present generations, HR managers is to create awareness amongst the youngsters and people working for the organization about the green HRM, green movement, utilization of natural resources and helping the corporate to maintain proper environment, and retain the natural resources for future generation i.e. sustainable development.

2. Review of literature

Mankotia, Shambhu and Tiwari (2011) made an attempt to find out how much importance IT companies are attaching to adopt green practices and products; and to find out the attitude of employees in IT firms towards environmental sustainability. Besides this, there is an increased level of awareness amongst the employees of software firms regarding the adoption of green IT practices.

Novacek Pavel (2013) analysed the correlation between human values and sustainable development; and studied how different countries can balance the two aspects to develop economically without compromising on environmental ethics. The other factor is having a vision of a positive solution, which gives hope that can produce the will and determination for a voluntary change in behaviour.

Walter Wehrmeyer (1997) carried out an article of top management graduates in Europe with respect to environment. He has come up with four most important factors for these graduates: green image helps recruitment, more support from employees to changes linked with improvement in environmental performance than to cutting costs or raising competitiveness, bonuses tied to environmental performance, and pay attention to workplace.

Quazi (1999) stated that companies attained substantial monetary savings from EMS implementation/ISO14001 through recycling activities, product and process modification, reduced energy consumption, reduction in chemical use, improvement in pollution prevention processes but difficulty in securing employee commitment was found in most of the companies.

Beard and Rees (2000) stated that the teams were used to: generate ideas, enhance learning experiences, explore issues, identify conflict and focus action to enhance understanding about why, what, how, where and when to pursue the best practicable environmental options.

Ramus (2001) found that companies that want to improve their environmental performance can increase their employee's willingness to eco-innovate through supportive behaviours from line managers.

Govindarajulu and Daily (2004) presented a theoretical framework on motivating employees for environmental improvement by integrating top management commitment, employee empowerment, rewards, feedback and review and environmental performance.

3. Objectives of the study

1. To study the sustainable practices and policies incorporated by IT firms.
2. To assess employee awareness regarding sustainable practices.
3. To suggest measures to improve sustainable practices.

4. Methodology

The researcher has selected 120 employees and 5 HR managers working in major IT firms across Coimbatore. Based on the result of the pilot study 2 hypothesis were formulated. H₀₁: Companies do not incorporate sustainable practices, and H₀₂: There is no awareness among the employees of IT firms regarding the adoption of green practices.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Awareness of employees

TABLE 1
Awareness of Environmental Management System

S.No	Parameters	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	90	72
2	No	23	18.04
3	Not aware	12	9.6
Total		125	100

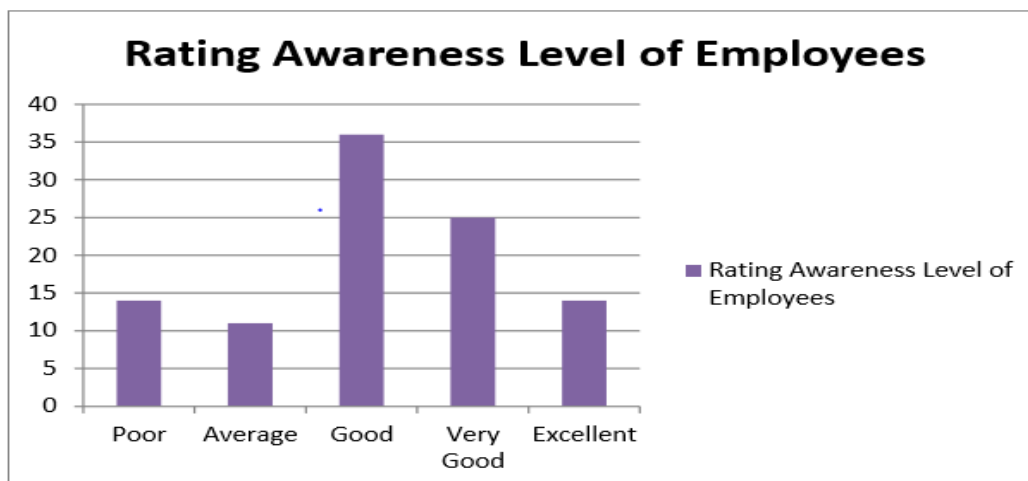
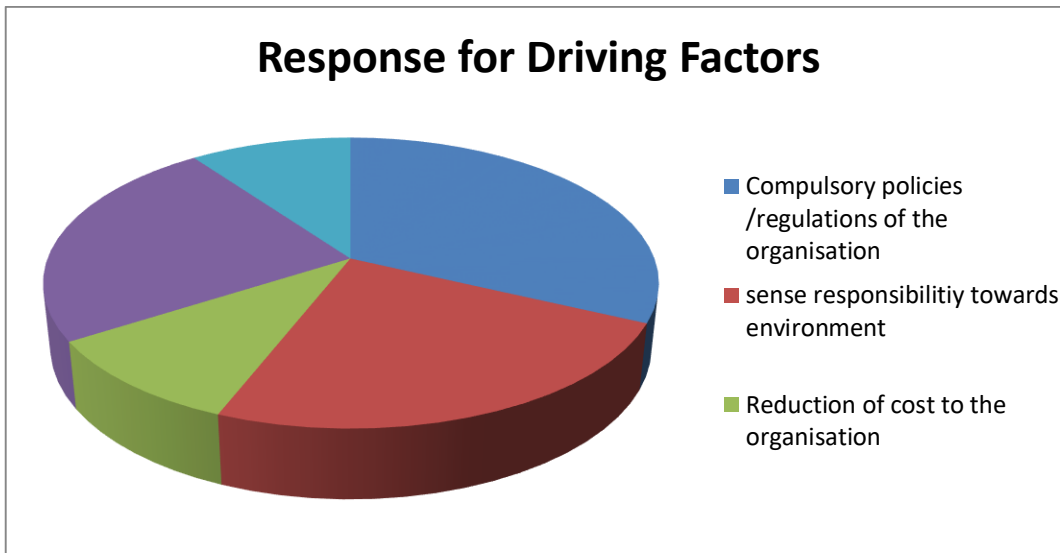


Figure 1: Rating of Employee Awareness of Green Practices

From the above table, it is inferred that 72 per cent of the respondents were aware of the environmental management systems of their companies. 18.40 per cent of respondents said that there were no environmental management systems in their companies. About 9.60 per cent of the respondents were not aware of such environmental management system. Out of the respondents who were aware of the environmental management systems, 36 per cent had good knowledge about the green practices, 25 per cent had very good knowledge and 14 per cent had excellent knowledge. However, 14 per cent of them have low awareness and 11 per cent of the respondents had average knowledge about the green practices of their organizations.



Further, it was found out that 32 per cent of the respondents followed green practices because of stringent government rules and policies of the organization. 24 per cent of them felt a sense of responsibility towards environment and 10 per cent of them felt it was helping in reducing cost of the organization and so it was their driver in following green practices. For 24 per cent of them, it was a convenience factor. 10 per cent of respondents said that it is due to health and safety considerations.

5.2. Barriers to implement Green HR policies

TABLE 2
Barriers to Implement Green HR Policies

S.No	Barriers	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Cost of implementing programs	35	28.0
2	Cost of maintaining programs	31	24.8
3	Lack of support by management	9	7.2
4	Lack of support by employees	20	16.0
5	Concerns about workplace inefficiency	12	9.6
6	Lack of governmental support	18	14.4

Most of the respondents thought that the biggest barrier in implementing green practices was cost of implementing the programs. Around 26 per cent of the respondents said that it is due to cost of maintaining such programs. 10 per cent said that there is lack of support by the employees and 9 per cent said that there is lack of top management support.

6. Recommendations

As per the findings, a few measures can be recommended as to how companies can really make green HR an integral part of their organization as it is very important for a sustainable future. The company should focus on internal operations and get senior management involved. They should engage employees to capture new ideas and communicate and share best practices with them. Encourage employees to incorporate green habits in their personal lives. Companies must drive campaigns to raise awareness about the green practices within the organization as well outside the organization. Companies must try to align green HR practices with corporate sustainability goals.

7. Conclusion

The present study was conducted on a few IT companies in Coimbatore. Green HR awareness is growing rapidly amongst organizations. Companies have taken initiatives like virtualizations, LEED certifications and these initiatives are helping them bringing more clients and business to the organization. The study found out that companies are adopting various methods towards sustainable development like takes double sided print outs, less use of papers, encouraging carpooling, switching off lights and other power consuming resources. Further, majority of the employees are aware of the green practices followed and they do think that it is an important step towards sustainability.

8. Reference

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