

GREEN HRM: A SMALL STEP TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

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Abstract

Technological advances have created a series of major problems associated with environmental pollution especially during the timings of industrial revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The eco balance has been under serious threat by the industrial pollutants and the carbon emissions from auto mobiles and from many other creatures of comfort which man has created for himself and by extracting the natural environment such as land, coal, minerals, water, trees, etc. as input/resources and in return dumping the waste, polluting the environment, causing atrocious problems such as global warming, floods, drought, famine and many more. Now the corporate citizens have identified their responsibility to do every bit to protect and sustain environment. Need of a realistic environmental management drive all over the world towards various solutions, one of which is green HRM. In the present scenario Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has become a fashionable business strategy for the organizations who works on ethical philosophy and goodwill is the prime objective for them. This article is throwing the light on the terms and concepts of green HRM, briefly discuss why going green is important and also examining the reason that organizations are adopting a green HRM philosophy along with the challenges of going green.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Eco-balance, Carbon emission

1. Introduction

Green is the colour of nature and one of the most beautiful colours in the world. Being with nature and environment can definitely bring happiness and prosperity to our personal as well as business endeavours. Exploitation of nature in numerous ways is resulting in global warming, depletion of ozone layer, reduction in forest area and melting of ice Mountains and glaciers. Nature also gives a grim reminder not to disturb ecological balance in its own way like earthquake, floods, draughts, tsunamis etc.

The green movement for protection of environment has influenced business and industry to adopt environment friendly practices and products which are referred to as green management. Green HR is the use of HRM policies to promote the sustainable use of resources within business organizations and, more generally, promotes the cause of environmental sustainability. Green

HRM is the part of wider programs of corporate social responsibility. It involves undertaking environment friendly initiatives resulting in greater efficiencies and help organizations to reduce employee carbon footprints by electronic documentation and record keeping, carpooling, teleconferencing, video-conferencing, virtual trainings, virtual interviews, creating energy efficient offices, inclination towards solar energy etc.

It must be realized that only HR cannot contribute to the entire business results by incorporating Green HR processes, rather organisations have to invest in the go green concept of the business as a whole. Such as encouraging recycling and reusing, minimizing use of bottled water, plastic and Styrofoam cups in the workplace, organizing awareness programs for employees and their families for physical fitness, nutrition and healthy life-style. Focus can be given on waste management, water harvesting, “Swachh organization” campaign, conducting tree planting camps for employees, linking reward with go green practices etc.

2. Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to:

- Develop a basic understanding of green HRM
- Find out the reasons that why the organizations are adopting green HRM in this current scenario
- Analyse the various significant works practices on green HRM by different organizations.
- Find out the various challenges in implementing green HRM.

3. Methodology of the study

This study is primarily based on the secondary data. Extensive literature related to the topic from different databases, websites and other available sources were collected for the purpose. A systematic literature is done to increase accurateness.

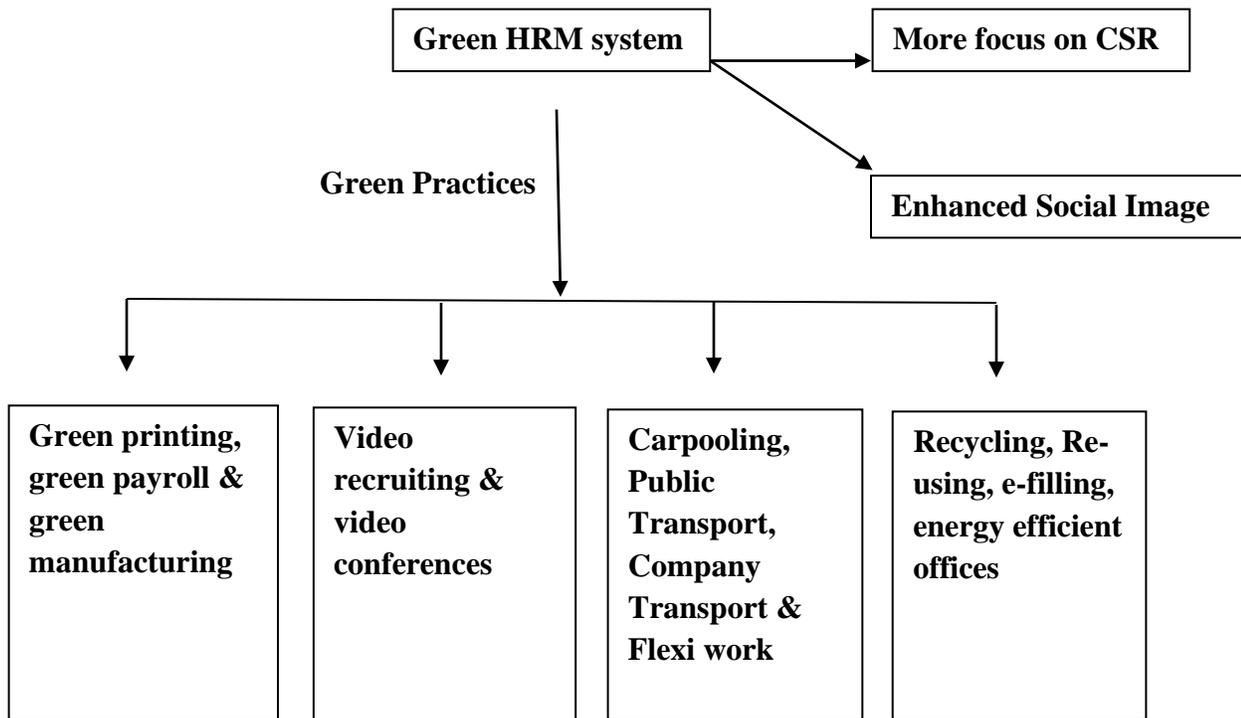
4. Green HRM Practices

Green HRM is not a distinguished practice human resource management rather it is the application of green or environment friendly technique to each possible function of HRM and more over the Management. It is a paper-free process with a minimal environmental impact. Electronic applications are used like e-mail, online application forms or the Global Talent Pool, if possible, telephone or video-based interviews, meetings reviews are conducted to minimize any travel-related environmental impact. Green HRM is active in the field of professional environment where the view is meeting the growing needs for experts in the areas of renewable

energy, climate change and sustainable development. In a nutshell creating a green world where consumers and employees force changes.

Largely it focuses on the following areas:

- a) Preservation of the natural environment.
- b) Conservation of the natural environment.
- c) Minimization or avoidance of environmental pollution and pollutants.
- d) Generation of gardens, plantation of trees and looking like natural places.



5. Organizations implementing Green HRM

- **ITC Limited**

Elemental chlorine is used in the bleaching process during paper manufacturing, this technique is replaced by 'Ozone Treated elemental Chlorine free technology' and such kind of environment friendly multipurpose paper is launched by ITC Ltd.

- **ONGC**

To create a beautiful premise ONGC started various projects of landscaping, designing of garden and greening of area in the campus of Jollygrant Airport, Dehradun

- **American Airlines**

American Airlines proudly announced that their flight attendants recycle over 646,000 pounds of aluminium cans which give them earnings of \$40,000 in a year and priceless environmental fitness.

- **Education Industry: IIMT University**

Instead of using stationary for notices (which are for no legal importance), circulars and all other important information is circulated through WhatsApp group and of which IIMT members are a part and e-mails. This process being environment friendly also provides a sense of belongingness and a friendly environment as each member is connected to every other member.

All the reporting is also electronic via e-mail. All the campuses are well equipped with plants, trees, grass and other nature friendly green species.

College is having its own botanical garden comprising various herbs and shrubs.

Rainwater harvesting system in the college is to preserve water which is very precious for life.

IIMT College may be seen as a sample of earth having more than 70% greenery, a pond full of fishes, various animals as the part of animal house.

On line tests and online assignments is a new initiative to save paper as much as possible.

Every year students of any department plant trees at various locations of the College and look after them till their tenure in college.

Pharmacy department of the college is manufacturing its own 'Aayurvedic Chawanprash' and different medicines including 'Kadha' with almost all the ingredients grown in the college itself.

Organic wheat, rice, vegetables, mustard oil etc are also available for all the students, teachers and staff.

- **Delhi Government**

Delhi government has tested an idea of odd and even number four wheelers to reduce the alarming pollution on the streets of Delhi.

6. Role of HR Manager in Going Green Concept

- HR manager is expected to guide line and staff managers to gain co-operation of subordinates towards the implementation of environmental policies
- HR Manager can create a culture of turning off computers, lights, projectors, fan, ACs and any other electronic equipment when leaving.
- Replacement of normal light with LED lights which consumes comparatively less electricity than normal bulbs and even CFL
- Solar lightening panel is also a good alternative if feasible to use.

- Company's vehicle may be used for transportation instead of individual vehicle, this is supportive to environment as well as economic to the employees.
- Conversion of e-HR system with full efficiency and effectiveness.
- HR Manager can motivate the employees to track their own carbon emission and minimize them.

7. Career Opportunities in Going Green

- With the emergence of green HRM career opportunities are also available for business risk analyst, architects, engineers, landscape designers, lawyers, business strategist etc.
- As per the survey of Economic Times due to increase in environmental awareness various job and business opportunities are being transferred from one area to other. For example, in Uttar Pradesh use of polythene is banned from the year 2016 because of which people engaged with the manufacturing of polythene have become jobless whereas now there is a huge scope in the area of paper bag making, jute bag making, cloth bag making, Rexene bag making etc.
- Expertise people in the carbon free world will have tremendous opportunity in all the organizations in public as well as private sector, but people with such an expertise required to fill them are not easy to found and even identify as there is no such course or degree program to train people in such an area till now.

8. Importance of Green HRM

• Reduced Running Expenses

Even small businesses can significantly reduce their running expenses by using technologies that are energy efficient and less wasteful. Switching light bulbs from incandescent to Energy Star-rated CFL bulbs lowers your electric bills immediately, offsetting the cost of the slightly higher bulb price within a time period. Adding energy-efficient windows and doors decreases heating and cooling costs, as does lowering a workplace's thermostat slightly in winter and raising it during summer. Utility companies in many communities are willing for a free energy audit and offering suggestions for cost cutting and energy saving

• Decreased Environmental Impact

By implementing green HRM, an organization helps the environment to stay fit. If an organization uses less electricity and water and reduce the trash produce that goes into landfills, recycle paper and use longer-lasting products, than it reduces the amount of energy needed to produce replacement products.

• Enhanced Social Image

Any initiative for the protection of environment or earth captures the attention of the consumers and always leads to a favourable image of the organizations and thus leading to goodwill. It can be more advertised by promotion of all the environmental contributions to the media through press releases to earn the attention of potential customers and possible new sales.

- **Increased Business Opportunities**

Some government agencies, commercial businesses and non-profit institutions make it mandatory that only businesses that meet specific green standards can bid on their contracts or fill the tenders.

9. Disadvantages of green HRM

- **Initial Costs**

One of the disadvantages of going green is that it often requires a large initial cost. For example, installing a new insulation roof to keep heat from escaping an office would be considered a green effort, but it would cost a large sum of money to get the work done. Similarly, any green equipment or material will demand for its purchase and installation cost.

- **Competition**

In the current scenario of cut throat competition, going green can be an attractive goal to gain goodwill and consumer support, but unless green improvements are economically viable, it can put a business at a competitive disadvantage.

- **Materials**

Eco friendly materials are not always as readily available as their less eco-friendly alternatives. Thus, green materials may need to be custom ordered for a remodelling project. Experts believe there are still not enough green alternatives for the endless remodelling possibilities available

- **Time**

Going green is a time-consuming gradual process. It requires a plenty of time for product identification, product purchase, product installation, to redeem tax rebates etc.

- **Marginal Impact**

While going green is focused on reducing harm to the environment, the impact that any specific individual can have on the environment by going green is often negligible. The theory is that if everyone were to go green, it would have a significant and noticeable impact, but not everyone can be convinced to go green and many believe that doing so has no real impact outside of the

economics. This makes going green a personal choice for many, which does not necessarily result in concrete economic or environmental benefits.

- **Decreased Productivity during Incubation Period**

“Bad habits die harder.” This is very true in case of employees also. They will take time to adopt new process get adjusted with it and meanwhile the productivity will be reduced until they become habitual of the new pattern and get expertise in using new green technology.

- **Green-washing**

Companies may intentionally or unintentionally make false claims regarding the environmental friendliness of their products, a process known as “green-washing.” If consumers become aware that a company is engaging in green-washing, the company may suffer harm to its credibility.

10. Conclusion

Green HRM Concept is based on the concept of preservation of natural resources and less environmental harming practices, while taking into consideration the satisfaction of the human needs and wants. This concept of improving efficiency by using a Human Resource Management Service is not new to HR Professionals; the focus now is on the increased corporate involvement and sustainability of green initiatives. To create environmentally friendly consciousness among employees and consumers in current environmental conditions is not very tough although it requires patient handling, media involvement, government and social organizations promotion etc. Despite of cost, time, acceptability and some other hindrances, all the experts working on this area agreed that there is no reason for any organization to not join the green movement, only one need to determine how important going green is to it and compare it to the potential limiting factors whichever applicable.

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