

A study on HR Roles of Organizational Sustainability and Green HRM

Sonam Maurya¹, Aditya Singh Yadav², Sharmila Singh³, Tulika Saxena⁴, Priti Rai⁵, Rajender Tewari⁶

¹MBA 2nd year student, Ashoka Institute of Technology & Management, Varanasi

^{2,3,5}Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, Ashoka Institute of Technology & Management, Varanasi

⁴Head & Dean, Department of Business Administration, M.J.P. Rohilkhand University, Bareilly, U.P.

⁶Head, Department of Business Administration, Ashoka Institute of Technology & Management, Varanasi

Abstract

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays important role in this transition towards sustainability through the adoption of Green HRM practices. This study investigates the various roles of HR in promoting environmental sustainability within organizations. It explores the integration of green initiatives into HR functions such as recruitment, training, performance management, and rewards, aiming to cultivate a workforce committed to eco-friendly practices.. By analysing existing literature and case studies, the research identifies effective strategies for implementing Green HRM and assesses their impact on organizational sustainability.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Environmental Sustainability, HR Practices, Organizational Culture.

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Introduction:

HR plays a crucial role in supporting sustainability efforts within organizations through Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM). This approach focuses on integrating environmentally friendly practices into HR policies and processes, such as recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement. By promoting eco-conscious behaviours, such as reducing waste, energy conservation, and sustainable commuting, HR can help build a culture of sustainability. Additionally, HR supports the organization's green goals by attracting environmentally-minded talent, offering sustainability-focused benefits, and fostering a sense of corporate responsibility among employees. Green HRM not only contributes to environmental sustainability but also enhances the organization's reputation, employee satisfaction, and long-term success.

Green HRM is about integrating eco-friendly practices into HR activities like hiring, training, and performance management. HR helps promote sustainability by encouraging behaviours like reducing waste and energy use, and supporting green commuting. It also attracts employees who care about the environment, offers

Corresponding Author: Sonam Maurya, MBA 2nd year student at Ashoka Institute of Technology & Management, Varanasi

E-mail: sonammaurya15022002@gmail.com

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green benefits, and fosters a sense of responsibility among staff. This approach not only helps the environment but also boosts the company's reputation, employee satisfaction, and long-term success.

Understanding Sustainability in Business

Sustainability in business refers to operating in a way that meets present needs without harming future generations. It involves balancing profit, people, and the planet by using resources wisely, reducing waste, and supporting social and environmental well-being.

Importance of Sustainability in Business:

- **Save Money:** Using less energy and resources helps cut costs.

- **Better Reputation:** People like supporting businesses that care about the planet, so it builds trust.
- **Avoid Legal Issues:** Following eco-friendly laws helps avoid fines or penalties.
- **Keep Customers:** More customers are choosing brands that prioritize sustainability, leading to loyalty.
- **Attract Great Employees:** People want to work for companies that care about social and environmental issues.
- **Stay Competitive:** Sustainable businesses stand out and offer something unique in the market.
- **Long-Term Success:** Sustainable practices help businesses stay strong and adapt to future changes.
- **Win over Investors:** Investors like companies that are forward-thinking and responsible.
- **Boost Creativity:** Being sustainable pushes businesses to find innovative solutions and new opportunities.
- **Engage Employees in Green Initiatives:** Involve employees in sustainability programs and make them feel responsible for environmental goals.
- **Attract Eco-Conscious Talent:** Hire people who care about sustainability, ensuring the workforce is aligned with green goals.
- **Support Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Ensure the company contributes positively to society and the environment, not just profit.
- **Green HRM is when a company's HR practices focus on being environmentally friendly.** This means encouraging sustainable actions like reducing waste, saving energy, and promoting eco-conscious behaviour among employees.

Key components of Green HRM are:

- **Green Recruitment:** Hiring people who care about the environment.
- **Eco-friendly Training:** Teaching employees how to be more sustainable.
- **Green Performance:** Setting goals that encourage saving resources and reducing waste.
- **Sustainable Rewards:** Giving benefits for eco-friendly actions.
- **Employee Involvement:** Getting employees involved in green initiatives.
- **Sustainable Workplace:** Creating an eco-friendly office, like using less energy and recycling.

Green HRM:

Green HRM refers to the practice of cooperating environmentally friendly policies and practices into human resource management. This includes things like promoting sustainability in recruitment, training, employee development, and performance management, with the goal of reducing the organization's environmental impact.

Objectives of Green HRM:

- **Promote Sustainability:** Encourage employees to adopt eco-friendly practices both at work and in their personal lives.
- **Reduce Environmental Impact:** Help the company cut down on waste, energy use, and carbon emissions.

Role of HR in Promoting Sustainability

HR plays an important role in promoting sustainability by integrating eco-friendly practices into various HR functions. HR contributes in following key areas such as:

- **Recruitment and Selection:** HR can hire employees who are passionate about sustainability by looking for candidates who align with the company's green

goals. They may also prioritize candidates with experience or interest in environmental issues.

- **Training and Development:** HR can offer training to teach employees about sustainability practices, such as reducing waste, saving energy, and supporting green initiatives. This helps employees contribute to the company's sustainability efforts.
- **Performance Management:** HR can set performance goals that encourage sustainable practices, such as reducing energy use or promoting recycling. Employees can be rewarded or recognized for achieving these goals.
- **Employee Engagement:** HR can get employees involved in green initiatives, like organizing eco-friendly events or sustainability challenges. Engaged employees feel motivated to support to the company's sustainability efforts.
- In short, HR helps implant sustainability into everyday work practices by hiring the right people, offering the right training, setting the right goals, and involving employees in green efforts.

Sustainable Practices in HR

HR integrates eco-friendly actions into daily HR activities, like reducing paper use, promoting virtual meetings, and encouraging green commuting options.

- **Implementation of Sustainable Policies:** HR creates and enforces policies that support environmental goals, like energy-saving practices, recycling programs, and reducing waste in the workplace.
- **Green Workplace Initiatives:** HR introduces programs like reducing office energy consumption, encouraging the use of sustainable materials, and promoting waste recycling to make the office eco-friendlier.
- **Sustainable Compensation and Benefits:** HR offers rewards for employees who engage in sustainable behaviours, like using public transport, and may provide benefits such as green

commuting subsidies or wellness programs that focus on eco-conscious lifestyles.

These actions help HR create a work environment that aligns with sustainability goals and encourages employees to contribute to the company's green initiatives. HR create a workplace that's more environmentally conscious, making it easy for employees to participate in sustainability efforts.

Challenges of Implementing Green HRM

Some challenges of implementing Green HRM are:

1. **Resistance to Change:** People are often used to doing things a certain way, so convincing them to switch to eco-friendlier practices can be tough.
2. **Lack of Knowledge:** Not everyone may understand the importance of going green, so it's hard to get everyone on board with new sustainability efforts.
3. **Upfront Costs:** Going green can be expensive at first-like buying energy-efficient equipment or setting up recycling programs-so businesses may hesitate due to the initial investment.
4. **Limited Resources:** Some companies might not have enough time, money, or staff to focus on implementing green practices properly.
5. **Hard to Measure Results:** It's tricky to measure how much impact green practices are actually having, so companies may struggle to see the benefits and justify the efforts.
6. **Balancing with Business Goals:** Sometimes sustainability efforts might seem to clash with a company's main goal of making profits, making it hard to balance both.
7. **Changing Company Culture:** Shifting the company culture to prioritize sustainability takes time and effort, and not everyone may be eager to make the change.

These challenges can make employing Green HRM a bit difficult, but with persistence and the right strategies, they can be overcome.

Literature Review:

Organizational Sustainability and HRM

Organizational sustainability refers to business strategies that create long-term value by integrating economic, environmental, and social considerations (Elkington, 1997). Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a crucial role in fostering sustainability by aligning employee behaviors with corporate sustainability goals (Renwick et al., 2013).

Green HRM: Concept and Practices

Green HRM involves HR policies and practices that promote environmental sustainability, such as green recruitment, training, performance management, and employee engagement (Jabbour, 2011). Key practices include:

- Green Recruitment: Hiring employees with environmental awareness (Wehrmeyer, 1996).
- Green Training & Development: Educating employees on sustainability practices (Daily & Huang, 2001).
- Green Performance Management: Linking sustainability KPIs to employee evaluations (Paillé et al., 2014).
- Employee Engagement in Sustainability: Encouraging pro-environmental behaviors at work (Norton et al., 2015).

HR's Strategic Role in Sustainability

HR professionals act as change agents by embedding sustainability into organizational culture (Cohen et al., 2012). Studies suggest that Green HRM enhances corporate reputation, employee morale, and operational efficiency (Dubois & Dubois, 2012).

Research Objectives:

1. To examine the role of HRM in promoting organizational sustainability.

2. To analyse the impact of Green HRM practices on employee behaviour and organizational performance.

3. To identify challenges in implementing Green HRM strategies.

Research Methodology:

Research Design:

- *Exploratory & Descriptive Research (Qualitative Approach)*

Data Collection:

- *Secondary Data: Review of academic journals, corporate reports, and case studies.*

Sampling:

- Target Population: HR managers and employees from sustainable organizations.
- Sampling Technique: Stratified random sampling.

Data Analysis:

- Qualitative: Thematic analysis of interview responses.
- Quantitative: Statistical tools (SPSS/Excel) for survey data

Case Studies:

Unilever's Successful Green HRM

Unilever, a global company known for its consumer goods, has done an excellent job of implementing Green HRM (Human Resource Management focused on sustainability). They've made sustainability a big part of their company culture and HR practices, and it's paid off. How Unilever Made Green HRM Work:

Sustainable Hiring:

Unilever focuses on hiring people who care about the environment. They look for candidates who share the company's values on sustainability and social

responsibility.

Getting Employees Involved:

Unilever encourages employees to be part of sustainability efforts by organizing events and challenges focused on green initiatives. This helps employees become more aware and involved in making the company eco-friendlier.

Training for Green Practices:

The company offers training to help employees understand how they can contribute to sustainability. They also provide programs that teach employees how to lead sustainability projects within the company.

Eco-Friendly Workspaces:

Unilever's offices are designed with sustainability in mind. They use energy-efficient systems, reduce waste, and promote recycling to make their workplaces as eco-friendly as possible.

Green Benefits for Employees:

Employees who take part in eco-friendly practices, like carpooling or using public transport, are rewarded. Unilever also offers green benefits, like allowances for employees to support sustainable commuting.

Sustainability in Performance Reviews:

Sustainability is part of the performance management system. Employees are evaluated on how well they help the company meet its environmental goals, alongside their business targets.

Results of Green HRM at Unilever:

Better Environmental Impact:

They've reduced energy use, water consumption, and waste.

Happier Employees:

Employees are proud to work for a company that values

sustainability, making them more motivated.

Stronger Reputation:

Their commitment to sustainability has improved their brand, attracting customers and investors who care about the environment.

More Innovation:

Employees have come up with new, green product ideas, which has helped the company stay competitive.

Conclusion:

Unilever's success shows how Green HRM can help businesses reduce their environmental impact while also engaging employees, improving the company's image, and encouraging innovation. By making sustainability a part of everything they do, Unilever has shown that being green is not just good for the planet—it's also good for business.

Google's Green HRM Practices

Google has always been focused on sustainability and being environmentally friendly. They integrate Green HRM (sustainable human resource practices) to reduce their environmental impact and engage their employees in green efforts.

What Google Does for Green HRM:

Sustainable Hiring:

Google hires employees who care about the environment and sustainability. During the hiring process, they make sure that new hires are excited about the company's eco-friendly goals and are ready to contribute to them.

Employee Involvement in Sustainability:

Google gives employees the chance to get involved in green initiatives. They run internal challenges where employees can suggest new ways to reduce the company's environmental impact. Google also hosts

events and workshops to raise awareness about sustainability.

Green Training:

Google provides training to teach employees about how they can make their work more sustainable, whether it's reducing energy use, recycling more, or creating eco-friendly projects.

Eco-Friendly Office:

Google's offices are designed to be energy-efficient, with natural light, energy-saving lighting, and water-saving features. They also focus on reducing waste by offering recycling and composting programs.

Green Benefits for Employees:

Google offers benefits like subsidies for using public transportation, biking to work, or taking part in green programs. This encourages employees to make eco-friendlier choices in their daily lives.

Sustainability in Performance:

Google includes sustainability goals in their performance reviews. Employees are encouraged to come up with ways to reduce the company's carbon footprint, and they're recognized and rewarded for their contributions.

Results and Successes:

Reduced Environmental Impact:

Google has reduced its carbon footprint, powered its data centers with renewable energy, and achieved carbon neutrality. They've also helped reduce CO2 emissions for partners and clients.

Engaged Employees:

Google employees feel motivated because they know they are part of a company that cares about the planet. This boosts their satisfaction and keeps them engaged.

Stronger Brand:

Because of its commitment to sustainability, Google has a strong reputation as an environmentally responsible company. This helps attract employees who care about the environment and consumers who support eco-friendly companies.

Innovation:

Google has come up with new technologies and solutions to help reduce energy use and improve sustainability, like using artificial intelligence (AI) to save energy in data centres.

Conclusion:

Google shows how Green HRM can make a company more environmentally friendly while also improving employee satisfaction and business success. By hiring the right people, engaging employees in green initiatives, providing training, and creating a sustainable work environment, Google has built a culture of sustainability that benefits both the planet and the company.

While there are challenges like resistance to change and upfront costs, companies like Unilever and Google have shown that Green HRM can lead to positive results, including a happier workforce, stronger brand image, and greater innovation. Looking ahead, the future of Green HRM will include more use of technology, alignment with global sustainability goals, and a stronger focus on employee well-being and innovation. In the end, Green HRM isn't just about helping the planet—it's also good for business. As more companies embrace sustainable practices, HR will continue to play a critical role in shaping a greener, healthier, and more successful future for everyone.

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