
A Study on Implications of Implementing Green HRM with Reference to Developing Nations

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Abstract

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is very critical in helping different organizations achieve environmental sustainability. This is a novel concept in relatively many organizations and especially those in the developing countries. Although more effort is required to help organizations in the implementation of the green policy, some of these organizations have already embraced the concept and have been utilizing it in some or all their Human Resource Management (HRM) practices. The main HRM practices generally include recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management and appraisal, compensation and reward, empowerment and participation, and the management of the organizational culture. This shows that HRM has a major role to play in helping turn their particular organizations green. This sets the basis of this paper, which utilizes the desk research but proposes further research in the area considering that it is still a green concept in the field of HRM. The main objective of the paper is to focus on the acquisition, development and motivational functions of GHRM in developing countries. The methodology followed to conduct the study is through secondary data.

Keywords: *Going green, green policy, business, company, GHRM*

1. Introduction

1.1 Why Green HRM

The recent years have been characterized by an augment with regard to the concept of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Ahmad, 2015). Customers are concerned and conscious about businesses pursuing and fostering activities that focus on “going green” through the adoption of environmental management techniques. This has helped the business communities to achieve their sustainability goals. HRM activities are considered as one of the major drivers towards the achievement of business sustainability goals and it is in this context that many businesses, both in the developed and developing countries have turned into the concept of the GHRM (Ahmad, 2015). The concept of the GHRM denotes the aspect of the utilization of HRM policies with the primary objective of promoting the sustainable use of resources within the business organizations as well in ensuring the promotion of environmental sustainability. In other words, the GHRM focuses on the aspect of pursuing Environmentally-friendly HR practices as well as preserving the knowledge capital. The proper management of the above two concepts are optimal to the attainment of the CSR and eventual business sustainability, which is critical for every business entity. The purpose of this paper is to find out the gap of implementing GHRM between the developing and developed countries and also identify the root cause of the gap in implementing GHRM. The paper aims to identify the mechanism to enhance the GHRM practices especially in developing countries.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

-) To study GHRM practices related to acquisition (Recruitment & Selection) with reference to developing countries.
-) To study GHRM practices related to development (Training & development, Performance Appraisal) with reference to developing countries.

-) To study GHRM practices related to Employee Motivation (Compensation and Employee benefits) with reference to developing countries.
-) To understand corporate policies related to GHRM.

1.3 Present Trend in Developed and Developing Nations

The concept of environmental management, which is critical in ensuring business sustainability, has been a key concern in the modern business environment. To achieve this, different businesses have been adopting and implementing the concept of GHRM in their HR departments. According to Rani and Mishra (2014), this is a novel area in HRM and hence limited researches and studies have been compiled. However, considering that businesses in the developed and developing countries aim to achieve sustainable development in the long-run, a large number of them have been implementing the GHRM policies in their strategic plans.

According to Pallavi & M V V Bhanu (2015), the top 25 green companies in the world are in the developed world with a green score of 72% to 89.2%. These companies were selected across different sectors of the economy ranging from retailing of consumer goods to production of industrial goods. The authors also made some comparison with the top 10 green companies in India in the same year without giving any specific green score of these companies. Since the GHRM concept is relatively a new concept in the developing countries, we anticipate the green scores to be much lower (below 40%) than developed countries.

1.4 Expected Trend in Future

Although there is limited literature with regard to the GHRM concept, the current trends can be used to project the future trajectory as more and more businesses continue to implement the GHRM initiatives (Parry, Stavrou, & Lazarova, 2013; Lawler, & Boudreau, 2015). Admittedly, every business is conscious about its future growth and development and hence will be willing to put in place the most appropriate policies that help the particular business to achieve the above mentioned objective.

1.5 Research methodology

The purpose of this section is to describe the methodology carried out to complete the work. The methodology plays a dominant role in any research work. The effectiveness of any research work depends upon the correctness and effectiveness of the research methodology

Research design

Descriptive research: The research design used in this project is the descriptive type.

A descriptive study is one in which information is collected without changing the environment (i.e., nothing is manipulated).

Descriptive studies in which the researcher does not interact with the participant include observational studies of people in an environment and studies involving data collection using existing records

Data collection

Secondary data: The data collected is through books, research articles and company websites.

2. Review and Influencing Factors

According to Ehnert, Harry and Zink (2014), the Human Resource Department of any organization is very vital with regard to the creation of the particular organization's sustainability culture. It is in this context that Lado and Wilson defined the Human Resources Management System as a raft of activities, processes as well as functions, which are different yet interrelated in attracting, developing, and retaining an organization's HRM (Pandey, Viswanathan, & Kamboj, 2016). These include the Human Resource functions, covering the policies, practices, and strategies, which when well designed and executed are optimal in suiting the particular business' objectives and strategies (Pandey, Viswanathan, & Kamboj, 2016). This literature focuses on the different GHRM practices that different organizations need to implement in order for them to achieve sustainability.

Existing literature has recognized the need to adopt environmental practices as primary objectives towards the achievement of organizational functioning. It has gone ahead to create a nexus between these

environmental performances and the HRM practices and hence the need to integrate the two in the delivery of a sustainable business entity Bratton (2012) notes the need for businesses to create a balance between their commercial goals and environmental preservation since it has been established that creating a nexus between the two could largely help the particular business to optimize its long-term profitability as opposed to when it does not focus on “going green”.

2.1 Green Recruitment and Selection

In the context of HRM, recruitment denotes the aspect of requiring different potential candidates to apply for a particular open position in an organization while selection is the process of choosing the best qualified and suitable candidates that meet the necessary merits from the list of the job applicants. Traditionally, these processes only concentrated on the skills-set abilities of a potential candidate to drive performance. However, this has been re-coined in the recent GHRM context, whereby it refers to the systematic hiring process, which focuses on the significance of the environment in making it a central element within the particular organization (Ahmad, 2015; Deepika & Karpagam, 2016).

2.2 Green Training and Development

Training is the concept of preparing a multi-talented lot of employees and is also concerned with the improvement of skills and knowledge necessary for innovation (Liebowitz, 2010). Zoogah 2011 (as cited in Obaid & Alias, 2015) defines green training and development as the organizational development of attitudes, behaviors as well as knowledge and skills among the employees in order to help avert the corrosion of environment. An important point to note is that there is a strong positive correlation between employee training and development with the organizational performance. It is the role of an organization’s HRM department to impart the necessary training and developmental skills and knowledge among the employees in order for them to remain competitive in the job market. It is in this context, that Boromisa, Tisma, and Lezaic (2015), note that organizations have the ability to acquit the employees with relevant knowledge regarding the concepts of “going green”.

2.3 Green Performance Management and Appraisal

The primary objective of undertaking this assessment is to ensure that there is the “sealing” of the performance gap so that the individual and collective employees work towards the attainment of the set organizational performance levels (Tapamoy, 2008; Odeyale, 2014). Traditionally, the performance management and appraisals were undertaken with the primary objectives focusing on the organization’s abilities to achieve its income, profitability, and employee satisfaction levels. As such, the assessment left out appraisals on the ability of the particular organization to remain sustainable in the long- run.

2.4 Green Compensation and Reward

According to Ahmad (2015), compensation and rewards are the means through which the employees are appreciated for their performance. They are considered as the most powerful and influential tools through which individual’s interests are linked to those of the organization. Through incentives such as accolades, different employees will be ensure full commitment to their work as well as work extra harder in order to help deliver the particular organization’s goals and objectives. In the context of GHRM, the green compensation and rewards are considered as latent elements that can be used in the support and promotion of the environmental activities in the particular organization or business entity. Ahmad (2015) notes that in order to push for eco-friendly initiatives, different modern organizations are embarking on strategic reward and management approaches integrated on their strategic approaches in order to motivate the particular employees to continuously work towards achieving the organization’s goals of augmenting the environmental management techniques (Ahmad, 2015).

2.5 Green Employee Empowerment and Participation

Employee empowerment and participation, through their engagement, is a very vital element in pushing forth and increasing the levels of an organizational performance (Huq, 2010). Engaging the employees in different capacities, such as in the decision-making process, is central in the sense that the employees will feel as being part of the organization, hence developing the “ownership” culture among them. In other words, they feel

valued by the top management of the particular organization eventually increasing their morale and motivation.

2.6 Green Management of Organizational Culture

Creating awareness and developing GHRM practices, is not necessarily enough in achieving the optimal green initiatives. On the contrary, there is a need for an organization to embed these initiatives and policies onto its organizational culture through continuous appraisal. Asmui, Mokhtar, Musa, and Hussin (2016), notes that organizational green culture and organizational commitment are two key tools that different organizations must understand in order for them to remain sustainable. It is in this context, that the three authors document the need of the organizations to come up with appropriate strategies of measuring the two determinants from the perspective of the employees. This will assist them to have a better understanding of the different needs of the employees so that they are able to satisfy them accordingly.

3. Green HRM in Corporate Body

3.1 Feasibility Studies on Implementing Corporate Green Policy

3.1.1 Energy Issues

Some of the notable energy issues with regard to the implementation of the corporate green policy within different firms and organizations include the following as established by some of the previous literatures. Firstly, there has been a lack of corporate leadership monitoring of the proper utilization of energy sources and usage within different organizations. It is the mandate of the senior leadership and management to ensure the proper utilization of energy by the subordinate and junior staff. For instance, switching off lights and machines is very critical to energy saving.

3.1.2 Environmental Issues

There are different environmental challenges that different organizations face while trying to pursue the goals of going green. Firstly, there is lack of commitment from different organizations with regard to the implementation of the corporate green policies in their particular business organizations (Dashwood, 2014; Fernando, 2010). As captured from the preceding sections, it is apparent that the human resource department is the senior most with regard to making appropriate policies and setting standards that govern the employees in the particular organization. Secondly, some of the organizations have continuously violated the concept of environmental reporting. The United Nations, working with other countries requires that different firms operating in different countries including in the developing nations, should continuously report their environmental performance against the set standards with reference to the environmental conservation (Dashwood, 2014; Sahay, 2006). The United Nations Environmental Program has been keen in ensuring that the different firms work towards full achievement of the corporate social responsibility. These include among others reporting on greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation, and energy consumption Thirdly, some of the organizations have not embraced the concept of green packaging for their products whereby they still rely on the non-biodegradable packaging materials such as the plastic bags (Fernando, 2010). Finally, some of the organizations have progressively continued to rely on the non-renewable energy in their production processes. In most cases, and especially in the case where the machineries are oil-powered, there is an increase in the air pollution through increased carbon emissions into the environment and eventual augment in the global warming (Fernando, 2010).

3.2 Preparation of Guidelines of Corporate Green Policy

3.2.1 Guidelines for Energy and Environmental Issues

In order to help alleviate the corporate green policy's shortcomings with reference to the energy and environmental driving factors, previous studies have recommended the adoption of the following guidelines. There is a need to conduct an assessment on the corporate green policy with reference to the particular organization. This will require the top management, the C.E.O, as well the board of directors among other relevant stakeholders coming together and identifying that there are energy and environmental issues facing the particular organizations or companies. It will entail the aspect of gathering and assessing any relevant

information with respect to the firm's processes and products.

3.2.2 Listed Activities

-) Assessment and identification of the corporate green policy issues within the organization |
-) Development of a corporate green policy strategy |
-) Development of the corporate green policy commitments |
-) Implementation process of the corporate green policy commitments |
-) Progressive verification and reporting |
-) Critical evaluation to identify and improve performance gaps |

3.3 Human Resource Planning to Meet Corporate Green Policy

3.3.1 Planning Appropriate Training Activities for Existing Workforce

According to Cherian and Jacob (2012), the focus of an organization with regard to the successful implementation of a corporate green policy should not only be targeted on the new employees but also among those already hired in an organization. It is, therefore, paramount to plan appropriate training activities for these existing workforce and in which case the HRM will be required to follow the steps outlined below (Cherian & Jacob, 2012). Firstly, it is pertinent to access the planning data and plans with reference to the employees' performance data, legislation and governance, operational and management plans, as well as strategic plans. Secondly, the HRM should undertake an extensive appraisal of the current business operations by reviewing the current policies and processes, financial situation, and the environmental factors.

3.3.2 Restructuring the Existing Workforce Based on Requirements

In the case where an organization or business has not been able to achieve its mission objectives or in a scenario where new targets have been set, and in this case with regard to achieving the corporate green policy, it is inevitable for the particular business to consider restructuring its workforce.

3.4 Training and Development for Existing Work Force on Corporate Green Policy

3.4.1 Making Awareness of Guidelines to Existing Workforce

Training and development have been cited as major drivers with regarding to imparting new skills and knowledge among the employees. However, an important point to note is that training primarily on the short-term acquisitions of the above mentioned attributes while development is relatively more complex focusing on long-term and future augmentation of the workforce performances. Existing workforce is already acquainted to the existing organizational culture and is likely to resist any organizational changes. Based on the established policies, strategies, and organizational commitment towards the employees, most of the workers will be committed towards the delivery of the particular organizational objectives (Massoud, Daily, & Bishop, 2008). An important point to note is that organizations should continuously communicate their goals and objectives to the employees regarding any potential changes in an organization (Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014).

3.4.2 Appropriate Training

Jabbar and Abid (2014) note that there are different employees' training approaches and in which case are open to different organizations based on how suitable they are to drive the particular organization's agenda. These include among others; classroom-instructor training, hands-on training, e-learning training, computer-based training, and interactive training technique. An organization may decide to adopt one or a combination of more than two of the above enumerated training techniques (Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014).

3.5 New Recruitment Guidelines to Meet the Corporate Green Policy

3.5.1 Requirements on New Recruitments

One of the ways of realizing the corporate green policy is through the adopting of the green recruitment strategies during the recruitment of new entrants. Daily and Huang (2011) note some of the green recruitment strategies for an organization to achieve a sustainable development. The HR department should first start with a critical evaluation of the "green" level in the organization including in its recruitment programs (Pillai & Sivathanu, 2014). This will help the HRM in identifying the already existing green initiatives and policies and

the necessary initiatives to make in order to bring into a nexus the existing workforce and the new recruits. In addition, with reference to the new and advancing technologies, it is appropriate for the HRM's to consider shifting into the optimal utilization of the new tools during the recruitment processes (Daily & Huang, 2011; Pillai & Sivathanu, 2014).

3.5.2 Training Activities on New Recruits

There are different training activities that will be necessary during the recruitment of new employees and in which case will be based on different essential skills from the different recruits. Firstly, there will be the concept of brainstorming through critical thinking in order to assess the employees' abilities in coming up with solutions that can help drive the corporate green policy agenda (Pillai & Sivathanu, 2014). Secondly, it is pertinent to include a team-work session in order to establish the abilities of the different recruits in working with co-workers in conflict resolutions and decision making considering that the implementation of the corporate green policy will require the input and collaborative efforts from all the employees (Jabbour & Santos, 2008b). Finally, there should be an evaluation activity to assess what the recruits found pertinent and on suggestions on the areas that require improvements.

3.6 Appraisals /Performance Evaluation Based on Corporate Green Policy

Like in many other case scenarios, there should be a continuous and periodic assessment of the organization, primarily by the HRM department in order to determine the achievements that have been made and the existing gaps with reference to the particular performance at the time vis a vis the set organizational goals and objectives (Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014).

3.7 Employee Discipline Management for Corporate Green Policy

Different organizations and companies have put in place different initiatives that aim at rewarding those employees who demonstrate outstanding performances. These include among others financial incentives, accolades, paid vacations, and promotions. This should be the case with those organizations planning to implement the corporate green policy in order to ensure that the employees are highly motivated. Equally, there is a need to set out appropriate and punitive policies that help administer discipline in the workforce. For instance, employees who do not meet their performance requirement with regard to driving the corporate green policy agenda should face demotion, lay-off, and salary and allowances reduction among other punitive measures (Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014).

4. Discussion/Recommendations

The above review of the literature, has demonstrated that like in many countries in the developed countries, a large number of organizations in the developing countries continue to embrace the concept of GHRM with some already having put in place appropriate greening initiatives with the aim of maintaining sustainable environmental performance. However, considering that most of the developing countries are still grappling with challenges of economic development, some of the companies have not yet fully achieved the CSR, which is vital with regard to going green. From the literature, it has been established that the Human Resource Management is a major stakeholder in the transformation of an organization towards moving green. This stems from all the roles that the HRM plays in an organization, which ranges from the recruitment and selection through to the management of the organizational culture. If all the above in a green way, the particular organization will help ease the environmental impacts by the organization. Although some hurdles will be faced when an organization is trying to optimally achieve environmental management techniques towards going green, the HRM practices, through the employees are very critical in achieving this goal. In the view of the above, and despite the fact that the GHRM is a new concept, more research and understanding of the concept by more organizations will help achieve organizational sustainability that it has happened in the past. The capital issue of transitioning in the implementation of GHRM will be an important challenge facing organizations in developing countries. Governments will have to provide incentive and support to subsidize organisations that implement GHRM as a corporate social responsibility. Organizations can also undertake intercompany support and social recognition for promoting and implementing GHRM in their policies and operations.

5. Future Direction of Research

The GHRM is a novel area in the HRM field and hence not much research has been done on the area. This implies that there is limited information with regard to the GHRM. With this in mind, it is apparent that there are not many organizations that embraced the concept with major gaps existing between the developed nations and the developing countries. It is this context and on the basis of the above findings, that this paper proposes further research into the area in order to unravel more information that can be utilized in ensuring the successful implementation of the GHRM in different organizations all across the world. This study utilized a desk research implying that all the information included was generated from secondary sources. Eventually, this does not bridge the gap between primary and secondary data, which would be considered more appropriate as they supplement each other with reference to any study gaps. As such, it sets a foundation for further research, which should be used in the development of more GHRM business models with regard to the implementation of the corporate green policy.

Some of the organizations have already invested and embarked on the implementation process of the GHRM and corporate green policy and hence should form a good sample representative in the provision of critical information regarding the success factors of implementing the GHRM as well as the shortcomings of the adoption of the strategy. An in-depth study of influencing factors of GHRM and their respective reflections on developed and developing countries could be taken for the next stage of the research.

6. Conclusion

This research article embarks on a comprehensive study on the different implications associated with the implementation of the GHRM in the developing nations. Some of the developing nations such as Afghanistan, China, India etc have to incorporate various GHRM practices to become developed nations. However, the concentration has been on the employees, with the focus on the recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management and appraisal, reward and compensation, employee empowerment and participation, and the management of the organizational culture. The research has established how these can be managed from a “green” perspective levels and offered relevant recommendations as optimal solutions to the successful implementation of the GHRM in different organizations.

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