

Implementation of Green Human Resource Management Practices: Barriers and Solutions

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Abstract: Scarcity of resources and environmental challenges are the problems that are influencing our Asian economy. Sustainability concept is gaining importance nowadays. Thereby, aim of sustainable development of organizations can be achieved through effective implementation of green human resource management practices. Aim of this study is to determine the implementation level of green human resource management practices. Further, it will also explore the challenges faced by the organizations during its implementation. Researcher have collected data from employees working in manufacturing as well as service sector. The Mixed methodology approach has been adopted for getting more reliable results and greater insights. Employees were interviewed to get greater insights concerning issues related to implementing Green Human Resource Management. Findings of the study revealed low to moderate level of implementation of green human resource management practices due to the barriers faced during its implementation. The key practices that are being highly followed in manufacturing and service organizations are Green Involvement, Green Training & Development and Green Performance Appraisal. The top impediment that are being faced during the implementation of green human resource management practices includes “Weak Incentives for achieving targets”, “Lack of awareness regarding the concept of green human resource management” and “Lack of Prior planning to implement green human resource management practices”.

Keywords: – Implementation, Employees, Green Human Resource Management, Organization, Sustainable Development

I. INTRODUCTION

Only aim of companies was to make profits earlier. But this has been shifting to achievement of sustainable development with competitive strategies and efficient green practices and advanced level of managerial and technical skills are required in order to do that (Dutta, 2012; Ahmad, 2015) which have a significant impact on sustainability of the organization as found out by Ayeswarya (2017). Increasing environmental pollution has urged companies to implement environmental-friendly practices as an element of their social responsibility (Rani & Mishra, 2014;

Deshwal, 2015; Rezaei-Moghaddam, 2016; Deepika, 2016; Sharma, 2016). That's why, Environmental management is becoming an eminent topic among researchers and academicians. Research is being conducted on many concepts related to Environment and Green Management, for example, Green Accounting, Green marketing, Environmental management and Green Human Resource Management. All activities are conducted by Human Resources of an Organization. That is why, human resource has great importance in the field of Environmental management in the organization (Margaretha & Saragih, 2013). Yet, this concept of Green Human Resource Management is in its infancy stage (Jabbour, 2013). Green Human Resource Management is that side of HRM which is related with transformation of normal employees into green employees in order to achieve environmental goals of an organization so as to make a significant contribution to environmental sustainability (Opatha & Arulrajah, 2014). A great deal of Empirical research is needed in this area. Organizations have to focus on Cost Reduction, Efficient use of energy, Proper utilization of resources, use of recycled products, applying environmental-friendly procedure in order to become Green. So, there is significant need for environmental management drive globally. As the industrial waste has been deteriorating and depleting the natural resources at a very fast rate. Human Resources are essential part of the system who can make a significant contribution in achieving sustainability. GHRM Literature is largely a western one. So, there is a research gap to study it in Asian context specially in Indian context.

First section of this paper constitutes the level of implementation of green human resource management practices. Second section of this study explored the barriers that are being faced by organizations while implementing green human resource management. To get more insights into the barriers faced and their possible solutions, third section of the study constitutes findings of qualitative study conducted by researchers.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Green Human Resource Management

Green Human Resource Management is a new concept which is being followed by the companies to achieve sustainable development. Different authors have defined this concept differently. Green Human Resource Management ensures that the organization has committed and competent employees who will help the organization in reducing its' carbon footprints by effectively utilizing the existing resources (Nejati et al., 2017). Jabbour (2011) defined it as "Incorporating Green aspects into functional dimensions of Human Resource Management Practices"; Renwick, Redman & Maguire (2013) defined it as "People-Centered Practices" oriented towards developing a green workforce; Opatha & Arulrajah (2014) defined it as "that side of Human Resource Management which is related with transformation of normal employees into green employees in order to achieve environmental goals of an organization so as to make a significant contribution to environmental sustainability" and Tang et al. (2018) defined it as "Greening the human resources to protect the environment which involves use of Human Resource Practices such as Green Recruitment and selection, Green Training, Green Performance Management, Green involvement". Effective Strategies are to be made in order to become Green.

1) Green Recruitment and Selection

Green Recruitment and Selection includes attraction and retention of high-quality staff who should be environmentally aware. As only pro-environmental employees can incorporate green human resource management practices effectively.

2) Green Training and Development

Green talent attraction and retention is meaningful only if green training is provided to green talents for activities of environmental protection. Green training includes imparting skills among human resource to cope up with the challenges faced during the implementation of Green human resource management practice into the organization.

3) Green Performance Management and Appraisal

This practice comes under motivational aspect of AMO Framework. Positive as well as negative measures are being used to motivate employees to enable them to use environmental practices. Performance indicators are being set at departmental level to effectively measuring environmental goals.

4) Green Pay and Reward

This function has high capacity to motivate employees to follow environmental management practices into the organization. Financial as well as non-financial rewards can be provided to employees to ensure their effective involvement in environmental management activities. Sometimes, this practice will motivate

employees to so much higher level that make them to use green practices voluntary at organizational as well as their individual level.

5) Green Involvement

Successful results require high level of participation of employees in environmental management activities. In other words, they must participate in environmental management rather than restricting its implementation. Only then, it can result in better results and good image of the organization.

B. Barriers in implementing Green human resource management

Numerous barriers are being faced by the organizations in implementing green human resource management practices. The barriers that are being faced by the companies includes Lack of Comprehensive conception of the Green Human Resource Management Concept (Likhitkar & Verma, 2017), Difficulty in changing attitude of workers, lack of skilled and qualified workers (Cheema et al., 2015), High initial cost of Implementation and requirement of long time (Hosain & Rahman, 2016), Difficulty arises in recruiting green employees, problem arises in evaluation of environmental performance (Deshwal, 2015). So, numerous barriers are being faced by organizations while implementing Green Human Resource Management Practices.

III. RESEARCH GAP/ NEED FOR THE STUDY

The term Green Human Resource Management has become the buzz word today. There is significant need for environmental management drive globally. Human Resources are essential part of the system who can make a significant contribution in achieving sustainability. Proactive environmental approaches are required to implement environmental management effectively (Gonzalez-Benito,2006; Jabbour et al., 2008). GHRM Literature is largely a western one. So, there is a research gap to study it in Asian context specially in Indian context.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Objective of this study are

- To determine the implementation level of green human resource management Practices
- To find out the barriers faced during implementation of green human resource management practices.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A mixed research design was chosen for methodology. All the questions were on implementation of green human resource management practices and barriers faced during its implementation. Online as well as offline Questionnaires were used for collecting the data and in order to get more reliable and

accurate responses. First part of the questionnaire deals with the demographic profile of the respondents such as gender, designation, experience, tenure of the organization and incorporation of environmental management. Second part deals with Implementation of Green Human Resource Management Practices. The scale chosen was 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 being ‘Not at all’ to 5 being ‘To a very great extent’. Third part deals with Barriers faced during implementing green human resource management practices on 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree. Green Human Resource Management Practices was chosen from Standardized scale of Tang et al. (2017) containing 18 statements. Statements related to barriers faced was chosen on the basis of literature review. Sample of the study consist of Manufacturing and Service Organizations in Rohtak (Haryana). Purposive sampling technique was used for distributing questionnaire and collecting the data. Sampling units were General Manager/CEO, Human Resource Manager, Supervisor and Employees. Mixed methodology research design was used. Some Human Resource Managers, Supervisors and Employees were interviewed after filling of questionnaire by them. Their opinions were taken regarding the barriers they faced during the Green human resource management practices implementation and possible suggestions were also taken regarding how can these barriers be overcome. A total of 100 questionnaire were distributed through online and offline mode. 20 Questionnaires were returned back which was distributed through offline mode, 10 was not usable due to high missing values among them and the remaining 12 that were not responded were through online mode. So, the final usable sample size for the study was 58 respondents.

A. Questionnaire Analysis

Responses of all respondents were analyzed through SPSS v26 Program. First test using SPSS was conducted to test the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach’s alpha was calculated to test the reliability of all items of the questionnaire. As per the results, it was found that all the items of questionnaire are reliable and Good, thereby indicating internal consistency of the questionnaire. Results of reliability test of all the elements of questionnaire are as follows:

Table 1: Reliability of the Questionnaire

Green Human Resource Management Practices and Challenges faced during its implementation	No. of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha
Green Recruitment and Selection	3	.886
Green Training and Development	3	.811

Green Performance Management and Appraisal	4	.850
Green Pay and Reward	3	.837
Green Involvement	5	.862
Barriers faced during Green Human Resource Management practices implementation	7	.920
Total	25	.930

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

A. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The majority of the respondents were males (79.3%). of this sample. The sample for the study consists of 79.3% Males and 20.7% Females. 53.4% of respondents were from Manufacturing sector and 46.6% from Service Sector. Sample for the Study includes 6 General Managers/CEOs, 9 Human Resource Managers, 13 Supervisors and 30 Employees/Staff. Regarding the work experience, 31% have experience between 1 to 3 years, 37.9% have 4 to 6 years, while, 10.3% have experience between 7 to 10 years and finally 20.7% have experience for more than 10 years. 62% of Sample Organizations were having tenure of more than 10 years, 17.2% were having tenure of 5 to 10 years, 5.2% were having 3 to 5 years and finally 15.5% were existing for less than 3 years.

Table 2: Demographic Profile

Name	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	46	79.3
	Female	12	20.7
	Total	58	100
Organization	Manufacturing	31	53.4
	Service	27	46.6
	Total	58	100
Tenure of the Organization	Less than 3 Years	9	15.5
	3-5 Years	3	5.2
	5-10 Years	10	17.2
	More than 10 Years	36	62.1
	Total	58	100

Designation	General Manager/CEO	6	10.3
	Human Resource Manager	9	15.5
	Supervisor	13	22.4
	Employee/Staff	30	51.7
	Total	58	100
Experience of Respondents	1-3 Years	18	31.0
	4-6 Years	22	37.9
	7-10 Years	6	10.3
	More than 10 Years	12	20.7
	Total	58	100

Table 3: Demographic classification of Sector wise and Experience wise

		ORGANIZATION		Total
		Manufacturing	Service	
GENDER	Male	28	18	46
	Female	3	9	12
Total		31	27	58

28 Males (60.8%) were from Manufacturing sector and 18 (39.2%) were from Service Sector. Regarding females, only 25% were from Manufacturing sector and 75% from Service Sector.

Experience wise distribution is shown in the following table. 23.9% Males and 58.3% females were having experience of 1 to 3 years, 43.5% Males and 16.7% females were having experience of 4 to 6 years, 8.7% Males and 16.7% females were having experience of 7 to 10 years and finally, 8.3% females and 23.9% males were having experience of more than 10 years.

Table 4: Experience wise classification

		EXPERIENCE				Total
		1-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-10 Years	More than 10 Years	
GENDER	Male	11	20	4	11	46
	Female	7	2	2	1	12

D						
E						
R						
Total	18	22	6	12	58	

B. Application of Green Human Resource Management Practices

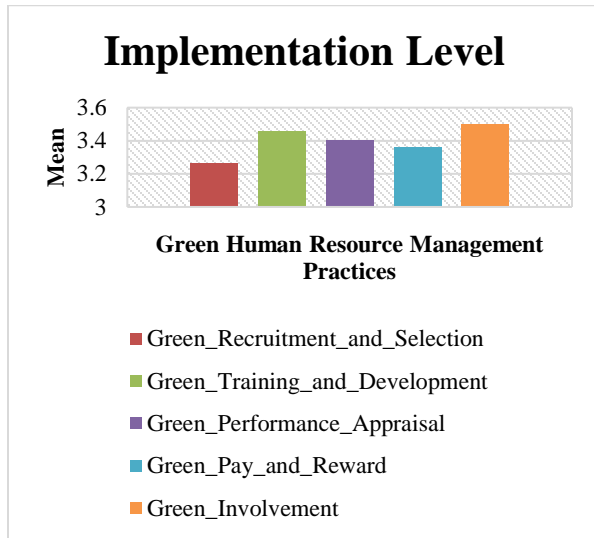
With regard to the implementation of Green Human Resource Management practices, the results showed that 32.7% Organizations are currently following green human resource management practices which includes 36.8% Manufacturing and 63.2% Service sector Organizations. 15.5% of sampled organizations were having no plans to implement green human resource management practices. 17.2% were planning to implement green human resource management practices within 12 months and 34.5% responded that it will take more than 12 months to implement green human resource management practices due to some challenges faced by them.

Table 5: Implementation of Green Human Resource Management Practices

		IMPLEMENTATION				Total
		Currently Exist	No plan to implement	Plan to Implement within 12 Months	Implementation will take more than 1 Year	
Organization	Manufacturing	7	2	8	14	31
	Service	12	7	2	6	27
Total		19	9	10	20	58

The mean of Green Recruitment and Selection implementation was 3.26 indicated a moderate level of implementation. Mean of Green Training and development implementation was 3.45 indicating a moderate level of implementation. Green Performance and Appraisal and Green Pay and Reward were having mean of 3.40 & 3.46 respectively. Highest mean was for Green Involvement with 3.50, which also indicated a moderated level of implementation in Sampled Manufacturing and Service Organizations of Rohtak (Haryana).

Figure 1: Green Human Resource Practices Implementation level



The following table is representing implementation of green human resource management practices in service and manufacturing sector. By analysing the following table, it can be said that green human resource management practices are being implemented at moderate level in both manufacturing and organizational sector in sampled organizations.

Table 6: Implementation of Green Human Resource Management

Green Human Resource Management Practices	ORGANIZATION		Level of Implementation
	Manufacturing	Service	
	Mean	Mean	
Green Recruitment and Selection	3.10	3.46	Moderate
Green Training and Development	3.28	3.65	Moderate
Green Performance Appraisal	3.28	3.54	Moderate
Green Pay and Reward	3.22	3.52	Moderate
Green Involvement	3.37	3.65	Moderate

Due to numerous problems faced during its implementation, the author conducted a qualitative study to get more insights into the barriers faced during its implementation and to find out possible solutions.

C. Barriers Faced in Applying Green Human Resource Management Practices

On the basis of literature review, authors find out some barriers that are being faced during green human resource management practices implementation. After that, it was asked to respondents whether they considered these as barriers and to what extent.

Respondents were asked to rate the potential variables on 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 being Strongly Disagree to 5 Being Strongly agree. The following table represents the mean rankings and the ratings of barriers in descending order. The most important barrier found was “Weak Incentives for achieving targets” with the percentage of 74.20%. Second major barrier was “Lack of awareness regarding the concept of green human resource management” with the percentage of 74.10%. As Represented by the table Lowest ranking was for “High cost of implementation” and “Resistance of staff to adopt green human resource management practices” with 63.80%.

Table 7: Barriers in Implementing Green Human Resource Management Practices

Barriers faced during Green Human Resource Management implementation	Standard Deviation	Mean	Percentage	Rank
Weak incentives for achieving targets	1.1765	3.8621	74.20%	1
Lack of Awareness Regarding Green Human Resource Management	1.25041	3.7414	74.10%	2
Lack of Prior planning to implement green human resource management practices	1.148	3.7414	72.40%	3
Lack of full support from Top Management to adopt green practices	1.33918	3.569	67.30%	4
High Cost of Implementation	1.23911	3.7931	63.80%	5
Resistance of Staff to adopt green human resource management practices	1.04944	3.6724	63.80%	6
Difficulty in changing	1.28712	3.5345	62.10%	7

attitude and behaviour				
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D. Interview Analysis: Barriers Faced and Their Solutions

To collect more information regarding the barriers being faced by organizations and their employees, qualitative analysis was done by conducting the interview with Human Resource Managers, Supervisors and Employees. Apart from the barriers mentioned above, some other barriers faced that were highlighted during interview includes Lack of Infrastructure and Resources to effective implementation of green human resource management practices creates hinderance in adoption. Green Policies are not effectively communicated which also creates a problem in implementing green human resource management practices. It was suggested by Human Resource Managers and supervisors that Seminars should be conducted by the government which will help in overcoming the barrier related to awareness and understanding of this concept. Effective leadership style should be adopted in order to change the behaviour and attitude of Employees and staff so that they can be motivated to implement green human resource management practices effectively.

VII. CONCLUSION

With Reference to First Objective of the study, Green Human Resource Management Practices are implemented at moderate level in Sampled Manufacturing and Service Industries. All Green human resource management practices were found to have a mean rating of greater than 3, which indicates a moderate level of implementation. After that, results were presented in tabular form for better understanding represented Implementation of green human resource management practices in manufacturing and service organizations. The key practices that are being highly followed in manufacturing and service organizations are Green Involvement, Green Training & Development and Green Performance Appraisal. The top impediment that are being faced during the green human resource management practices implementation includes “Weak Incentives for achieving targets”, “Lack of awareness regarding the concept of green human resource management” and “Lack of Prior planning to implement green human resource management practices”. Results of qualitative study indicated that in order to overcome the barriers faced during its implementation, Seminars and programmes should be conducted at Government as well as Organizational level. Proper infrastructure and resources should be provided to employees to enable them to follow green human resource management practices. Rewards and Incentives should be provided to employees to motivate them for effective implementation of green human resource management practices. Legal Pressure and Green Organizational culture will help in effectively implementing green human resource management practices.

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