



Green Human Resource Management & Indian Industries

Dr.Simran Kaur*, Dr.Pramod Gupta**

Faculty of Commerce & Business Studies, Manav Rachna International University,
Faridabad*

Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies, IET Group of Institutions, Alwar**

Abstract:

The term Green HRM has become the buzz word within the business field at present and its significance is increasing manifold with the passage of time. This term has also its secured position as a hot topic in recent research works since the awareness on environmental management and sustainable development has been increasingly rising day by day all round the globe. Today the topic Green HRM not only includes awareness toward environmental affairs, but also stands for the social as well as economical well-being of both the organization and the employees within a broader prospect.

From the perspectives of strategic HRM and green management, this study argues that the new model should include among others the relationship of assessment-based HR Interventions, environmental management system (EMS), green intellectual capital (GIC) and corporate environmental citizenship (CEC).

Key Words: *GHRM, Green Recruitment, Green Selection, Green Training & Selection.*

Introduction:

Recently, there has been observed an increasing awareness within business communities on the significance of going green and adopting various environment management techniques. As the corporate world is going global, the business is experiencing a shift from a conventional financial structure to a modern capacity-based economy which is ready to explore green economic facets of business. Today, Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has become a key business strategy for the significant organizations where Human Resource Departments play an active part in going green at the office. The paper largely focuses upon the various Green Human Resource Practices pursued by the organizations all over the world and, explains the simplified meaning of GHRM. The study also adds to the extant literature by discussing future direction of some GHRM functions. Finally, the paper suggests some potentially prolific HR initiatives for Green organizations.

The term 'green HR' is most often used to refer to the contribution of people management policies and practices towards the broader corporate environmental agenda. Typical green activities include video recruiting, or the use of online and video interviews, to minimize travel requirements. Green rewards can include the use of workplace and lifestyle benefits, ranging from carbon credit offsets to free bicycles, to engage people in the green



agenda, while continuing to recognize their contribution. While many employees often feel it is not their responsibility to protect the environment while they are at work, the new workforce of millennials are emphasizing environmental consciousness as they chose their employers. There is also a broader opportunity to engage the workforce given that more and more people seek meaning and self-actualization in their jobs. Other simple green actions include minimizing the amount of printed materials used in performance management, salary reviews and so on. While there is definitely a substantial amount of 'green washing' occurring in reducing waste, there are many opportunities here too. However, HR is never going to have a truly significant impact on a business through the improvement of HR processes alone so the greater opportunity is to contribute to the green agenda of the business as a whole.



The question "What is Green HR" was presented to a panel of business professionals with the results pointing towards environmentally friendly initiatives that reduce an employee's carbon footprint. The results included: electronic filing, ride sharing, job sharing, teleconferencing and virtual interviews, recycling, telecommuting, online training, and developing more energy efficient office spaces. Not only are we reading about how to become more "green" but we are seeing these concepts implemented more and more each year. Green HR efforts to date have primarily focused on increasing efficiency within processes, reducing and eliminating environmental waste, and revamping HR products, tools, and procedures resulting in greater efficiency and lower costs. Actions taken thus far have been well intentioned and are producing results, but little has been done to preserve talent amidst the highest levels of unemployment we've seen since the early 1980s. It's time to take these initiatives a step further and expand our way of thinking green. People, often referred to as "industry's most valued assets", along with infinite levels of knowledge, experience, and know-how gained at the expense of their employer, appear expendable in today's economy.



Can the investment made in human capital be considered waste, if what we see happening is indeed a waste of talent and development dollars? How can and will Green HR impact how companies utilize their human capital? Green HR is about retaining, recalling, preserving, and growing talent, therefore reducing and/or eliminating workplace inefficiency. Along with creating a more efficient workplace, retaining knowledge capital forces employers to properly evaluate their staff and look for the best options available. What do these concepts mean for the economy of 2009 and beyond? With unemployment rates hitting 9.4% in May not only are people struggling to find employment, but companies are finding their top talent absent during the most crucial times of production. Some examples of Green HR implementation include, but not limited to, reduced work schedules, furloughs, and phased retirement programs. In the current economy this means saving your top talent while still meeting cost cutting needs. When the economy begins to recover Green HR initiatives continue to preserve knowledge capital while giving employees more options and a better work-life balance. By continuing to be environmentally friendly while recognizing the importance of human capital, not only will our environment benefit but our jobs will remain globally and nationally competitive. Green HR is one which involves two essential elements: environmentally friendly HR practices and the preservation of knowledge capital. Green HR involves reducing your carbon footprint via less printing of paper, video conferencing and interviews, etc. Companies are quick to layoff when times are tough before realizing the future implications of losing that knowledge capital.

Companies who Have adopted GREEN HRM

General Electrics

Uses six sigma technique for optimizing their operations to improve environmental and social outcomes in a manner that increases overall performance.

Google

Uses green recruiting technique- Believes that most talented people get attracted because of it.

Infosys

eRecruiting Staffing Solutions

Hewlett Packard

Product take-Back programs, green packaging and integrating designs.



ACTIVITIES TO GO GREEN:

1. Annual energy audit survey.
2. Recycling go through the trash for recycling glass, plastic, metal trash and any other waste materials. By recycling you will observe a new sense of how much it costs in purchasing, storing and disposing off stuff. Unnecessary photocopying should be eliminated and packaging should be reused for shipping.
3. Offering transit facilities Transit facilities should be encourage by providing transit passes to employees who take subway or bus and bike racks for cyclist and also by providing preferred parking for carpoolers.
4. Save natural resources for generation of electricity solar panels on the rooftop should be used. Toilets and sinks should be monitored regularly for leagues that lead to water wastage. Wastage of water should be eliminated to manufacturing processes and in watering the lawns.
5. Go paperless by encouraging emails.
6. Communicating inform customers and suppliers about your green initiatives and take help by the local regulatory agencies and keeping employees and shareholders/investors informed about your green campaign.
7. Save fuel reducing business travel and using teleconferencing should be encouraged .Consider the transportation cost of shipping and receiving products.

GREEN HR PRACTICES IN FUNCTIONAL AREAS:

The functional areas where HR can have a green approach are as follows:

Green Recruitment:

Green Recruitment means a paper-free recruitment process with a minimal environmental impact. Applications are invited through online mediums like e-mail, online application forms or the Global Talent Pool.

If possible, telephone or video-based interviews are conducted to minimize any travel-related environmental impact.

5 Steps to a Green Recruiting Strategy:

1) Evaluate the 'green' level of your organization & recruiting program:-

When planning to make any radical changes to a company's HR strategies, one of the first steps should be to evaluate and organize the facts on the ground. Compile all information on your organization's recruiting strategies as well as any and all green initiatives and policies. Determine how socially responsible your current recruiting program is, including travel, paper use, printing use, interview tactics and so on.

2) Use online applicant tracking software:-



Recruiting software is one of the benefits to the advances of the internet on the 21st century, and an absolute must-have in any green recruiting strategy. Among its many advantages, the most important is the fact that it transforms the process into completely paperless recruiting. Less paper = thousands of saved sheets, either printed by candidates sending their resume or printed by staff in the office. All necessary information on the candidate can be easily stored in an online applicant tracking program, from the resume, to scheduled interview dates, and any notes on the candidate by yourself or a co-worker hundreds of miles away. The amount of paper waste that is reduced from this installation is estimated at over 60%!

3) Publish job openings in new channels:-

The traditional means for publication of job openings are no longer as relevant as they once were. Whereas in the past, recruiting was done through printed media such as newspapers and flyers, that may be ineffective in today's day and age. By changing the strategy away from printed media and instead toward different channels, you can radically reduce the carbon footprint of your recruiting process.

Instead, you can publish job openings on online job forums, websites and social media. Encourage onsite CV downloads; discourage physical mailing of the CV to your offices.

Attend virtual job fairs to increase brand awareness and receive interest from job seekers. On the off chance that you need printed material, use recycled paper, sustainable merchandise, and eco-friendly building material for stands.

4) Switch to virtual interviewing:-

Reduce recruitment travel by using all means of online collaboration such as the ever-wonderful Skype, Google + hangouts, audio/video interviews of other types, online tests, emails and so on. At first, it may be uncomfortable to adapt from the face-to-face interviews, but you'll quickly see that a Skype video chat can be enough to judge the character of the interviewee. At the very least, this should be sufficient for an initial interview.

5) Identify potential employees with similar values:-

To recruit a green-inspired workforce, include questions in the interview on their environmental commitment. Job descriptions should incorporate the employee's responsibility to reduce negative impacts to the environment. Make sure you are noting and reviewing the employee's adherence to green practices. Additionally, create a firm policy for recruiters on the critical elements of the 'sales' pitch to applicants, including emphasizing the company's commitment to sustainable development.

Green Selection:

Is the integration of **Environmental Management** with **recruitment & selection**, where HRM policies are used to promote environmental sustainability and the wise and judicious use (conservation) of resources within business organizations? Green recruiting is a system where the focus is given on importance of the environment and making it a major element within the organization. It provides the employer with an opportunity to stand ahead of the



crowd and further increase their chance of attracting the candidates and retain them after induction.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Few firms have made a concerted effort to leverage the company's environmental stance as a critical point in recruiting pitches. Firms like Google, Timberland, and yes, even old school General Electric have led the way by undertaking major efforts to make being environmentally friendly a critical element of their employment brand. Google, the world's only "recruiting machine," leads the way not just in its environmental practices but also in publicizing their environmental record and approach. Like many emerging green companies, Google has hired a director who coordinates corporate environmental efforts in an attempt to match their corporate business strategy with their environmental efforts. While some companies adopt the grassroots approach to going green, others start at the top and work down. General Electric is one of a small handful of companies that have an environmental effort driven by their chief executive officer, Jeff Immelt. If you watch television or read national magazines, you might recall seeing one of hundreds of ecomagination advertisements GE has spent millions on in recent years to "green wash" their image. The ecomagination campaign is one of the boldest approaches to capture intangible value by touting environmental efforts in play by any global company.

The extant literature in the HR field on the topic of sustainability suggests that more and more HR executives are keen to modulate their corporation as such to become exclusive environmental champions. A great extent of empirical research highlights the impact of environment management practices on performance of the organization using different parameters (Iraldo, Testa, & Frey, 2009; Yang, Lin, Chan, & Sheu, 2010).

Green HRM depends on the unique and identifiable patterns of green decisions and behaviors of HR managers (green signatures; Jackson, Renwick, Jabbour, & Muller-Camen, 2011).

Distinguished policies in the field of recruitment, performance and appraisal management, training and personnel development, employee relations, and reward systems are considered powerful tools for aligning employees with a company's environmental strategy (Renwick, 2008).

Distinguished policies in the field of recruitment, performance and appraisal management, training and personnel development, employee relations, and reward systems are considered powerful tools for aligning employees with a company's environmental strategy (Renwick, 2008). It becomes definitive to have effective human resource management practices including presentation of strict recruitment strategies (Grolleau, Mzoughi, & Pekovic, 2012)

GREEN RECRUITMENT & SELECTION (HRM) : TOP 10 INDIAN COMPANIES

1. Wipro Technologies:

- There was a time when the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board indicted the IT solutions arm of Wipro Limited for dumping huge volumes of hazardous electronic waste in illegal recycling units in Bangalore.



- **The eco eye:** an initiative that had several goals to reduce the organization's carbon footprint, manage its water and energy efficiently, develop new benchmarks in recycling waste, minimize the use of hazardous substances, become ecologically sustainable, and motivate all employees to follow green practices in their professional and personal lives –
- They extended their green mission to physical infrastructure and substitute CRT monitors with LCD monitors
- The company also had a green testing lab, practiced a Carbon Disclosure Project (to report the internal carbon footprint), reduced employee travel,.
- Wipro was the first IT company in India to launch eco-friendly desktops and notebook computers that adhered to the RoHS (restriction of hazardous substances) regulation specified by the European Union (EU)

2. Suzlon Energy

- **The “green banking” initiative:** State Bank of India tied up with SUZLON to become the first Indian bank to take lead in harnessing wind energy.
- **The Suzlon One Earth Campus,** the corporate headquarter of Suzlon at Hadapsar, Pune, India is the most energy efficient building built ever in India with insulated green roof, energy efficient – lighting system, construction time, renewable energy based hot water system, reduced landscape and building water requirement, recycle, reuse and recharge of water, waste management and waste water treatment, health and energy of occupants, carpooling, zero waste management, green education etc. are policies practiced by the companies.

3. ITC Limited

- **‘Ozone-treated elemental chlorine free’** bleaching technology for the first time in India.
- An entire new range of **top green products and solutions:** the environmental friendly multi-purpose paper that is less polluting than its traditional counterpart.

4. HCL Technologies

- “Go Green”: a multi-layered corporate program running campaigns to initiate individual action towards environmental issues. It has designed and developed a comprehensive **Green Edge** sustainability framework that caters to the specific needs of manufacturing industries.
- They are active members of India Council for Sustainable Development
- First company in India to launch an Antimony & Beryllium Free laptop
- The company extends its take-back service to customers for disposing off their equipment through HCL Green Bag Campaign, and recycling collected E-waste in an environment-friendly manner.

5. Tata Consultancy Services

- Spotted 11th under Newsweek's annual rankings of the ‘World's Greenest Companies’ with a Green Score of 80.4 globally



- They focus on improving the agricultural and community needs of the region, where its offices are located make it one of India's most environmentally proactive companies.
- Its 16 facilities do composting, some have bio-digesters turning waste into kitchen fuel.

6. **Oil & Natural Gas Company (ONGC)**

- ONGC is all set to lead the list of top 10 green Indian companies with energy-efficient, green crematoriums that will soon replace the traditional wooden pyre across the country.
- **Mokshada Green Cremation:** An initiative that will save 60 to 70% of wood and a fourth of the burning time per cremation.

7. **Idea Cellular**

- 'Use Mobile, Save Paper' campaign
- Green Pledge campaign: at Indian cities where thousands came forward and pledged to save paper and trees
- Currently is working to set up bus shelters with potted plants and tendril climbers to convey the green message.

8. **IndusInd Bank**

- The bank is running ATMs on solar power and has pioneered an eco-savvy change in the Indian banking sector.
- Has been awarded the NASSCOM IT User Award 2012 for "Environmental Sustainability"
- The bank is planning for more such initiatives in addressing the challenges of climate change.

9. **Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited**

- Own power generating facility to make it 100% self-sufficient: installation of 61.18 MW Power Generating equipment (TG Sets) at the paper mill site. The surplus power generated is being exported to the State Grid.
- The innovative **bio – methanation project:** This project contributes to the sustainable development in terms of generating in-house renewable energy and reducing green – house gases.
- Other initiatives: Eco – friendly technologies in process, its proactive role in reducing the use of fossil fuels, increasing the green cover, using energy efficient systems, recycling and reuse of solid and liquid wastes in the process.

10. **Tata Metaliks Limited**

- Every day is **Environment Day**



- According to the company's policy, working on Saturdays at the corporate office is discouraged.
- Lights are also switched off during the day with the entire office depending on sunlight.

FINDINGS – OPPORTUNITIES IN INDIA

- **Conducting “energy audit”**

- Auditing the energy efficiency and energy conservation activities and initiatives in the organization on a regular basis. This will create a mandate sense of energy conservation within the organization helping in molding green employees.

- **Green purchases**

- Buying raw materials that has undergone recycling, or purchases to be made from green companies

- **Computerized Human Resource Information System (HRIS):** the use of computer software to manage data about movement of human resources in an organization

- E – signatures and biometrics for documents

- Maximum use of LED technology

- **GREEN SIGMA:** From the concept of **lean six sigma**, it's time to move to **green sigma** now.

- **Six – sigma** is a data driven approach and methodology to eliminate defects.

- Leans six sigma is a managerial approach that combines six sigma methods & tools and the lean manufacturing to eliminate waste of physical resources, time, effort and talent while not compromising on quality in production and organizational process.

- **Green sigma** is the adaption of Lean Six Sigma to environmental and climate protection.

- The principle of Green Sigma: **1. combination of methods** (outcomes and results are stronger when a combination of methods is applied rather than specific methods), **2. Continual improvement**, **3. Fact based decision making** (concentrate on the vital few things), **4. Accountability and responsibility**, **5. Everybody can contribute**.

IBM's Green Sigma solution, which applies Lean Six Sigma principles and practices to energy, water, waste and greenhouse gas emissions throughout a company's operations. The solution combines real-time metering and monitoring with advanced analytics and dashboards that allow clients to make better decisions about energy and water usage, waste and greenhouse gas emissions to improve efficiency, lower costs and reduce environmental impact.



- Under the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the state of Gujarat had brilliant idea to cover its canals with solar panels.
- The Andhra Pradesh state Cabinet has now gone paperless. It has conducted a meeting of what is being called "eCabinet", a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country. This is expected to become a permanent feature of the Cabinet meetings.

Conclusion:

Based on this review, it is possible to conclude that by understanding and increasing the scope and depth of green HRM practices, organizations can improve their environmental performance in a more sustainable manner than before. The green HRM practices are more powerful tools in making organisations and their operations green. The green performance, green behaviours, green attitude, and green competencies of human resources can be shaped and reshaped through adaptation of green HRM practices. Hence, we suggest that organisations be required to give more priority to make each function of HRM green.

References:

1. Beard, C. and Rees, S. (2000), Green Teams and the Management of Environmental Change in UK Country Council, *Environmental Management and Health*, Vol.11, No.1, pp. 27-38.
2. Berry, M. A. and Rondinelli, D. A. (1998), Proactive corporate environmental management: A new industrial revolution, *Academic Management Executive*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 38-50.
3. Bhushan, A.K. and Mackenzie, J.C. (1994), *Environmental leadership plus total quality management equals continuous improvement*, *Environmental TQM*, 2nd ed, McGraw-Hill, New York, pp. 72-93.
4. Carpenter, (1994), In Milliman, J. and Clair, J. (1996), Best Environmental HRM Practices in the USA, In Wehrmeyer, W. (eds) (1996), *Greening People - Human Resources and Environmental Management*, Sheffield, England: Greenleaf Publishing.
5. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (2007), The environment and people management, Discussion web page.
6. Clarke, E. (2006), Power Brokers, *People Management*, 18th May, pp. 40-42.
7. Clement, K. (1997), Multi-disciplinary Teams and Environmental Integration: European Programmes, *Team Performance Management*, Vol. 3, pp. 261-269.
8. Cook, J. and Seith, B. J. (1992), Designing an effective environmental EMS training program, *Journal of Environmental Regulation*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 53-62.
9. Crosbie, L. and Knight, K. (1995), *Strategy for Sustainable Business: Environmental Opportunity and Strategic Choice*, McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead: England.
10. Daily, B. F. and Huang, S. (2001), Achieving Sustainability Through Attention to Human Resource Factors in Environmental Management, *International Journal of Operation*



and Production Management, Vol. 21, No. 12, pp. 1539-1552.

11. Ditz, D. Ranganathan, J. and Banks, R.D. (1995), *Green Ledgers: Case Studies in Corporate Environmental Accounting*, World Resources Institute, Washington.