

## Green HR Management



### INTRODUCTION

Green Human Resource Management has emerged as the new HR (Shoeb, 2015). The concept initially signifies the policies, practices and systems that transforms employees' behaviour and attitude for the benefit of business organisations and the societal environments in general (Abdull, Mohamed and Osman, 2012). Most essentially, Green HRM promotes sustainable use of resources and thereof maintain organisations' competitive advantage within industries (Dutta, 2012). Economic and financial outlooks are perpetually becoming inadequate to sustain the long-term endurance of business organisations (Cherian and Jacobs, 2012). Hence the incorporation of environmental management and human resource management has materialised as a strategy intended for a more comprehensive relationship of economic and environmental performance of organisations documented as Green HRM (Wagner, 2013). However, there are a plethora of uncertainties surrounding the concept, as to how environmental management must be incorporated into human resource management (Marcus and Fremeth, 2009). This paper discourses this issue.

Globally, the 21<sup>st</sup> century is characterised by some heightened consideration of environmental concerns (Ahmad, 2015). The environmental concern has taken a stand as a global crisis shortly after the realisation of harmful repercussions of industrial sites, waste objects, pollution and toxic chemicals included which has intensely steered the greenhouse effect (Renwick, Redman and Maquire, 2008). Furthermore, the conspicuous consequences of the greenhouse effect have advocated for the formulation of legislations, white papers, and policies throughout the globe (Rosenbaum, 2016). Authors such as Grolleau, Mzough and Pekovic (2012) postulated that it is only fitting that government statutes induce the compliance of business organisations in environmental awareness and green initiatives per se.

These authors have the confidence that the existence of environmental regulation may counteract natural disasters, accidents or illegal emissions produced by industries saving organisations tons of compliance money while simultaneously preserving the environment and its resources. Mampra (2013) maintains that under normal circumstances this may appear to be state compliance regulations however, the innovative organisations holds a perspective of a competitive advantage strategy, they perceive this strategy as a green movement revolution in HR of which organisations can benefit from. Mandip (2012) emphasises that uncovering the concept Green HRM is accompanied by its two significant components that should centre the understanding of its incorporation in human resource management, according to Deshwal (2015) these two imperative components take account of environmental-friendly HR practices inclusive of recycling, e-filing, telecommunication, virtual interviews, virtual teams and car sharing and/or car pooling. The second component entails the preservation of capital knowledge i.e. tacit knowledge Wagner (2013), conferring to this author this component should entail imparting tacit knowledge on the workforces through diverse training methods and information sessions on the phenomenon of Green HRM.

## **THE INCORPORATION OF GREEN HRM INTO HRM**

A number of authors have dedicated their studies towards a comprehensive understanding of the incorporation of environmental (green) strategies and policies into the traditional human resources practices, each of this strategies should be discussed jointly with the familiar traditional HR practices to portray how they can be effectively implemented by business organisations with the interest of going green.

### **Green recruitment and selection**

There is somewhat belief that recruitment and selection is the foremost momentous function of HRM for the vital reason that it is considerate of the long-term competency of the organisation and therefore have the potential to occupy a central position of the green movement (Prathima and Misra, 2013). Green recruitment and selection has been defined by Ahmad (2015) as a recruitment system whereby the competencies of recruitment are inclusive of environmental awareness, environmental enthusiastic character, green organisations and most importantly the candidates must aspire to form part of green teams. Authors such Sharma and Gupta (2015) recommend recruitment of such nature as “smart staffing”, in the view of the fact that it involves recruiting updated, innovative and knowledgeable employees that becomes capital.

However, the initial process before recruitment is advertising, organisations that aspires to incorporate green strategies must primarily attract a green-conscious labourforce (Ndubisi and Nair, 2009). Gueri, Montanari, Scapolan and Ephifanio (2016) have found that there is a positive relationship between a firm's corporate image and competent employees, it is therefore appropriate to conclude that when a green corporate image is advocated, green candidates are attracted. In their study titled ‘Green behaviour change’, Anderton and Jack (2011) found that several US graduates have started to display

some considerable interest in occupations that are in support of environmental awareness and are constantly choosing a green-friendly employer. Same conclusions have been found in the UK by Mohammad (2014) whom shared that surveys disclose that high-achieving graduates make use of the organisation`s environmental performance and green reputation as criteria for decision-making when they apply for vacancies, thus a green image is imperative.

Additionally, Sharma and Gupta (2015) reports that a 2015 IPSOS Mori survey revealed that 80% of respondents in fifteen signatory developed countries would prefer an organisation that has a reputation of social and environmental responsibility. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that green organisations grow their corporate image in order to attract the right employees compatible to the organisation`s vision.

Grobler, Bothma, Brewster, Carey, Holland and Warnich (2012) presented a resource-based-review paradigm, the paradigm demonstrates that recruits should not only be perceived solely as part of factors of production but as a strategy that would contribute to the organisations competitive advantage. The incorporation of green recruitment and selection is somewhat diverse in the sense that many strategies can be utilised to ensure smart staffing. Hiba (2016) has identified green job descriptions as one of those strategies, the author postulates that green job descriptions can be used to detail out the corporation`s environmental aspects inclusive of safety and health tasks.

Dutta (2012) have outlined that the health and safety tasks should be inclusive of those tasks that may endanger the employee`s lives or be subjected to hazardous or unsafe environments, such employees should undergo regular check-ups and report to management with a medical certificate as well as counselling sessions where necessary. Mohammad (2014) have identified green interviewing techniques as one of the green recruitment and selection strategies firms can employ to promote GHRM.

Green interviewing techniques involves the use of interviewing techniques designed to distinguish potential employees fit for environmental centred positions (Deshwal, 2015). Mohammad (2014) points out that interviewing techniques that promotes green recruitment includes the use of webcams or Skype, telecommunicating and teleconferencing, these techniques reduces the use of paper, vehicles and finances. This kind of recruitment has been currently categorised as e-recruitment as a result of excessive use of technology in the recruitment processes (Guerce et al, 2016). Most essentially, e-recruitment broadens the selection pool and escalates recruitment processes speed and moreover, it reduces recruitment costs (Jabbour et al (2016).

### **Green training and development**

Employees should be equally empowered and motivated to initiate green efforts in the induction and training phase (Sudin, 2011). Authors such as Zoogah (2011) views green training and development as an HR practice that concentrates on the development of the workforce knowledge, skills and attitudes permissible to prevent deterioration of environmental management. Ahmad (2015) asserts that the incorporation of green training and development strategies should be inclusive of practices that educates

the workforce about the values of the environment, working methods on waste management and recycling, energy conservation, environmental awareness programmes and environmental problem-solving tasks.

Sharma and Gupta (2015) proposed that the incorporation of green training and development can be initiated through workshops, orientation programs and green teams or virtual teams aimed at facilitating and increasing green morale within the workplace. Cherian & Jacob (2012). recommended organisations should make use of case studies in training workshops and online factual courses rather than making use of loads of printed hand-outs, books and files which ultimately encompasses paper.

Furthermore, Prathima and Misra (2013) further suggested that human resource departments can ease up their efforts of green initiatives by simply encouraging the employees to make use of laptops or computers to perform their tasks within the workplace, moreover projectors, emails, intranet, Dropbox and Blackboard could be utilised to conduct briefings and feedback in that way the green training is being implemented simultaneously with the traditional human resource functions.

Liebowitz's (2010) had a different perspective on the incorporation of green training into the traditional HRM, the author asserts that green training should initially be implemented at a strategic level in the sense that leadership development workshops focusing on assisting managers in the development of behavioural competencies or people skills in teamwork, diversity and change management should be incorporated as part of green training, the idea behind this perspective is that the enforcement of green training should start at top management level before it could be enforced to the workforce, strategy is believed to drive the firm towards common goals.

The importance of environmental training is necessary and essential in the sense that it encourages green corporations to keep up with new innovative corporations, (Razab et al, 2015) this implies that green training has the capacity retain the competitive advantage of an organisation. Therefore, continuous green training will provide employees with the opportunity to acquire the latest knowledge and relevant skills.

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green strategies must primarily attract a green-conscious labourforce (Haddock et al (2016). Gueri, Montanari, Scapolan and Ephifanio (2016) have found that there is a positive relationship between an organisations corporate image and competent employees, it is therefore appropriate to conclude that when a green corporate image is advocated, green candidates are attracted to the company. Conversely, the initial process before recruitment is advertising, organisations that aspires to incorporate green strategies must primarily attract a green-conscious labourforce (Ciocirlan, C. E. (2018). Gueri, Montanari, Scapolan and Ephifanio (2016) have found that there is a positive relationship between an organisations corporate image and competent employees, it is therefore appropriate to conclude that when a green corporate image is advocated, green candidates are attracted.

### **Green training and development**

Fernando et al. (2019) asserts that the most vital impact towards environmental awareness among employee is through environmental training, this means that the best way to promote environmental management (EM) and green awareness is through training. Tang, Chen, Jiang, Paillé and Jia (2018) views green training as an HR practice that focuses on the development of worker`s knowledge, skills and attitudes permissible to prevent deterioration of environmental management.

Ahmad (2015) asserts that the incorporation of green training and development strategies should be inclusive of practices that educates the workforce about the values of the environment, working methods on waste management, recycling, energy conservation, environmental awareness programmes and environmental problem-solving tasks. Sharma and Gupta (2015) proposed that the incorporation of green training and development can be initiated through workshops, orientation programs and green teams or virtual teams aimed at facilitating and increasing green morale within the workplace. Tang et al. (2018) recommended that organisations should make use of case studies in training workshops and online factual courses rather than making use of printed hand-outs, books and files which ultimately embodies paper.

### **Green compensation and reward**

The main objective of green compensation and reward is to illustrate recognition of the contribution and commitment of green-conscious employees, therefore it should be given to employees once they acquire of green skills and competencies and subsequently mastered the organisational environmental tasks (Daily, Massoud, & Bishop, 2011). This means that such rewards or benefits should be designed with a purpose of reinforcing and motivating employee`s environmental friendly behaviours.

Singh and Trivedi (2016) indicate that most authors consider monetary based, non-monetary based and recognition based incentives to be important in motivating employees in becoming environment friendly. Deshwal (2015) stated that monetary-based can be allocated in the form salary increase, cash incentives and bonuses while non-monetary rewards may include sabbaticals, special leave and gifts to employees and their family members. Jabbour and Jabbour (2016) suggested that recognition-based awards can draw attention to the green contributions of employees, moreover they suggest that this can be done

through publicity, public praise as well as appreciation of green efforts by the CEO or any top management executives. Furthermore, the authors emphasize that rewarding employees for their commitment towards environmental practices can enhance the attainment of green goals within the workplace.

### **Green performance management and appraisals**

Performance management guides the employee's performance on environmental-conscious behaviour and motivates employee's undertakings of green tasks, but also presents a challenge on how to measure this performance (Singh and Trivedi, 2015). Rawashdeh (2018) and Hiba et al. (2016) seem to agree that green performance standards serve as an excellent yardstick in performance appraisals in all organisational levels and therefore recommends these standards to organisations aspiring to go green. Dutta (2012) asserts that it is of paramount importance that performance evaluation should cover waste management and environmental audits.

Leszczynska (2016) postulates that this can assist not only in creating awareness and familiarisation of green issues, but also in encouraging them to engage in green-related tasks of the organisation. It is therefore imperative for human resource management practices to integrate environmental performance into performance management by setting green objectives, responsibilities, monitoring procedures of environmental behaviours, and evaluation of achievement of environmental objectives by utilising green work-rating as the key indicators of job performance, Hayes (2018).

### **Challenges of the incorporation of Green HRM**

People have different beliefs and therefore are guided by different philosophies Lovejoy (2017). Hence, it is difficult to change employees' behaviour within a short period of time Burke (2017). The phenomenon of Green human resource management is a broad concept that demands commitment of employees, since they will be expected to practice green living in both their personal lives and work-setting (Dutta, 2012), henceforth it comes as a challenge to the organisation and its goals.

It is therefore not surprising that not all employees will be equally motivated to take part in the progression of greening the organisation's human resource practices. Like any other emerging fields, developing a green culture within the organisation will be a cumbersome and enduring process (Deshawn, 2015). The field of Green HRM is still young, HR practitioners are therefore confronted with challenges of being expected to deliver the green tools, green structures, green processes and green thinking while there is a theoretical and empirical gap on Green HRM which should be instrumental as guiding map in the incorporation of green practices Ciocirlan (2018).

### **(Viii) Benefits of the incorporation of Green HRM**

Organisations that are eco-friendly are recognised to be active participants of the greenhouse effects this has created a good image for such companies (Kim, Lee and Fairhurst, 2017). Consequently, this advantage attracts not only environmental-conscious investors but also competent human resources, who easily adapt to the green culture of the organisation. Banerjee (2017) asserts that most organisations

take advantage of a good image and use it as a marketing strategy in order to gain a competitive advantage within their industries, green corporates enjoy this benefit.

Deshwal (2015), highlights that green HR initiatives improves relationships of organisations with its shareholders, customers, suppliers, vendors, government agencies, and the media. Clearly, it will come to a point where overall expenditures of the organization will reduce as the government is becoming more and more interested in environmental issues (Porter and Kramer, 2019). Green organisations are ultimately protected from government's interventions, and save money in the process (Banerjee, 2017). Nag (2018) maintains that GHRM is a way of initiating green learning that reinforces eco-friendly habits in the employees work-setting as well as in their personal life styles. Furthermore, Iqbal (2018) asserts that it also promotes efficient and efficient use of resources and moreover it ensures effective way of managing risks

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