

Employee Perceptions towards Green Human Resource Management Practices in Corporate Firms

MONIKA PEDGAOKAR*¹ AND MONA MEHTA²

¹Temporary Assistant Professor and ²Assistant Professor

Department of Family and Community Resource Management, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences,
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara (Gujarat) India

*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

Global warming has paved the attention of most corporate owners to rethink and realize the importance of environmental awareness towards sustainability. The increasing concern towards the environment urges the grave necessity of Human Resource experts to strategize the HR functions in a way to accelerate the amelioration of organizational environmental performances. Thereby, corporate groups are transforming their customary models into environmental-friendly models by employing eco-friendly edges in their processes which can aid in achieving the economic improvement. Thus, the present study was undertaken to ascertain the perceptions of the employees and to determine the barriers faced while adopting GHRM practices in corporate firms. The present study comprised of 160 respondents through purposive sampling technique wherein questionnaire was selected as a tool. The findings of the present study will be beneficial to the employees of several corporate firms to gain insight about green human resource management practices, various methods and policies enable organizations to increase their environmental social consciousness. Thus, corporate firms can reaffirm its commitment to the cause by submitting an accelerated action plan that aligns with the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Keywords: Perceptions, Green Human Resource Management Practices, Employees, Corporate Firms

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, with the expansion of globalization across the world, it has been realized that environmental aspects need to be taken into consideration by institutions, including manufacturing, corporate and service sectors, education, and politics. It is fact that human activities (industrialization and transports) are approximate to have already caused about 1.08C of global warming (United Nations Environment Programme, 2019). Concerns about environmental deterioration caused by resource depletion, the impact of pollution on human health and the effects of climate change have led to an increased investment in greening operations. These investments are regarded as ardent proponents of decarbonisation, as it decreases carbon footprint by reducing

the emission of carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere. Moreover, such initiatives encourage the increased use of renewable energy sources like wind and solar energy¹.

Sustainability is now a worldwide issue, and firms increasingly care about the effect of environmental issues on their competitiveness and long-term success (Paillé *et al.*, 2014). It has been argued that human resources are central in achieving successful Human Resources Institute environmental management (Daily and Huang, 2001; Jackson *et al.*, 2011). HR plays a vital role in making the environmental responsibility of the organization as a part of the corporate mission statement. The responsibility of the HR managers is to create awareness about the Green HRM, the green movement, and the utilization of natural resources, helping the

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corporate to maintain the proper environment and retain natural resources for future generations among young and working people.

From the resource-based viewpoint, human resources are important factors in firms' competitive advantage, due to their rarity, value, non-repeatability, and exclusiveness (Barney, 1991; Wright, Dunford and Snell, 2001). In the context of environmental protection, human resource management (HRM) can facilitate the successful formulation and implementation of environmental management (Daily and Huang, 2001) by aligning practices such as selection, performance evaluation, and training with environmental objectives (Jabbour *et al.*, 2017). Thus, there is an increasing need to integrate green concepts into HRM, referred to as green human resource management (Mishra *et al.*, 2014).

Organisational Environmental performance refers to performing activities in a way that positively affects the environment (Jabbar and Abid, 2015). Environmental performance of an organisation "reflects an output demonstrating the degree to which firms are committed to protecting the natural environment" (Paillé *et al.*, 2014). Environmental performance can be evaluated in terms of low environmental releases, prevention of pollution, minimisation of waste, recycling activities, etc. (Lober, 1996). When organisations implement environmental management systems like ISO14001 certification, their Environmental performance is likely to improve. But, in a study conducted by Jabbour and Santos (2017), it was found that among the four ISO 14001 certified organisations, the best EP was reported in the case of the organisation that had used human resource management (HRM) strategies for environmental management. The shift to a greener economy has focused on decoupling operations from resource wastage and environmental damage.

GHRM can encourage employees' commitment and involvement in environmental practices, which can increase their sense of belongingness and pride, motivating them to work harder. These environmentally friendly practices can therefore help a firm develop a good reputation, reduce the pressure from stakeholders, and benefit future generations in the long run. Green HRM involves undertaking environment-friendly HR initiatives resulting in greater efficiency, lower costs and better employee engagement and retention, which in turn, help organizations to reduce employee carbon footprints by

electronic filing, car sharing, job sharing, teleconferencing, and virtual interviews, recycling, telecommuting, online recruitment and training, energy-efficient office spaces².

While Green Human Resource Management research has contributed to the literature the major thrust areas such as; Role of entering and experiencing green economy, Factors affecting Green HRM and their organizational practices and behaviour of employees against environment and relationship of green recruitment and selection, green training and development, and green rewards with Environmental performance in the service organisation were covered. There view of literature reflected a dearth of researches on employee perceptions towards GHRM practices. Therefore, the present research was conducted with the following objectives:

Objectives of the Study:

1. To ascertain perceptions of employees towards green human resource management practices in corporate firms.
2. To determine the barriers faced by employees while adopting GHRM practices in corporate firms

METHODOLOGY

To attain objectives, Descriptive research design was used for the present study. The study comprised of 160 respondents through purposive sampling method wherein questionnaire was selected as tool. The employees from various corporate firms were selected as unit of inquiry. The questionnaire contained several sections such as: Section: I; contained questions related to demographic characteristics of the respondents, Section: II; included questions related to perceptions of employees towards green human resource management practices in corporate firms, in which respondents were asked to respond on a 3-point continuum scale in terms of "Agree", "Undecided" and "Disagree". To test the validity of the scales prepared, the entire tool was given to a panel of 7 judges, from which 3 were the experts from Family and Community Resource Management Department and 4 were the experts from corporate field. The judges were requested to judge whether the listed items of the scales were clear, ambiguous, relevant, irrelevant, negative or positive. The items on the scales that had 90% agreement by the experts were finally selected for the scales to be used to judge the perceptions

of employees towards green human resource management practices.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study are discussed in separate sections:

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents:

This section deals with the background characteristics of the respondents: Gender, Age, Educational Qualification of the respondents, Years of work Experience of the respondents.

The Findings (Fig. 1) revealed that more than one half of the respondents (54 %) were male. It was also found that more than one half of the respondents' (58 %) age ranged between 25-35 years, more one half of the respondents (62 %) were post graduates. Most of the respondents (78 %) were having 1-5 years of experience in the corporate firms.

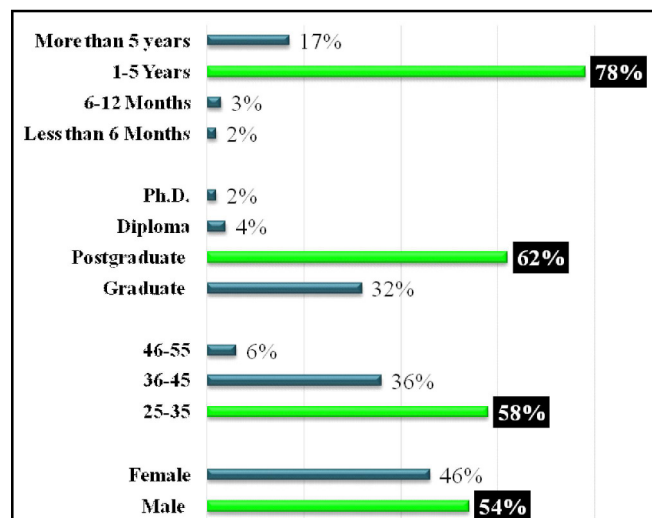


Fig. 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to Demographic Characteristics (n=160)

Perceptions of Employees towards Green Human Resource Management Practices in Corporate Firms:

This section deals with the awareness about the concept of Green Human Resource Management, Green Human Resource Management Practices adopted in organization, Barriers of Green Human Resource Management and Perceptions of Employees towards Green Human Resource Management Practices in Corporate Firms.

The data (Fig.2) reported that telecommunicating was majorly (89 per cent) adopted as green human resource practice in the organization whereas adoption of Transport pooling and recycling, waste management practices were not adopted or followed at regular basis in the firms.

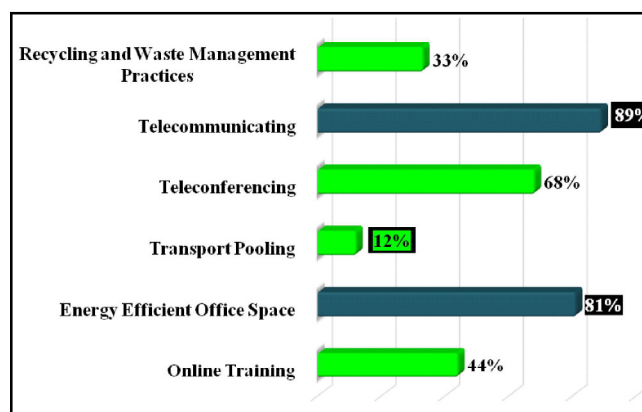


Fig. 2 : GHRM Practices adopted in Corporate Firms (n=160)

More than one half of the respondents (56 %, Fig. 3) agreed that the absence of financial resources emerged as the most crucial obstacle for adoption of GHRM practices in corporate firms.

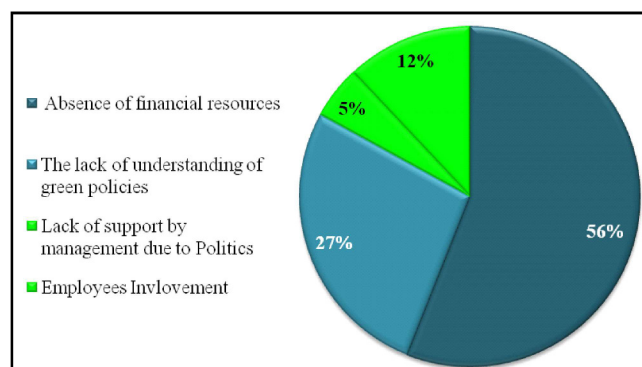


Fig. 3 : Distribution of the respondents according to Barriers faced in adoption of GHRM Practices in Corporate Firms (n=160)

The data of weighted mean scores (Table 1) reported that respondents were strongly agreed in relation to various aspects of GHRM practices in corporate firms must be adopted as followed by them such as; Interviewing candidates online and evaluating them for selection, Integrating green criteria in appraisals or evaluating employee's job performance, Public recognition

Table 1: Weighted Mean Scores on Perceptions of Employees towards various aspects of GHRM Practices in Corporate Firms (n=160)

Sr. No.	Statements	Weighted Mean Scores (n=160)
A)	Green Recruitment and Selection	
1.	Selecting applicants who are sufficiently aware of greening to fill job vacancies.	2.4
2.	Recruiting those candidates who have competency and attitudes to participate in corporate environmental management initiatives too in the recruitment message.	2.7
3.	Conducting interviews through the internet, telephone, or video conferencing which can reduce the candidate's travel requirements while also reducing paperwork, save time and money.	2.6
4.	Interviewing candidates or evaluating them for selection, asks environment - related questions.	2.8
B)	Green Performance Management and Appraisal	
1.	Providing regular feedback to the employees or teams to achieve environmental goals or improve their environmental performance.	2.6
2.	Incorporating environmental management information system and environmental audits on regular intervals.	2.2
3.	Incorporating corporate environmental management objectives and targets with the performance evaluation system.	2.5
4.	Integrating green criteria in appraisals or evaluating employee's job performance according to green - related criteria.	2.9
5.	Including a separate component for progress on greening in the performance feedback interview.	2.4
C)	Green Training and Development	
1.	Providing environmental training to the organizational members to increase environmental awareness.	1.4
2.	Taking into account the needs of environmental issues when training requirement are analyzed	2.5
3.	Training materials are available online for employee to reduce paper cost.	2.3
4.	Providing training to learn or adapt environment friendly best practices (e.g., reducing long - distance business travel and recycling).	1.9
5.	Providing training to the staff to produce green analysis of workspace.	1.8
6.	Applying of job rotation to train green managers of the future.	2.1
7.	Providing online training to employees for their skill development	1.2
D)	Green Reward and Compensation	
1.	Offering non-monetary and monetary rewards based on the environmental achievements (sabbatical, leave, gifts, bonuses, cash, premiums, promotion.)	2.8
2.	Public recognition should be given to employees for their effort in maintaining environment sustainability which further enhances their morale & dedication.	2.9
3.	Providing incentives to encourage environmentally friendly activities and behaviors (e.g., recycling and waste management).	2.7
4.	Rewarding for green skills acquisition.	2.8
5.	Offering green incentives to workers by arranging for a nature-friendly workplace and lifestyle benefits such as carbon credit equalizers, free bicycles.	2.3
E)	Green Empowerment	
1.	Recognizing employee as a key stakeholder in environmental management.	2.9
2.	Providing opportunities to negotiate with management about green workplace agreement.	2.1
3.	Providing opportunities to the employee to involve and participate in green suggestion schemes and joint consultations for environmental issues problem solving.	2.8
4.	Offering workshops or forums for staff to improve environmental behavior and exchange their tacit knowledge.	2.8
5.	Modifying or creating new processes which are eco-friendly within the organizations framework and policy.	2.7

Table 1 contd..

Contd... Table 1

F) Pro Environmental Behavior towards GHRM Practices		
1	Encouraging workers to find ways to reduce the use of environmentally harmful chemicals in their goods through training and rewards.	2.7
2	Encouraging the employee to save electricity by turning off lights, monitors, and printers during work hours and on weekends, adopt LED technology to conserve energy.	2.9
3	Conducting business meetings and conferences through the internet, telephone, or video conferencing to save time and money.	2.7
4	Encouraging workers to improve their travel and commuting habits by minimizing official car trips, using public transportation for business travel, car-pooling, offering interest-free loans for electric car purchases, and encouraging employees to bike or walk to work.	2.5
5	By minimizing the use of printed products, increasing recycling, using eco-friendly lunch bags and products, and banning the use of bottled water and plastic in the workplace, an organization can create a green business climate.	2.8
6	Buying computers from local vendors which are using recycled components.	2.6
7	Establishing standards for waste disposal, usage of environment friendly gadgets, recycling and reusing of products.	2.9
8	Accomplishing green actions with the least amount of paper and written materials.	2.8

should be given to employees for their effort in maintaining environment sustainability which further enhances their morale & dedication, Encouraging workers to find ways to reduce the use of environmentally harmful chemicals in their goods through training and rewards, Encouraging the employee to save electricity by turning off lights, monitors, and printers during work rest hours and on weekends, adopt LED technology to conserve energy, Establishing standards for waste disposal, recycling & reusing of products. It was also found that very few of the respondents were agreed for providing online training to improve their skills because they believed that many times in-person training is required and it is more fruitful for the firm.

Summary and Conclusion:

Green ideas and concepts are beginning to gather pace within the HR space, it delivers tangible benefits to the business, rather than simply adding a gloss to brand and reputation. These new processes, policies, products and tools are actually helping to ensure compliance and improve productivity too. It's an urge to make environmental management an integral part of their way of doing business so HR professional can provide a constant calendar of activities. Going green also helps firms enhance their public relations, and improved public relations and positive public perception can have a strong impact on firm's profit. Therefore, to fill the gap in relevant literature, the present study was conducted. The Findings of the present study revealed that more than of the

respondents were aware about the concept of GHRM but did not follow or adopt certain practices due to financial constraints. The data reported that telecommunicating was majorly adopted as green human resource practice in the organization whereas adoption of Transport pooling and recycling, waste management practices were not adopted or followed at regular basis in the firms. Majority of the respondents agreed with regards to Green Performance Management and Appraisal practices, Green Empowerment, Green Reward and Compensation practices and Pro Environmental Behavior towards GHRM Practices should adopted by the firms. Educational Institutes can play a significant role by providing knowledge and increase awareness amongst the corporate employees regarding benefits of GHRM practices. 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. The findings of the present study will be beneficial to the employees of several corporate firms to gain insight about green human resource management practices, various methods and policies enable organisations to increase their environmental social consciousness, allowing them to achieve sustainability. Thus, corporate firms can reaffirm its commitment to the cause by submitting an accelerated action plan that aligns with the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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