

GO GREEN AND GAIN COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

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ABSTRACT

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is an approach that brings together environmental and human resource management at one platform. It facilitates to adopt such HRM strategies that foster increased environmental sustainability and equilibrium. Thus, it aids in protecting the environment by encouraging minimum utilization or utilizing maximum out of limited resources. Further, GHRM provides a competitive advantage to the company over others. For instance, it promotes the retention of the employees, gaining profit as well as building strongly reputed image in the market and others features discussed in this article. However, different approach and strategies can be used in a variety of ways for implementing GHRM in a particular company. However, HR plays a critical component of applying these strategies successfully. For instance, the more the use of green teams, more will be the utilization of the proactive green function in a company. In this article, the policies and practices for implementing GHRM in the company for gaining advantage have been discussed.

Research Methodology

This research paper is primarily based on secondary data that is fetched from periodicals, journals, books, scholarly articles, and others. The prime objective of using this method was to foster comprehensive information related to stated research area. Here, survey method was used to collect data from related reference books, related websites mentioned in the references and published information that are available in public domain.

Keywords: *GHRM, competitive advantage, environment, sustainability*

Introduction

In the twenty-first century, Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) has one of the emerging business strategies of the major successful organizations that enjoy competitive advantages over others in the industry. GHRM is related to bringing environmental and human Resource management together on one platform. GHRM is the utilization of HRM policies and practices for the promotion of sustainable use of resources in an environmental-friendly way within business organizations.

Moreover, the Human Resource (HR) under GHRM has been gained the name of People and Society. Green HR offers advantages such as higher efficiencies, lower costs and improved employee engagement as well as retention. Human Resource Departments act as a major player in implementing going green theme at the working place (Renwick, Redman & Maquire, 2008). Since, past, the green management approach is found to be useful as well as profitable (Lee, 2009). Companies engaged in practicing the GHRM are involved in protecting the environment. This paper focuses on the Green Human Resource Practices and its competitive advantages offered to the successful organizations worldwide.

Definition of Green HRM

In literature, the Green HRM term has been vividly defined by various researchers but the overall goal is same that is to adopt HRM strategies leading to increased environmental sustainability and equilibrium. For instance, Green HRM is defined as the method in which organizations execute environment management by developing and adopting environmental management strategies (Lee, 2009). Another definition of Green HRM accounts for balancing the growth of the industry with the protecting environment so that future generation can thrive as well (Daily and Huang, 2001). Business organization has significant role in maintaining the environmental management as they exist in the society and are integrated part of the environment (Liu, 2010).

Green HR function

Human resource imparts significant contribution in the sustaining and implementing green HRM into business organization successfully (Renwick, Redman, & Maguire, 2013). However, the strategies for engaging employees differ across different companies. Moreover, the HR functions are well-known in fostering a green culture in an organization by applying policies and practices with the target of sustainability (Cherian, & Jacob, 2012; Mandip, 2012). Additionally, elements such as reward, performance, recognition of HRM are perceived as some of the drivers that help in attaining environmental sustainability (Jabbour, Santos, & Nagano, 2010). Further, the intensity of using green teams is directly proportional to companies' use of the proactive green function (Jabbour, 2013).

Policies and practices to implement Green HRM

Past organization policies and practices were highly dependent on gaining economic values but in the present growing environmental concerns have changed the entire scenario, and the paradigm has been shifted to minimizing the carbon footprint and sustainability of the environment, the ecological equilibrium as well as enhancing society conditions. The change is mainly attributed to the elevated level of environmental pollution and waste generation from business industries that are leading to extensive devastation to the non-renewable resources.

Moreover, the companies have a significantly contributory role in increasing the carbon footprint in the past (Liu, 2010). As a result, Green HRM came into the picture where the organizations

begin to manage the environment by taking account of management strategies involving environment (Lee, 2009). Green HRM view to be as the utilization of policies, practices, and procedures in the firms that results in green employees contributing advantages to the individual, society, environment and the organization itself (Opatha and Arulrajah, 2014). Some of the practices and policies are explained in the following sections.

Recruitment A company's attractiveness is increased if it takes account of pro-environmental position for protecting the environment, in turn, has an effect impact on the hiring (Bauer and Aiman-Smith, 1996). Further, it has also been suggested that positive environmental stands have a positive influence on the potential recruitment. Further, surveys demonstrate that the person seeking jobs has higher priorities to choose employment in the environmental and ethically responsible company rather than the opposing one. For instance, surveys show the choice of being recruited in American Cancer Society rather than Camel Cigarette.

Green Compensation and Rewards is one of the best tools for supporting and enhancing the efforts of achievement of the environmental goal (Milliman and Clair, 1996). Employees across different companies across the world have shown to be more inclined to the green management principles when they are offered rewards (Taylor, 1992). Moreover, the reward has been found to profound impact on the motivation, attitude and environmental behavior of the employees (Ramus, 2002). The green reward can be in the form bonuses, cash, gifts, recognition award, promotion based on the promotion of green initiative of various types.

Green Training and Development is a practice that involves the development of required skills and knowledge of the employees that lead to the attainment of the beneficial competencies. Green training also allows inhibiting decline management attitude, expertise, and knowledge (Zoogah, 2011). They are also shown to be attached to increasing business values (Perron, Cote, & Duffy, 2006). Further, the employees based survey indicates that the creation of efficient green management system was directly related to environmental training (Daily, Bishop, & Steiner, 2007).

Green performance management can be successfully implemented by directly connecting performance management to the characteristics of the green job. Further, one of the ways to improve the environmental management values is to integrate the environment management into performance management system (Renwick et al., 2013). These measures help in protecting the environment against any damage.

Competitive Advantages through Green HRM

Presently, many multinational organizations are utilizing environment management system as a strategic tool for gaining competitive advantages (Daily and Huang, 2001; Haddock-Millar, Sanyal, & Müller-Camen, 2016). This type of system aids in enabling the management of an organization to control its impact on the environment effectively. Additionally, employing Green HRM offers many facets of interconnected benefits for the company, for instance, green employees have shown to have increased performance and retention. Additionally, green initiatives lead to the creation of green workforce or HR, who are more responsible and works in a team. Further, their activities involve choosing those options that are more environmental-friendly such as the use of telephonic interview, communication via email and others. These initiatives, in turn, lead to a decrease in overall costs and wastages in organizations. Altogether factors such as enhanced organizational cultural, overall cost reduction, teamwork, increased retention and performance of employees lead to dual advantages. In one hand these factors foster environment sustainability but on another hand, it improves the operational performance, efficiencies, and effectiveness of an organization.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the implementation of Green HRM offers lucrative approaches for the organizations to increase their effectiveness while imparting their environmental responsibility successfully. Thus, the Green HRM concept has a great potential towards saving current environment and resources for future generation and gaining current competitive advantages in the current industry gradually shifting towards the environment sustainability.

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