

Chapter 17

Sustainable and Green Human Resource Practices

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ABSTRACT

Two topics, circular economy and human resource practices, have been in separate baskets. However, recent studies have shown that both have a major impact either directly or indirectly on each other. Human resource management or human management is largely associated with a behavior of an economy. It has been largely debated and accepted that human resource management has a major role in creating sustainable organizations. Human resource management as a function involves a lot of postulates of sustainability in the scope of an organization. We all understand that the role of human resources has widened throughout time, and there is a need for more innovations in better management with various stakeholders and employees to create HR as a more solution-based function.

For the longest years the two topics circular economy and Human Resource Practices has been in separate baskets and never thought of bringing both together. However, the recent studies has shown that both has a major impact either direct or indirect on each other.

Human Resource Management or Human management is largely associated with a behavior of a economy. It has been largely debated and accepted that Human Resource Management has a major role in creating sustainable organisations.

The transition is taking place in many organizations where the practices are largely affected through the concepts of circular economy as it helps in optimum utilization of resources or gaining more value from the employees and providing better experiences and outputs to the stakeholders. Human Resource Management as a function involves lot of postulates of sustainability in the scope of a organisation. (Vickers, 2005). We all understand that the role of Human Resource has widened throughout the time

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and there is a need of more innovations in better management with various stakeholders and employees to create HR as a more solution-based function.

To develop this chapter we have reviewed 53 research and empirical papers along with 15 articles referring to Green HRM and Sustainability along with focused discussions with HR professionals of leading think tanks working on Sustainability. The research gave us an understanding of relationship between Green HR practices, Sustainability and employee development along with the outlook on potential areas to be explored in future to meet the developing needs.

The chapter presents the concepts highlighted in research and adaptation of various Sustainable Human Resource Practices in organisations widely along with the development of the human potential by implementing the relevant practices.

While the widely discussed parameters of Economic, Social and Environmental focus in regard to sustainability are addressed, the chapter takes closer look in developing and applying the same to enrich employee development and providing a Green Work environment to the staff.

INTRODUCTION

Over the years Human Resource function of organisations has evolved from becoming facilitator to a Strategic arm of developing organisations. Since 1980's there had been numerous debates on better management of humans or employees in the organisations and tremendous research shows us direct and positive relationship between Human Resource Management Practices and Organisation Performance.

With the urgent requirements of increasing environmental and sustainability issues around the world, organisations are developing and introducing relevant strategies to focus and address the same.

Research shows that the focus of organisations is growing in terms of demonstrating their commitments to sustainability.

The Think Tanks, Government and other stakeholder bodies are making certain conscious attempts to make these changes through corporate consultative groups and bring a radical change.

We understand that to make Human Resource Practices more sustainable, the functions shall work around economic performance, social performance, and environment performance.

- Economic Performance here means that we analyse the appetite of the organisation to be more innovative in terms of its functions and Products.
- Social Performance would mean effectiveness to manage diversity of resources and human potential.
- Environment Performance is to introduce functions and processes which are more environment friendly and help in providing the conducive work environment to the staff.

Sustainable Human Resource Management has been tried to define through various research studies and the recent rising interest on the topic has shown varied definitions of the same.

Sustainable HRM can be defined as the adoption of HRM strategies and practices that enable the achievement of social, financial and ecological goals by creating an impact inside and outside of the organisation and over a long term time horizon while controlling for the unintended side-effects and negative feedback. (Michel, Muller-Camen, 2016)

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