

Chapter 105

Green Human Resource Management: A Review and Future Directions

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the vital role of human resource departments in organisations and their contributions towards environmental sustainability in the nations of sub-Saharan Africa. It posits that the role of HR in recruitment, training and development, learning, rewards, employee relations, and appraisal of employee performance should be conducted with environmental sustainability in mind. It affirms that instilling a culture of environmental awareness into every activity of organisations has a great return on productivity, attracting the best talents, and minimizing the harm of environmental degradation. It contends that organisational policies and behaviour on environmental responsiveness should be of greatest priority to the 21st-century businesses in sub-Saharan Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, there has been increased media focus on climate change and environmental degradation largely because of the rapid pace of industrialisation across the globe. While the surge in industrial growth and globalisation has resulted in economic boom and job opportunities for nations, it has adversely led to environmental ruin, especially in sub-Saharan African nations. Some of the effect of industrialisation include the depletion of natural resources and environmental pollution. Several scholars have argued that to sustain an effective organisational green management system, it is vital to promote the use of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) in every organisation (Jackson, Renwick, Jabbour, & Muller-Camen, 2011; Liebowitz, 2010). GHRM is the education of employees on the values and future economic benefits of environmental sustainability. GHRM involve the creation of environmental awareness among the workforce by organising seminars and workshops mainly to achieve green behaviour in their performance. GHRM refer to the promotion of sustainable practices and environmental awareness by employees in the performance of their functions in the organisation (Cherian, & Jacob, 2012; Greaves, Zibarras, & Stride, 2013). In essence, GHRM is the use of video conferencing for interviews and seminars, the use of iCloud to preserve employee and organisational data and using online training and performance appraisal of employees. All these efforts are conducted primarily to attain a balance between organisational growth and environmental sustainability.

The human resource department is largely responsible for forging the corporate mission statement based on the environmental awareness and sustainability. It creates a pattern of green behaviour among employees which is often carried out into private life (Arulrajah, Opatha, & Nawaratne, 2015; Chan, 2011; Sathyapriya, Kanimozhi, & Adhilakshmi, 2013). The quest to safeguard the environment from detrimental practices by nations in sub-Saharan Africa has resulted in several of these nations promulgating policies and laws to ensure environmental sustainability. Studies in the field of environmental sustainability have indicated the cardinal role of human activities in environmental destruction (Davis & Challenger, 2013; O'Skamp, 2000). As such, the application of environmental sustainability using workplace behaviours such as recycling of papers, bottles and cans as well as using energy efficient equipment.

While several scholars have underscored the importance of green training in enhancing environmental-friendly behaviour among employees, there is still lack of research in the areas of GHRM especially in sub-Saharan African region (Jabbour & Santos, 2008; Ones & Dilchert, 2012; Rimanoczy & Pearson, 2010). Significantly, much of the literature around GHRM is examined in the context of developed countries, particularly in Western Europe and North America (Unsworth, Dmitrieva, & Adriasola, 2013). Considering the rapid pace of environmental degradation in sub-Saharan African nations, it is particularly vital to explore green training and development in the context of sub-Saharan African nations. The purpose of this paper seeks to examine the relevance of GHRM in both the public and private organisations in sub-Sahara Africa. Studies on green employee training and development is significant because it offers broader understanding of an organisation's workforce behaviour on the environment.

BACKGROUND

There is a unanimous consensus on the detrimental impact of environmental degradation (Ahmad, 2015). Policy makers and scholars in the field of environment and economics studies have described the potential gloomy economic implications of not creating management programs to deal with the

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