


Chapter 9

Green Human Resource Management and Environmental Sustainability in Higher Education Institutions: Navigating the Challenges

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ABSTRACT

The fast-changing organizational landscape in the modern world fosters a new trend toward environmental performance. The poor and ineffective environmental performance of higher education institutions (HEIs) shifts scholars focus toward sustainable practices over relying solely on technological improvements. This chapter explores the influence of green human resources management (GHRM) practices on sustainability in HEIs in Karachi, Pakistan through the lens of a Resource-Based View (RBV). Using a qualitative research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 56 HEIs employees, analyzed via thematic analysis. This study enriches the limited body of literature on GHRM by exploring its role in fostering sustainability in HIEs. Additionally, it highlights the challenges HEIs face when adopting GHRM practices to promote sustainability, discusses managerial implications and provides insights for policymakers. Findings revealed that GHRM practices encourage eco-friendly behaviors, emphasizing the need for sustainable strategies within Pakistani's HIEs workforce.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's modern world, where sustainability in higher education institutions takes center stage, the ongoing dynamic evolution within the academic realm fosters a new emphasis on economic, environmental, and social performance (Rana & Arya, 2024). Globally organizations all around the world have faced increasing pressure over the past decade to contribute to environmental sustainability, recognizing their role in environmental degradation (Madrid-Guijarro & Duréndez, 2024). This shift has led

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businesses to rethink their operations, systems, practices, and procedures to meet sustainability goals, driven by societal, market, and regulatory demands and in human resource management (HRM) (Nart et al., 2024). Green human resources management (GHRM) has come into view as a holistic approach to HRM that promotes environmentally responsible behavior within an organization. Through GHRM, employees initiate green practices that help achieve organizational sustainability goals, ultimately supporting broader environmental objectives (Tunio, 2024).



In recent years, a growing number of global higher education institutions strive to incorporate “Green” behaviors and ecological governance into their educational offerings. Educational and scientific research institutions play a pivotal role in adopting eco-friendly strategies to tackle environmental concerns (Aboramadan, 2022). HEIs should so adopt the “Go Green” mindset in order to promote an eco-friendly work environment (Yong et al., 2023). Academic staff, research scholars, and institutional administrative personnel at universities must deploy “Green” and eco-friendly working practices in their daily jobs (Al Mahameed et al., 2023).



Green practices are often referred to as employee behaviors that promote and support environmental management practices at work (Agrawal et al., 2024). The successful application of green practices in the workplace is said to depend on the green behaviors of employees. “Green” workplace strategies are thought to be implemented effectively when employees exhibit “Green” habits. Furthermore, research has shown that incorporating workers into green practices is essential for environmental management

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