

A Study on Implementation of Green HRM Practices of Various Organisations in Chennai City

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Abstract

There is an increasing emphasis on integrating environmental considerations into Human Resource Management (HRM), giving rise to what is known as Green HRM initiatives. Green HRM involves leveraging employee-related practices to encourage sustainable operations, build environmental awareness, and support organizations in functioning responsibly toward the planet. It primarily includes two key components: implementing eco-friendly HR policies and safeguarding organizational knowledge related to sustainability.

The aim of this study is to examine the current landscape and challenges associated with Green HRM practices in Chennai city, a topic that remains relatively underexplored. The paper focuses on understanding how companies in Chennai are adopting Green HRM, the level of awareness surrounding these practices, and the pace at which they are being implemented. It also evaluates the effectiveness of these initiatives within the Indian context. Overall, this research contributes to the growing need to analyse Green HRM in developing and emerging economies such as India.

Introduction

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) is an emerging area within HRM that has expanded significantly in recent years. It involves embedding environmental sustainability concepts into core HR activities such as recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, and employee engagement. The primary objective of Green HRM is to support organizational sustainability initiatives by fostering environmental awareness among employees, encouraging eco-friendly behaviours, minimizing the use of resources, and strengthening the organization's environmental performance (Deshwal, 2015).

As global environmental issues continue to intensify, organizations are increasingly adopting Green HRM practices to demonstrate their dedication to sustainability and social responsibility. This paper examines the concept of Green Human Resource Management, which involves incorporating environmentally responsible approaches into various HRM functions. Based on an analysis of existing environmentally responsible approaches into various HRM functions. Based on an analysis of existing literature, the discussion outlines several advantages of Green HRM, such as better environmental outcomes, higher levels of employee involvement, and a stronger organizational reputation. It further explores the major elements of Green HRM, including eco-conscious recruitment and selection, sustainability-oriented training, green performance evaluation, environmentally linked compensation, and active employee participation in green initiatives. Overall, the paper argues that Green HRM can play a significant role in promoting organizational sustainability while also supporting employee well-being, and emphasizes the need for continued research in this growing field.

Literature Review

Ahmad (2015) noted that Indian companies are becoming increasingly conscious of environmental issues and are beginning to adopt a range of eco-friendly management practices.

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The study highlights different Green HRM initiatives implemented by organizations and offers a clear explanation of the concept. Businesses worldwide are integrating Green HRM practices as a way to enhance sustainability and gain an edge in a rapidly evolving competitive environment. However, full-scale implementation remains challenging, as it demands significant changes to traditional HR processes and mindsets.

Mishra (2017) examined the Green HRM practices currently used by Indian companies and found that these initiatives are neither systematically structured nor consistently implemented. The study was carried out in two stages: the first involved archival analysis, while the second utilized a case study approach. The findings revealed that organizations tend to promote environmental awareness through informal channels, as formal methods are often more costly. In terms of recruitment and selection, little attention is given to evaluating candidates' environmental attitudes or green competencies. Overall, the study concluded that there is substantial potential for the Indian manufacturing sector to strengthen and enhance its Green HRM practices.

Peerzadah et al. (2018) investigated whether Green HRM practices enhance an organization's reputation and improve employee engagement. Their research, which relied on secondary data and an archival review of existing literature, indicated that employees' green performance, environmentally responsible behaviours, and sustainability-related competencies can be influenced and strengthened through the use of Green HRM initiatives. The study was further suggested that such practices can motivate employees, increase their willingness to participate, and encourage a stronger commitment to contributing ideas and efforts that support the organization's transition toward environmentally sustainable operations.

Majeed and Khan (2019) analyzed existing literature to highlight the importance of adopting Green HRM. Their study focused on the range of environmental practices implemented by Indian companies and offered recommendations for expanding these efforts more broadly. In addition to emphasizing environmental responsibility, the authors noted that adopting green initiatives can significantly enhance a company's public image. The study also proposed strategies for aligning environmental management with human resource practices in order to help organizations gain a competitive advantage over others.

Rizvi and Garg (2021) applied both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of Green HRM within Indian organizations. Their study explored various green practices and their influence on organizational performance and management, as well as the link between HR strategies and environmental sustainability. The authors emphasized the importance of enhancing employees' environmental knowledge and competencies, fostering a workforce that values eco-friendly behaviour, and offering training focused on environmental issues. They also stressed the need to develop HR strategies that prioritize sustainability. The findings indicate that several companies are actively working to build a culture that encourages environmentally responsible actions and promotes a strong commitment to sustainability among employees.

The review indicates that although several studies have examined the adoption of Green HRM practices within particular sectors or geographic areas, there is still a need for broader research to understand how these practices can support organizations and HR professionals in effectively implementing sustainability-focused strategies that also enhance employee well-being. In light of this gap, our study aims to investigate the current state of Green HRM practices in Indian corporations and contribute to the existing body of knowledge on this emerging area.

Objectives of the study

1. To understand the commonly practised green hrM approaches.
2. To identify and describe the green initiatives adopted by various companies in chennai city.

Research methodology

This paper is conceptual in nature and relies mainly on secondary information obtained from databases, journals, websites, and other published sources. It compiles and synthesizes existing knowledge on Green HRM practices. In addition, the study includes an examination of companies from diverse industries to provide a broad understanding of how different sectors have adopted Green HRM in recent years.

Theoretical Review Of The Green Initiatives

Modern organizations are becoming increasingly conscious of the environmental consequences of their operations. Many companies are transitioning to resource-efficient practices that help minimize ecological harm, such as using solar energy, incorporating recycled materials, implementing effective waste and water management systems, and adopting other sustainable construction methods. A significant shift can also be seen toward creating paperless workplaces. This is particularly evident in the IT sector, where firms are converting traditional paperwork into digital formats, thereby reducing resource consumption and environmental strain.

Green recruitment and selection have also gained prominence, with organizations aiming to hire individuals who demonstrate environmental awareness and a commitment to sustainability. Employees are expected to possess the motivation and knowledge necessary to support green initiatives within the workplace. Waste reduction and recycling efforts further help decrease the volume of discarded materials, save energy, and lower organizational carbon footprints. Many companies now follow the “3Rs”—Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle—to promote sustainability and strengthen their competitive position.

In addition to this, firms are increasingly focusing on energy conservation by adopting renewable energy sources, promoting the use of electric vehicles, and implementing other eco-friendly measures. Overall, corporations are making consistent efforts to operate responsibly and support a more sustainable future.

Green appraisal and performance management are strategies that organizations use to assess and guide employee performance with an emphasis on environmental responsibility. Green appraisal evaluates how well employees contribute to sustainability initiatives, whereas performance management involves setting objectives, offering continuous feedback, and reviewing progress to ensure employees align with organizational goals. When sustainability indicators are integrated into performance evaluations, they not only encourage environmentally responsible behaviour but also strengthen employee motivation and overall performance.

Similarly, green training and development focus on building employees' knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to environmental sustainability. Such programs may cover topics like energy conservation, waste minimization, and methods for embedding sustainable practices into daily operations and decision-making. These training initiatives help organizations advance their environmental objectives while fostering greater employee involvement and enthusiasm. By equipping

employees with sustainability-related competencies, organizations can cultivate a culture of environmental stewardship that becomes an integral part of their systems and practices.

Green training and development also contribute positively to society by raising awareness about environmental challenges and encouraging sustainable behavior beyond the workplace. As a whole, such initiatives are a vital component for organizations aiming to strengthen their environmental performance and support long-term sustainability.

Green rewards and compensation refer to the incentives organizations provide to recognize and motivate employees for their efforts toward sustainability and reducing the company's ecological impact. These rewards help cultivate an environmentally responsible culture and can attract individuals who value sustainability. Incentives may include bonuses for outstanding environmental contributions, recognition programs, or additional rewards for innovative ideas that help lower the organization's carbon footprint. By offering such benefits, companies reinforce their sustainability commitments and inspire employees to prioritize eco-friendly practices in their roles.

In the current business environment, sustainability has become a key priority across industries. As organizations work to minimize their environmental impact, employees play a central role in achieving these objectives. As a result, green employee relations have become increasingly significant. This concept involves developing policies and practices that actively involve employees in sustainability efforts, equipping them with the information and tools needed to make environmentally responsible choices, and fostering a workplace culture that values environmental stewardship. Effective green employee relations can boost organizational environmental outcomes, enhance employee engagement, and contribute to broader sustainability efforts.

Green Hrm Initiatives by Companies In Chennai City In Recent Times

1. Hyundai Motor India (Chennai Plant)

Hyundai has undertaken several major environmental initiatives in Tamil Nadu, including the development of a **75 MW solar power facility** and a **43 MW wind energy project** through a partnership with Fourth Partner Energy, supporting its commitment to operate fully on renewable energy. Through the Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the company has also expanded green cover around its Irungattukottai plant by planting over **21,000 trees**, assisted local tribal communities in maintaining this greenery, and restored multiple ponds to improve water conservation. Additionally, Hyundai is collaborating with IIT Madras to establish the **HTWO Innovation Centre**, focusing on advancements in green hydrogen technology.

2. Thryve Digital (Chennai)

Thryve Digital has introduced the "**Tree for Every Thryvian**" initiative, under which the company has planted **2,500 saplings** across Chennai with active participation from employees and local residents. This initiative aims to enhance urban greenery while strengthening environmental awareness and community involvement.

3. TVS Emerald (Chennai – Real Estate Sector)

TVS Emerald integrates sustainable practices into its residential projects by adopting **IGBC pre-certified designs**, implementing **rainwater harvesting**, and installing **solar panels** in common areas. Their properties support waste segregation, composting systems such as vermicomposting, and

maintain substantial green cover—often around 60%. Many of their developments also follow **zero-discharge water systems**, ensuring that treated wastewater is reused within the community.

4. Chennai One (IT Park / SEZ)

Chennai One IT Park has committed to creating an eco-friendly campus by adopting **energy-efficient infrastructure, green building principles, and EV-charging facilities**. The complex is designed to meet **LEED Gold** standards and regularly organizes tree-planting programs to encourage environmental responsibility among tenants and employees.

5. Courtyard by Marriott, Chennai

As part of its sustainability and CSR efforts, Courtyard by Marriott in Chennai marked World Environment Day by distributing **500 flowering plants** to a local NGO, Bala Vihar. The initiative promotes environmental conservation while engaging with the community to support a greener urban environment.

6. Deloitte

In the Southeast Asian region, Deloitte introduced a “Green Impact Challenge” to motivate employees to adopt environmentally responsible habits. Using digital tools, teams engaged in tasks such as conserving water and choosing eco-friendly travel options. This initiative helps build a collective green mindset and turns individual behavioral changes into organization-wide environmental progress—an important component of Green HRM.

Benefits and Outcomes of Green HRM Practices in Companies in Chennai

S.No.	Category of Benefit	Description of Outcomes Observed in Top Companies in Chennai
1	Environmental Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in energy consumption through green workspaces and digital HR processes Lower carbon emissions due to green commuting programs and efficient operations Enhanced waste management and increased recycling rates
2	Cost Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced operational costs from paperless HR activities Savings on electricity and water through employee-led conservation initiatives Lower long-term expenditure due to sustainable resource management
3	Employee Engagement & Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher employee participation in environmental programs such as tree planting and clean-up drives Improved sustainability awareness through continuous training and green leadership initiatives Stronger sense of responsibility toward environmental goals
4	Brand Reputation & Employer Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved public perception as environmentally responsible companies Strong employer branding that attracts eco-conscious talent Recognition through sustainability certifications and awards
5	Regulatory Compliance & Risk Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced compliance with national and state-level sustainability norms Reduced risk of penalties through proactive environmental practices Better alignment with global ESG reporting requirements
6	Organizational Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased process efficiency due to streamlined and digital HR functions Better productivity resulting from healthier and more eco-friendly workplaces Integration of sustainability goals into overall business strategy

Challenges of Green HRM

Top companies in Chennai, despite their growing focus on sustainability, continue to face several challenges in effectively implementing Green HRM practices. A major difficulty is the high cost associated with adopting environmentally friendly technologies, training programs, and renewable energy systems, which can be resource-intensive for many organizations. Additionally, employees may show resistance to behavioural changes, such as shifting to digital processes, reducing resource

consumption, or participating in sustainability initiatives, especially when these practices disrupt routine workflows. Limited awareness and inadequate environmental literacy among staff further hinder consistent adoption of green policies. Some companies also struggle with the lack of clear regulatory guidelines or industry benchmarks, making it difficult to design structured green HR frameworks. Moreover, maintaining long-term engagement in green activities can be challenging, as sustainability efforts often require continuous reinforcement and leadership support. Together, these barriers slow down the full-scale implementation of Green HRM in Chennai's leading firms, despite their strong intent to become more environmentally responsible.

Conclusion

Human resources remain the backbone of every organization, and in today's corporate landscape, their role in advancing environmental sustainability has become more critical than ever. With businesses increasingly embracing Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM), sustainability is no longer viewed as an optional practice but as a strategic requirement for long-term competitiveness. While integrating environmental objectives into HR functions presents challenges—such as redesigning policies, reshaping employee behaviour, and aligning green goals with organizational culture—companies are steadily adapting to this transition. Green HRM not only strengthens environmental performance but also elevates workplace quality, enhances employee commitment, and fosters a culture of ecological responsibility. As organizations in Chennai and across India continue to embed sustainability into their mission and vision, Green HRM serves as the connecting link between business growth, employee potential, and sustainable development. Ultimately, the effective implementation of green HRM practices positions companies to achieve both environmental stewardship and long-term organizational resilience, thereby contributing meaningfully to a more sustainable future.

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