

A STUDY ON GREEN HRM METHODOLOGIES ARE USED TO EXAMINE HOW GREEN CULTURE AFFECTS ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE IN INDIAN FIRMS

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Abstract

This research makes a significant addition to the expanding body of literature on "green human resource," or the use of HR tactics to achieve an organization's environmental management goals. Based on the findings of previous research, we have included environmental sustainability culture as a moderating variable to examine the impact of sustainability activities on business outcomes. We looked into the topic and its significance to India's business community using qualitative and quantitative methods. We observed that green HRM practises significantly impacted environmental performance using a sample size of 120 top-level HR managers from Indian manufacturing enterprises. This gave us confidence in the results we found. We also discovered that a culture of environmental sustainability moderated the connection between environmentally responsible HRM practises and their impacts on the environment. The results of the study show that industrial organisations can improve their environmental performance through environmentally responsible human resource management practises and a sustainable business culture.

Paper Identification



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Introduction

2018 was the fourth warmest year on record, according to statistics from NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In 2016, “14 of the 20 most polluted cities in the world” were located in India (The Hindu, 2018). According to the 'Biennial Update Report' on climate change presented to the United Nations, the majority of carbon dioxide emissions (70%) come from the energy sector, which includes factories, power production, the transportation sector, and fugitive emissions (CO₂ dominates the total GHG emissions). India is aware of the dangers posed by these weather patterns and has pledged, as part of the Paris Climate Conference in 2015, to cut its emissions by 33–35% by 2030. (DNA Correspondent, 2016).

Sustainable development is the practise of balancing a company's financial success with its positive impact on the environment and the quality of life in the local communities in which it operates (Schwarz et al., 2002). Many leaders and managers in the business world are interested in environmental sustainability (Costello et al., 2009; De Lange et al., 2012). Several businesses these days employ sustainable development strategies. About half of the 1,500 business leaders polled in a recent survey agreed that sustainability plays a significant role in their company's overall strategy (Berns et al., 2009). Most businesses, however, struggle to connect their sustainability-focused efforts with their overall company strategy, which ultimately prevents them from improving their sustainability performance or being competitive in the long run (Porter and Kramer, 2006). So, including this project into the company's strategy is the first and important step in putting the organization's commitment to sustainability into action. Human resource (HR) strategies that include environmental considerations in their job description, recruitment and selection, induction, training and development, performance appraisal, reward and recognition, employee engagement (Ramus, 2002; Jabbour and Santos, 2008, etc.), employee relations (Ahmad, 2015), and green occupations are often cited as reasons why businesses can improve their environmental performance (EP). Green HRM is what you get when you combine HR methods with an organization's commitment to environmental sustainability (GHRM). Top corporations have come to appreciate the significance of culture in facilitating their transition to sustainability (Bertels et al., 2010). For an organisation to achieve its stated goal of promoting environmental sustainability, it must foster what is known as an environmental sustainability culture (ESC), which is defined as “an interpretive and symbolic concept” that influences the actions of all employees and the way in which the business operates

(Chen, 2011). The Environmental Performance of a Company is More Likely to Boost When It Has a Culture That Encourages Environmental Sustainability (SHRM et al., 2011; Liebowitz, 2010). Changing a company's culture is a necessary but often difficult step in introducing sustainable practises (Perron et al., 2006). This obstacle may be removed with the use of HR initiatives (Harmon et al., 2010; Winterberg et al., 2007; Liebowitz, 2010; etc.). HR practises and a culture that encourages sustainability may also aid businesses in producing above-average economic results (Fernandez et al., 2003).

Despite scholars' increasing curiosity on GHRM and EP, there is still debate over the importance of GHRM in achieving sustainability (Jackson and Seo, 2010; Renwick et al., 2012). Thus, this research aims to clear up this mystery by providing hard data on the connections between GHRM tactics and EP. Strategies for GHRM also contribute to the development of environmentally friendly lifestyles (Harmon et al., 2010; Winterberg et al., 2007; Liebowitz, 2010; etc.) We have investigated the mediating function of culture in the connection between GHRM tactics and EP since it is well acknowledged that culture may significantly contribute to a company's effectiveness in achieving its EP goals (Jabbour & Santos, 2008).

Review of Literature

1. Environmental performance of organizations

According to the research of Jabbar and Abid (2015), "organisational EP" refers to "the practise of doing business in a way that is good for the planet." "A company's environmental performance (EP) is an indicator of how committed it is to protecting the natural environment" (Paillé et al., 2014). Low environmental discharges, pollution management, waste minimization, recycling activities, etc. are all important factors to consider when assessing EP (Lober, 1996). ISO14001-certified businesses, and those with similarly rigorous environmental management systems, typically have greater EP.

2. Effective environmental management and sustainable human resource practises

Since the mid-1990s, numerous scholars (e.g., Wehmeyer, 1996; Millima and Clarer, 1996) have acknowledged human resource management as a significant contributor to an organization's economic performance (EP). Several other empirical studies have also found a favourable association between HRM practises and EP, corroborating the findings of the latest study by Rensick et al(2012). There is a lack of empirical maturity despite the fact that numerous studies have underlined the relevance of HR strategies in environmental management of organisations. The aforementioned research suggests that companies could modify their HR policies in order to increase EP (Jabbour and Santos, 2008). The investigation focuses on green employment

policies, green training and education, and green employee engagement. "Green recruiting" refers to the practise of finding and hiring candidates who share an organization's "green values" (Ahmad, 2015). When advertising open positions, businesses should take ecological factors into account. Prospective employees need access to the company's sustainability agenda through the company's website or other research tools in order to understand the company's green endeavour (Arulraja et al., 2015). The interview process should include questions about the candidate's environmental preparedness (Renwick et al., 2012). Companies should prioritise applicants with suitable job experience when filling environmental protection positions (Jabbour, 2011). According to the World Economic Forum, "recruiting and selecting procedures should intentionally establish a pool of human capital with values and abilities that support the journey towards sustainability" (Bertels et al., 2010).

In the service of an organization's goals, "green training" (Thevanes and Arulrajah, 2016) seeks to inform and motivate staff members to reduce their environmental impact. Environmental education has been deemed "one of the most significant tools" (Teixeira et al., 2012) for creating a more sustainable society. Therefore, businesses should educate their staff with environmental education (Liebowitz, 2010). Renwick et al. (2012) provided the guidelines for eco-friendly training. Green workplace analyses, job rotations for aspiring green leaders, recycling techniques, waste management strategies, energy efficiency enhancements, and other similar issues should all be included in training courses. All employees should be given access to environmental training, and the corporation should fund and host environmental events (Liebowitz, 2010). Mandip (2012) argues that a company's environmental policy should be shared with new employees on their first day so that they can better align their personal aims with the company's. As part of employee onboarding, the company's environmental policy should be shared with new workers (Mandip, 2012). Environmental training and education, as well as a supporting environmental culture, are two of the most effective human resource management approaches that may help firms achieve their environmental goals (Ramus, 2002).

Businesses that are serious about providing excellent EP will encourage their employees to take part in sustainability initiatives (SHRM et al., 2011). Employee input is required much beyond the implementation stage. Businesses should hold sustainability meetings often so that employees may provide feedback on the company's sustainability strategy (Molnar & Mulvihill, 2003) and new suggestions for how to improve the company's sustainability efforts (Bertels et al., 2010).

Jabbar and Abid (2015) The researchers studied how HRM practices influenced employee motivation to be involved in the company's EP. Using a sample size of 178 employees, the study showed that rewards and recognition and supervisory support motivated employees towards EP. However, green performance assessment did not motivate employees towards EP.

Owino and Kawasira (2016) Human resource methods were examined in connection to environmental sustainability at Kenya's Menengai Oil Refinery. Utilizing data from a sample of 163 workers, they discovered that "green occupation health and safety" and "green performance management" significantly impacted environmental sustainability. When it comes to environmental sustainability, green staff sourcing had a minimal impact, whereas green training and development had no effect.

Masri and Jaroon (2016) Using Palestine's industrial organizations as a case study, the researchers examined the correlation between GHRM and EP. Finding a moderate link between the use of GHRM and sample size of 110 businesses. Furthermore, they discovered a strong link between GHRM and EP.

Rawashdeh (2018) The study looked into how green hiring, green development, and green pay affected EP in Jordan's public health system. Overall, the survey found that the aforementioned HRM practises were somewhat put into practise. The three HRM approaches were also shown to have a favourable correlation with one another.

4. Hypotheses

After reviewing the relevant research (Section 2), it was determined that GHRM tactics do, in fact, result in the development of EP. When companies recruit people who care about the environment, the company's environmental performance (EP) increases, according to research by Mandip (2012). This is so because they contribute to the company's efforts to go green. Environmental training, according to Jabbour and Santos (2008) and Renwick et al. (2012), helps businesses better deal with environmental problems, which in turn boosts EP. Boiral and Paille (2012) concluded that including staff in the organization's path towards environmental sustainability would boost staff members' tacit knowledge of how to deal with environmental challenges, which in turn would improve EP. Thus, the following inferences were made:

H1 Green recruitment and selection have a positive effect on the EP of organizations.

H2 Green training and education have a positive effect on the EP of organizations.

H3 Green employee engagement has a positive effect on the EP of organizations.

Culture was also recognised as a crucial moderator in this study's literature review. This review found that EP may be enhanced by using HR practises that foster a “green culture” (Jabbour and Santos, 2008; Liebowitz, 2010). (Handfield et al., 2001; Fernandez et al., 2003). Hence, the following hypotheses were investigated in order to answer the research question:

H4 ESC mediates the relationship between green recruitment and selection and EP of organizations.

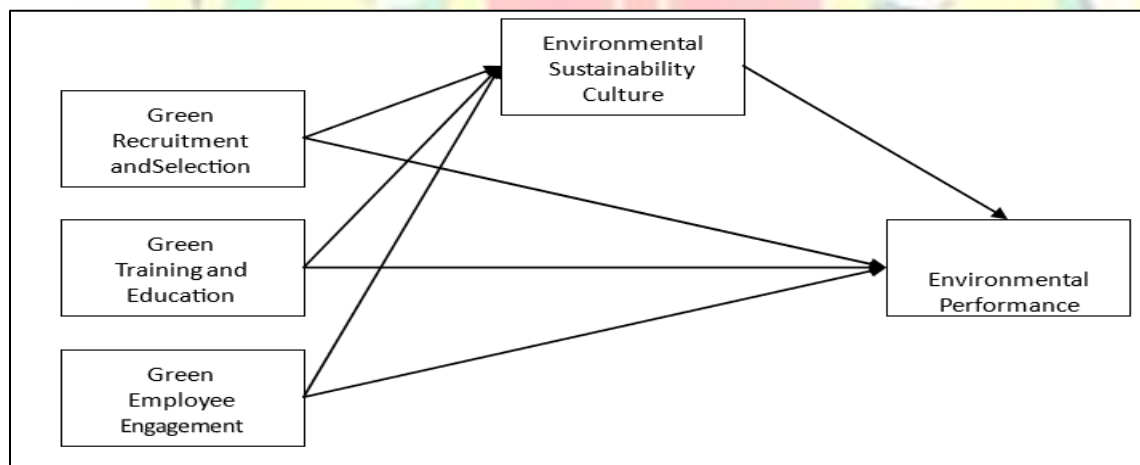
H5 ESC mediates the relationship between green training and education and EP of organizations.

H6 ESC mediates the relationship between green employee engagement and EP of organizations.

5. Derivation of model

After a comprehensive analysis of the available literature, the following framework has been developed. For this research, we used ESC as a mediator between the independent factors (green recruiting and selection, green training and education, and employee engagement) and the dependent variable (environmental performance).

Figure 1. Mediating effect of ESC on the relationship between GHRM and EP



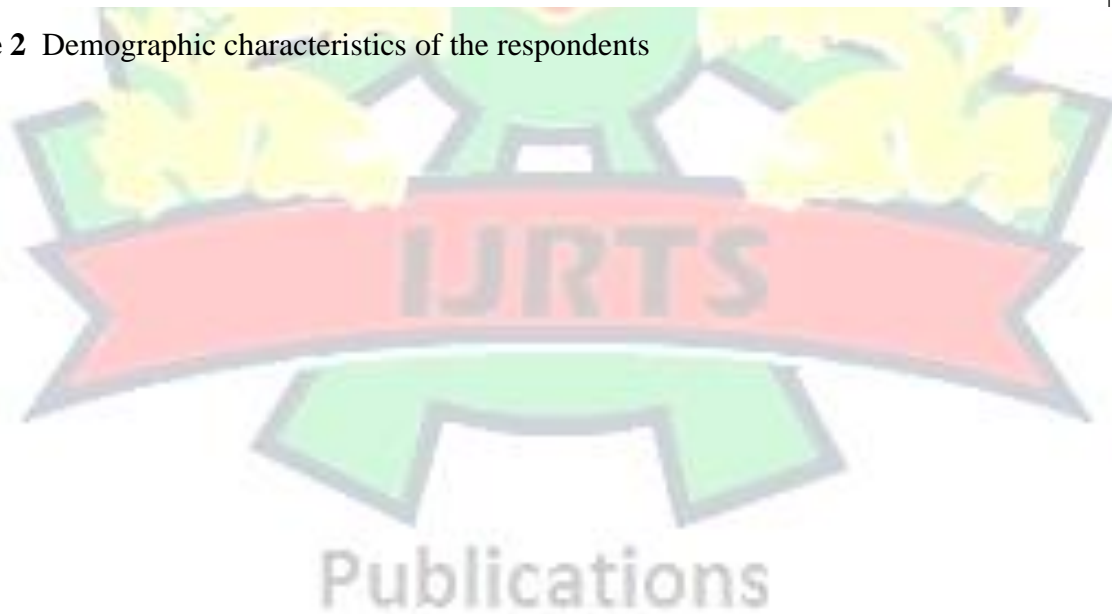
Analysis and Results

Qualitative Study

Interview Since companies in India have adopted the idea of GHRM recently, conducting interviews helped us to get a basic understanding of the topic in light of the Indian companies. We selected 10 companies that have been leaders in terms of environmental management practices. However, only four companies agreed to participate. Conducting face-to-face interviews for all the interviewees was our prior motive, but since we couldn't get all the relevant people to agree to this arrangement, therefore we requested them to answer through emails, which they agreed to. Consequently, three interviews were conducted via emails and one face-to-face interview was conducted.

Table 1 Sector wise distribution of the companies

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Percentage of responses</i>
Automobile	20%
Oil and Gas	14%
Electricity	12.73%
FMCG	11.83%
Basic Material	10.90%
Electronics	10.90%
Cement	8.18%
Conglomerates	5.45%
Pharmaceuticals	5.45%

Table 2 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

<i>Demographics</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Age		
20–30	21	17.5%
31–40	49	40.84%
41–50	31	25.84%
51 and above	19	15.84%
Gender		
Male	94	79%
Female	26	21.67%
Job tenure		
1–5 yrs	36	30%
6–10 yrs	31	25.84%
11–15 yrs	23	19.16%
More than 15 yrs	30	25%
Job position		
CEO/CFO/COO/CHRO/VP	26	21.82%
General manager	42	34.55%
Assistant general manager/senior manager	36	30%
Plant manager/regional manager/divisional manager	16	13.64%
<u>Educational qualification</u>		
Diploma or below	3	2.5%
Bachelors	24	20%
Masters and above	93	77.5%

The main research question was:

How does your organisation align its HRM strategies with the environmental sustainability programs of your organisation? We have coded companies as A, B, C, D to maintain confidentiality. We obtained the following responses from the interviewees:

- Company A, VP, HR: “I believe in India it will take a substantial amount of time to reach a stage where organizations include environmental criteria in the appraisals. However, employees are somewhat engaged in environmental activities in the organization. We have knowledge-sharing sessions wherein the employees participate and discuss ways in which the organization can combat environmental challenges. Training on EM is given but only to those employees who are directly associated with the environmental management activities of the organization. Moreover, the EP of our organization has improved its corporate reputation in the job market and has attracted talented youth to work for our organization”.
- Company B, senior GM, HR: “Environment management is generally driven by HR folks

in our organization. For e.g. we create awareness about the environment, through employee self-service portals wherein topics such as awareness related to pollution caused by plastic, the importance of afforestation, etc. are displayed. The company has an NGO specially dedicated to the environment and employees are frequently involved in the activities carried on by the NGO. We also have various competitions in the form of an online quiz to create awareness on environmental management. Employees are sent emails that address environmental problems on a frequent basis. We have environmental pools wherein employee's opinion is taken on environmental sustainability. The company also ensures that appropriate training and awareness programs on the environmental system are in place to ensure best practices. Finally, we also believe that environmental protection is a shared responsibility amongst employees, suppliers, and customers”.

- Company C, VP, HR: “EP is included as a specific responsibility in the job description of business leaders and forms an important part of their goal sheet. We believe in engaging employees in the environmental initiatives of the company. These initiatives extend to the employee's personal lives as well. Recently, we organized a summit named ‘Supplier Sustainability Meet’. Waste management and sustainable supply chain management were among the main agendas. We provide e-learning and classroom training to our employees (directly dealing with environmental sustainability) as well as our suppliers in environmental management areas. We also have training courses on energy management”.
- Company D, senior GM, HR: The company encourages its stakeholders (which includes the company's employees) to use renewable energy. We have a culture of conservation wherein employees are encouraged to come up with innovative solutions on minimizing dependency on natural resources. The company provides training to all its members to enhance productivity by minimizing the consumption of raw materials, minimum waste generation, etc. with the aim to ultimately achieve a reduction in energy consumption. We display our seriousness towards environmental health in our job advertisements. We also have a paperless hiring procedure. Although we do not have a policy of selecting green employees, we definitely give more weightage to those resumes that show the interest of employees in environmental health.

Interview results

Based on the interviews conducted with the VP and GM, working in the HR department, we concluded that all the four companies under study have linked their HR strategies with the

environmental sustainability initiative of the organisation. We found the presence of green training and education in all the four organizations, i.e., A, B, C, D. Engaging employees in EP was also observed in all four cases. However, green recruitment and selection were observed only in the case of companies A, C, and D. Based on the answers of the interviewees we can also conclude that companies are taking maximum initiatives to engage their employees in the environmental sustainability agenda of the organisation. This is followed by green training and education in the form of classroom training, workshops, etc. to help employees acquire environmental skills. Although in companies A and C, the training and education are mostly limited to those involved in the environmental management activities of the organisation, companies B and D have extended such training and education programs to all the employees. Green recruitment and selection are also being practiced by the companies. But based on the above answers we can say that organizations need to work more on this area.

After we gathered evidence in the favour of the presence of GHRM practices in Indian organizations our next step was to study the relationship of GHRM with ESC and EP. Following this qualitative study, we conducted multiple regression analyses to study the empirical relationship between these variables.

Quantitative study

Reliability

Table 3 Reliability

<i>Variable name</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>
Green recruitment and selection	.846
Green training and education	.816
Green employee engagement	.86
EP	.84
ESC	.93

Cronbach's alpha can be used to examine the reliability of a set of items for a certain theoretical framework. Cronbach's alpha should be over 0.70, and anything over 0.60 is regarded acceptable

(Nunnally, 1978). Table 3 demonstrates that this value is more than .70 across all research constructs.

Results for the relationship between green human resource management strategies and environmental performance

The first model looked at how different GHRM characteristics correlated with EP. Determining whether or not the residuals exhibit autocorrelation is a primary goal of the Durbin Watson test. When the residuals are not totally uncorrelated with one another, we have autocorrelation. The range of 1.5–2.5 indicates zero autocorrelation (Rovai et al., 2013). This model's Durbin-Watson statistics, at 1.968, are within the allowable range. Checking for multicollinearity, or collinearity among independent variables, may be done with the variance inflation factor (VIF). No multicollinearity exists between the independent constructs if the tolerance value is more than .10 and the VIF value is less than 10. (Hair et al., 2010). Independent variables have a VIF of 2.502 (green hiring practises), 2.396 (green education and training), and 1.992 (green technology adoption) (green employee engagement). Each of the tolerance levels is more than .10. Hence, multicollinearity cannot exist. The R² value demonstrates that GHRM techniques account for 65.7% of the overall variation in the EP. In conclusion, our overall model is statistically significant (F statistic = 74.186, df = 119, p 0.05). Beta = .334, p = .000, indicates a significant relationship between green recruitment and selection and EP; beta = .283, p = .001, indicates a significant relationship between green training and education and EP; and beta = .296, p = .000, indicates a significant relationship between green employee engagement and EP. The highest effect on EP is also shown in green recruiting and selection. The three hypotheses are therefore all accepted: H1, H2, and H3.

Results of mediation analysis

For running mediation analysis, we followed Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-step approach followed by Sobel's test and Preacher and Hayes's (2004) bootstrapping for checking for the significance of the indirect relationship and the effect size, i.e., $a * b$.

Step 1 The independent variables should have a significant effect on the mediating variable. This condition is met as can be viewed in model 2, The Durbin-Watson statistics, VIF, and tolerance statistics for these variables were within the acceptable range. The R² value shows, 64.6% of the total variation in ESC is due to GHRM strategies. The F statistics (F = 70.653, df = 119) is significant at a 5% significance level. A significant relationship is found between green recruitment and selection and ESC (beta = .249, p = .005), green training and education, and ESC (beta = .334, p = .000) and green employee engagement and ESC (beta = .322, p = .000).

Furthermore, green recruitment and selection have the greatest impact on ESC.

Step 2 The independent variables should significantly affect the dependent variable.

This condition is met (model 1).

Step 3 The mediating variable should have a significant impact on the dependent variable. This condition is satisfied (model 3). As we can see from Table 6, the VIF and tolerance statistics and Durbin-Watson statistics are within the acceptable range. Thus, this model meets all the assumptions. The R² value shows that 58.4% of the total variation in the EP is due to ESC. The F statistics (F = 165.590, df = 119) is significant at a 5% significance level. A significant relationship is found between ESC and EP (beta = .764, p = .000).

Step 4 We took independent variables and the mediating variable as predictor variables, predicting our dependent variable. the VIF and tolerance and Durbin-Watson statistics are within the acceptable range. Thus, this model meets all the assumptions. The F statistic, (F = 65.192, df = 119) is significant at a 5% significance level. All the predictor variables had a significant relationship with the predicting variable. By adding ESC in our model 3, R² value increased by 3.7% and this increase is significant. Also, on adding this variable, all the independent variables remained significant thus ESC does not have a full mediation effect between GHRM and EP. But the β coefficients decreased on adding ESC into our model. For green recruitment and selection, β decreased from .334 to .254, training and education β decreased from .283 to .176 and for green employee engagement β decreased from .296 to .192. For ESC, we found the β value of .322 with p = .000. Hence, ESC partially mediated the relationship between the GHRM variables and EP.

Using the bootstrapping technique (Preacher and Hayes, 2004), we also examined the possibility of a mediating influence. The benefits of this approach have led to its widespread adoption by modern social science scholars. This method reduces the likelihood of type 1 error by using fewer inferential tests and is therefore appropriate for use with small sample sizes (Kelly and Carter, 2013). We used 5,000 data-replacement bootstrap re-samples with 95% bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals to examine the oblique effect. Since our model contains three separate factors, we ran the procedure three times, each time treating one of the three independent variables as X and the other two as covariates. By doing so, we were able to determine the factors' effects indirectly. In his book Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis, Hayes (2013) proposes this approach. The mediation analysis showed that ESC acted as a middleman between green recruitment and selection and EP (

=.0638, CI = .0137-.1364). A statistically significant correlation between the variables under examination can be inferred if the confidence interval (CI) does not extend beyond zero.

However, the direct effect also remained significant ($\beta = .2021$, CI = .0689-.3352), thus indicating partial mediation. ESC also mediated between green training and education and EP ($\beta = .1003$, CI = .0410-.1691). However, the direct effect between green training and education and EP remained significant on adding the mediating variable, ESC ($\beta = .1638$, CI = .0069-.3206). Thus, we obtained partial mediation in this case as well. The results also confirmed the mediating role of ESC between green employee engagement and EP ($\beta = .0743$, CI = .0281-.1372). In this case too, on adding ESC as a predictor variable, the direct effect of green employee engagement on EP remained significant $\beta = .1374$, CI = .0267-.2480). Therefore we found a partial mediation effect of ESC in all three cases. This result is consistent with the result given by Baron and Kenny (1986). However, with this test, we could confirm our results and we could also find the effect size for the indirect path in our model

Implications of the study

Businesses are under increasing pressure from a variety of groups, including clients, suppliers, regulators, and the public at large, to lessen their negative effects on the environment. While many businesses have adopted various measures in response to this increasing strain, they are still frequently unable to provide excellent EP. Our research will provide these businesses with a roadmap for advancing on the path to sustainability. Many research have demonstrated the efficacy of GHRM tactics in raising EP. The paper's empirical analysis of the connection between the three GHRM techniques and EP provides solid proof that managers should begin staffing decisions around environmental goals. Their EP might use some work, and this would help.

Second, we observed that these HRM practises contribute to the development of a green culture, and that businesses with stronger ESC tend to have higher EP. So, managers may rest guaranteed that their EP will improve both directly and indirectly if they incorporate environmental considerations into their GHRM plans (with the help of culture).

Finally, despite implementing GHRM standards, some businesses may not notice an increase in their EP. Lack of eco-consciousness may be to blame. This article demonstrates that the connection between GHRM and EP is moderated, at least in part, by cultural factors. As a result, business leaders may go ahead and make the necessary adjustments to their GHRM initiatives to foster the development of a green culture in the workplace, which will ultimately boost the efficiency and productivity of their operations.

Conclusions

Based on our results, we conclude that organizations that are willing to achieve superior EP must modify their HRM strategies to align them with the environmental sustainability aspect. This can be done by hiring environmentally conscious people, upgrading their green skills by providing appropriate training on environmental issues, and finally by engaging employees in the formulation and implementation of environmentally-related strategies. All these initiatives will help organizations in achieving a green culture – a culture where every member holds superior environmental values. Managers should work to improve green recruitment and selection, green training and education, and green employee engagement to reap more benefits in terms of improved environmental performance (EP), and they should also take immediate steps to build a culture of environmental sustainability in their organizations.

Limitations of the study

As only large multinational corporations were included in the data set, we were able to determine a statistically significant correlation between all variables. Researchers should broaden their focus in the future to include small and medium-sized manufacturing businesses for a fuller picture and more reliable generalisation. Further research might also compare and contrast the GHRM approaches of different sized businesses. This would provide them a better idea of how far along various companies are in implementing GHRM practises and whether or not company size affects the impact GHRM tactics have on EP.

The current investigation solely included three GHRM factors. Green remuneration, green communication, green performance assessment, etc., might be included as independent variables by future studies.

There is also the possibility of selection bias in the study, as data is only collected from HR department supervisors (Farnsworth, 2020). HR is primarily responsible for developing and executing GHRM initiatives, but a company's culture will not automatically shift to one of sustainability just because the CEO says it is a priority. Because of this, managers everywhere need to take action (Cohen et al., 2010). To avoid this type of bias and ensure more generalizability, future research should include data from both HR and non-HR managers.

Ultimately, future research can expand their sample size for interviews and undertake a qualitative analysis of the data gathered from those interviews to derive more accurate conclusions.

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