

Review Article

Green Human Resource Management on Energy Saving Behaviour: A Review of Related Literature

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Abstract

This study examines how employees' green behavior at Deposit Money Banks in Southwest Nigeria is impacted by Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) regulations. It looked specifically at how green recruitment, training, performance management, and remuneration policies influence ecologically friendly habits in the workplace, such as energy conservation. As firms attempt to align with sustainable development goals, they are increasingly implementing GHRM techniques to accomplish internal objectives while also contributing to the larger goal of environmental protection. The study investigated important activities and practices required to promote environmentally responsible behavior and create greener organizations. In today's business environment, GHRM has emerged as a crucial strategy, and Human Resource Departments play an important role in promoting sustainability efforts. The study's findings show that implementing GHRM principles improves both environmental performance and staff well-being in the banking industry. Based on the findings, the study recommends the following actions: implementing green certification programs for employees, providing incentives to encourage eco-friendly workplace behaviors, conducting regular sustainability training and awareness campaigns, and implementing technology-driven green recruitment and selection processes. These findings add to the increasing body of research on sustainable human resource practices and provide practical recommendations for strengthening corporate environmental responsibility in Nigeria's finance sector.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management Practices, Energy Saving Behavior, Energy Conservation, Sustainable Development.

1. Introduction

In recent years, an increasing number of deposit money banks around the world have attempted to integrate environmental management and green practices into their services (Benayas *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, they must provide a precedent for rejuvenating and recognizing the changing requirements and challenges of environmental management concerns (Finlay and Massey, 2012). As organizations prioritize green initiatives (Mtembu, 2019), HR professionals must rethink their mission and integrate green management practices to enhance their practices (Ángel del Brío *et al.*, 2008). Members of higher education institutions, including teaching, research, and administrative staff, would need to adopt green and environmentally friendly practices in their daily activities at the workplace (Benayas *et al.*, 2002).

Several scholars (Dumont *et al.*, 2017; Tang *et al.*, 2018; Pham *et al.*, 2020) have defined and conceptualized green human resource management practices as practices that include green recruiting and selection, green reward system, green performance management, green training and development, green career management, employees with green awareness and knowledge; green training to develop green skills, competencies, and knowledge; green performance management with established an employee's green activity demonstrates an individual's environmental sensitivity (Norton *et al.*, 2015). This covers recycling, printing reduction, energy-saving behavior, and task-related behavior toward the environment (Norton *et al.*, 2015), but the researcher will be researching energy-saving behavior. In general, the empirical research suggests that green human resource management is positively linked to green task behaviour, green employee empowerment, green job crafting, and organisational citizenship toward the environment

(Dumont *et al.*, 2017; Chaudhary, 2019; Luu, 2019; Fawehinmi *et al.*, 2020). The norm of reciprocity of the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) may provide the basis for explaining the relationship between green human resource management and energy saving behaviour (both task-related and voluntary behaviours) (Blau, 1964). When organisations send signs of commitment toward environmental management practices by providing clear green goals, green training and development, effective green performance management, and green rewarding systems, employees are, in turn, expected to trade this environmental dedication and efforts by their organisations, displaying green behaviours. Innovative work behaviour is viewed as employee behaviour that is composed of idea creation, promotion, and realization (Scott and Bruce, 1994). In general, innovative work behaviour has been perceived as an essential component to sustaining an organisation's competitive advantage (Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal, 2019).

Although individual behaviours that impact the environment have been studied by environmental psychologists for over half a century (such as littering, polluting, recycling, conserving, petitioning the government for environmental causes, use of public transportation), there has been little effort directed at studying such behaviours in work settings (Fawehinmi *et al.*, 2020). Rather, energy-saving behaviour in work settings has mostly been studied at the organisational level. Yet, individuals working for the same organisation differ in terms of their environmentally responsible behaviours (Fawehinmi *et al.*, 2020). Even among employees, who perform the same duties, performance variability exists among them (Gilal *et al.*, 2019). Understanding how and why employees differ in terms of their behaviours that have an environmental impact should be of concern to organisations aiming to operate in environmentally sustainable ways, to societies at large aiming to address environmental problems, and ultimately to humanity aiming to sustain itself on this planet (Gilal *et al.*, 2019).

Regrettably, the handful of research studies and applications on energy saving behaviour that have ventured from studying such behaviours in personal lives to studying them in work lives have focused on very specific applications for example, can the researcher pay employees to take public transportation as well as only particular aspects of employee's green behaviour (Disterheft *et al.*, 2012). Yet, these are single-item indicators of broader categories of energy saving behaviour (Disterheft *et al.*, 2012). Such single indicators may be too unreliable and too narrowly focused to be of use in building a scientific understanding of energy saving behaviour of individuals (Disterheft *et al.*, 2012). An overly specific definitional focus and idiosyncratic measures of pro-environmental behaviour can hinder scientific understanding, knowledge accumulation, and useful prescriptions for application (Fernández *et al.*, 2003). Each behaviour directed at an employee's green behaviour should be a manifestation of the general employee's green behaviour among individuals (Fernández *et al.*, 2003). The objective of the study is to determine the effect of green recruitment and selection on energy saving behaviour in the selected organisation, examine the influence of training and development on energy saving behaviour in the selected organisation, and to examine the effect of green reward and compensation system on energy saving behaviour in the selected organisation.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Green Human Resource Management Practices

Green human resource management practices are referred to as the combination of practices that environmental sustainability uses, like green recruitment and selection, green performance management, green training and development, and green reward and compensation management to attain the organization's green objectives (Haddock-Millar *et al.*, 2016). To achieve environmental goals, green human resource management practices are used as a green strategy by organizations (Yusoff *et al.*, 2020). Green human resource management is defined as "the systematic, planned alignment of typical green human resource management practices with the organisation's environmental goals" (Jabbour, 2013).

According to Opatha and Arulrajah (2014), green human resource management encompasses "all of the activities involved in the development, implementation, and ongoing maintenance of a system that aims to make employees of an organization green" (Sanyal and Hisam, 2016). It is the aspect of green human resource management concerned with changing ordinary employees into green employers to meet the organization's environmental goals and, ultimately, to make a substantial contribution to energy-saving behaviour (Haddock-Millar *et al.*, 2016).

Green HRM strives to assist an organization in carrying out its environmental management goal, allowing it to lower its carbon footprint while earning human smiles. Recently, the deteriorating global environment and human values, as well as the ongoing expansion of the green movement, have combined to generate a powerful force that has compelled businesses to rethink their environmental management principles and

implement a green management system. This system incorporates green production, green technology, and green human resource management. HRM operations can generate "GREEN values" in terms of eco-sociological harmony, particularly psychological harmony, which can lead to organizational citizenship behavior. However, it is a cautious action that is not part of an employee's formal job duties, but that yet fosters effective functioning of the organization. Corporations adopting "green/social" HR practices can experience significant impact on the engagement, commitment, morale, and quality of work life and the retention of human capital in the organization since green HRM is emerging as an important thrust area for management which can have an enormous impact on people's issues in an organization.

2.2. Green Recruitment and Selection

Attracting high-quality staff is a key HR challenge in the "war for talent" (Renwick *et al.*, 2013). Holtom *et al.*, (2008), in their study on turnover and retention of employees, argue that the most important benefit dimensions of HR and sustainability are retention/recruitment and satisfaction. Firms are now beginning to recognize the fact that gaining a reputation as a green employer is an effective way to attract new talent (Phillips, 2007; Stringer, 2010). German firms such as Siemens, BASF, Bayer, and Mannesmann use environmental activities and a green image to attract high-quality staff. The Rover Group carmaker, in Britain, makes environmental responsibilities and qualifications part of every job profile (Wehrmeyer, 2017). Increasingly, green job descriptions with environmental aspects are now being included for employees within the recruitment agenda. Green recruitment can be defined as the process of hiring individuals with knowledge, skills, approaches, and behaviors that identify with environmental management systems within an organization. According to Wehrmeyer (2017), recruitment practices can support effective environmental management by making sure that new entrants are familiar with an organization's environmental culture and are capable of maintaining its environmental values. Green recruiting is a system where the focus is given to the importance of the environment and making it a major element within the organization. Complementing this, the recruits are also enthusiastic, and to some extent, passionate about working for an environmentally friendly "green" company.

Recruiting candidates with a green mindset makes it easy for firms to induct professionals who are aware of sustainable processes and are already familiar with basics like recycling, conservation, and creating a more logical world. Grolleau *et al.*, (2012) in their study on the impact of environmental standards of a company on recruitment of an employee found that environmental commitment of the company adds to the profile of a company. In their primary survey, they found that professionals were more concerned about the environmental strategy of a company. Contemplating these statements, we conclude that green recruitment provides the employer with an opportunity to stand ahead of the crowd and further increase their chance of attracting the candidates and retaining them after induction. Corroborating the recent green trend, we propose that the recruitment process be aligned with environmentally friendly issues. Further research should address questions related to the green employer's enthusiasm in achieving the environmental goals and how the potential job seekers perceive or rate them on the parameters of sustainability as claimed. For example, do the employers include green job descriptions, eco-friendly locations, paper less interviews, and such other practices in their recruitment portfolio? Are the recruits made aware of the environmental policies and allegiance of the company at the commencement of the job itself? Research addressing these questions will help the recruits to carry on with the green policies as well as cooperate with the management in establishing green policies to achieve the goals of the company.

2.3. Green Performance Management

Green performance management is the process by which employees are prompted to enhance their professional skills that help to achieve the organizational goals and objectives in a better way. The recognition of the corporate strategy culminates in the performance management. With the environmental management affecting global business strategy, performance management is also being influenced by the green wave in a possible positive manner. Green performance management consists of issues related to environmental concerns and policies of the company. It also concentrates on the use of environmental responsibilities. Epstein and Roy (1997) in their study concluded that when human resource managers integrate environmental performance into green performance management systems, they safeguard environmental management against any damage. Today, some firms deal with the issue of performance management by installing corporate-wide environmental performance standards, and green information systems/audits to gain useful data on environmental performance (Marcus and Fremeth, 2009). The most important aspect of performance management is performance appraisal. In addition to meeting the criteria of reliability, validity, and fairness, effective performance appraisals provide useful feedback to employees and support continuous improvements in the firm's environmental outcomes (Jackson *et al.*, 2011).

Issues involved in environmental performance appraisal concern the need for managers to be held accountable for employee performance in addition to wider performance objectives (Renwick *et al.*, 2013). We suggest that future research on green performance appraisal should focus upon issues such as environmental incidents, environmental responsibilities, communication of environmental policy, and green information systems and audits. The job description should be aligned with green tasks and goals to be achieved. The Human resource staff should modify the performance appraisal rating system to include dimensions for rating people on the following behavioral and technical competencies: teamwork, collaboration, diversity, innovation, and environmental stewardship. Such competencies are essential for fostering a progressive and inclusive workplace culture, promoting sustainability, and driving continuous improvement and innovation. Integrating these dimensions into the appraisal system will not only align individual performance with organizational values and strategic goals but also encourage employees to adopt behaviors that contribute to long-term organizational success and social responsibility.

2.4. Green Training and Development

Training and development is a practice that focuses on the development of employees' skills, knowledge, and attitudes, and prevents deterioration of EM-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Zoogah, 2011). Green training and development educate employees about the value of EM, train them in working methods that conserve energy, reduce waste, diffuse environmental awareness within the organization, and provide opportunity to engage employees in environmental problem-solving (Zoogah, 2011). Green T & D activities make employees aware of different aspects and the value of environmental management. It helps them to embrace different methods of conservation, including waste management within an organization. Further, it sharpens the skill of an employee to deal with different environmental issues.

Ramus (2002), in a survey of managers on best management practices, concluded that environmental training and education, along with establishing a favorable environmental culture for the employees where they feel that they are a part of environmental outcomes, were the most important HRM processes that facilitate the achievement of environmental goals. Liebowitz (2010), in his study on the role of HR in achieving a sustainability culture, suggests that the HR department can offer leadership development workshops to help managers develop their "front wheel" soft, people skills, or behavioral competencies, in teamwork, diversity, managing change, and collaboration. Future research that facilitates green training on one hand and helps organizations on the other to develop eco-friendly managers who, without any hesitation, can indulge as well as promote sustainability throughout the process would be particularly useful. Concluding the above discussion, we envisage that the need of the hour is: organizations should train their employees on best business practices enthused with green initiatives. Besides, sustainable training and education employees should also be adept at educating the customers regarding the advantages of becoming more earth-friendly and buying green products.

2.5. Green Reward and Compensation Management

Rewards and compensation are the major HRM processes through which employees are rewarded for their performance. These HR practices are the most powerful method that links together an individual's interest to that of the organization. We also assert that incentives and rewards can influence employees' attention to the maximum at work and motivate them to exert maximum effort on their part to achieve organizational goals. In the context of Green HRM, rewards and compensation can be assumed as potential tools for supporting environmental activities in organizations. By a strategic approach for reward and management, modern organizations are developing reward systems to encourage eco-friendly initiatives embarked upon by their employees. The statement is supported by a survey conducted in the UK by CIPD/KPMG that estimated that 8% of UK firms were rewarding green behaviors with various types of awards and/or financial incentives (Phillips, 2007, p. 9), and these practices can be effective in motivating employees to generate eco-initiatives (Ramus, 2002).

In a similar study by Forman and Jorgensen (2001) on the importance of employee participation in environmental programs, it was observed that employee commitment to environmental management programs was increased when they were offered compensation to take up duties concerning environmental responsibility. The efficacy of green rewards and compensation was best observed in a study conducted by Berrone and Gomez-Mejia (2009) on 469 US firms operating in high-polluting industries. They found that the firms having eco-friendly performance paid their CEOs more than non-ecofriendly firms. They also concluded that long-term company results by pay were associated with greater pollution prevention success. Literature review reveals that incentives encourage executives to use accounting and other means to achieve short-term results and enrich themselves (Denis *et al.*, 2006; Benz and Frey, 2007).

2.6. Energy Saving Behaviour

In the past few years, the world has had trouble with a lack of resources and energy, as well as problems with supply and demand (Zhao *et al.*, 2019). The climate and environmental problems caused by energy consumption are also becoming increasingly severe (Zhao *et al.*, 2019). It is the responsibility of every citizen to promote energy conservation. China is transitioning from a “production-oriented” to a “life-oriented” society, and the household sector’s energy consumption has been increasing year over year (Chang and Chen, 2013). Among them, electricity consumption, primarily from household appliances, contributes the most to energy consumption (Zhao *et al.*, 2019). So, household electricity-saving behaviour is increasingly important for resource conservation. Electricity-saving behaviour is generally divided into buying electricity-saving behaviour (such as buying an energy-saving refrigerator) and customary electricity-saving behaviour (such as turning off the lights) (Yuan *et al.*, 2024).

Compared with customary electricity-saving behaviour, electricity-saving behaviour plays a more important role (Zhao *et al.*, 2019). So, it is significant to persuade households to choose energy-saving products. The consumption behaviour of household energy-saving products is characteristic of “one-time investment, long-term impact” (Xue and Shen, 2019), so there are many difficulties in persuading people to buy because they have to pay more. The country has advocated green consumption and household energy-saving products in various policies (Xue *et al.*, 2020). National policies are essential in encouraging people to purchase household energy-saving products, but they tend to work in the short term. Therefore, other forces must be combined to promote people’s buying behaviour.

In recent years, with the rapid development of internet marketing in China, internet celebrities have become an essential force in promoting the diffusion of household energy-saving products (Xue *et al.*, 2020). They have a large fan base due to their expertise and attraction, and they sell related energy-saving products among their fan groups, producing significant social and commercial value (Xue *et al.*, 2020). The phenomenon of internet celebrities has attracted extensive attention from scholars (Xue *et al.*, 2020). However, more research still needs to be done on how internet celebrities influence fans’ purchase intention (Xue *et al.*, 2020). The mechanism by which internet celebrities increase their fans’ purchases of household energy-saving products urgently needs further investigation. In the past, many scholars have analyzed the factors affecting consumers’ intention to purchase energy-saving products from various angles (Wang and Shen, 2017).

Scholars explored factors in terms of the consumers themselves, such as demography (gender, age, income, etc.) (Renwick *et al.*, 2013) ethics (Wang and Shen, 2017), attitudes, emotions, and awareness of the environment and they also explore the factors of the external environment, such as media, policy incentives price incentives and ecological labels (Liu *et al.*, 2021). However, from the perspective of social influence, there needs to be more research on the impact of opinion leaders on the users’ purchase of household energy-saving products (Liu *et al.*, 2021). In the internet era, people obtain relevant information from influential people in online communities (Liu *et al.*, 2021). Their values are easily influenced by influential people, thereby changing their attitudes and behaviours. The closeness between users and media figures is called a “para-social relationship”, and it often has a big impact on how people decide what to buy (Liu *et al.*, 2021).

Although energy-saving products can have good economic and social benefits, they often cost more (Liu *et al.*, 2021). So, rational persuasion alone is not enough to get people to buy these products. Instead, the close relationship between fans and internet celebrities is a big reason people buy energy-saving products that internet celebrities recommend (Liu *et al.*, 2021). This study uses social cognitive theory and para-social interaction theory as the theoretical basis to explore the mechanisms by which the expertise and attraction of internet celebrities influence the intention of fans to purchase the energy-saving products they endorse (Akhtar *et al.*, 2023). This study introduces para-social relationships as a mediating variable from a relational perspective to explore its mediating role (Sultana and Jahan, 2021). Secondly, based on the characteristics of household energy-saving products, this study explores the moderating effect of fans’ green self-efficacy on the relationship between the expertise and attraction of internet celebrities and the para-social relationships formed between them and their fans (Masud *et al.*, 2023). This study has theoretical and practical contributions. In terms of theoretical contributions, the study extends the scope included in the environmental element (Chen *et al.*, 2022). This study takes internet celebrities’ characteristics as the external environment factor and explores their influence on fans’ purchase intention of energy-saving products. Secondly, this study enriches the application scenario of para-social interaction theory and explores the psychological mechanisms of fans’ purchasing energy-saving products recommended by

internet celebrities from the perspective of intimate relationships. Finally, the findings have practical implications for internet celebrities and governments attempting to urge households to purchase energy-saving products.

3. Conclusion

The above review significantly delineates the potential of HRM functions right from job design to employee empowerment, in making the organizations green. Apart from reducing their negative impacts on the environment, these green organizations can simultaneously improve their image and brand building. Today, organizations in India are quite aware of green HR practices, but most of them are not able to implement them properly in different functional areas like selection, performance appraisal system, rewards, and training. Such a situation demands sheer attention and the support of top management. There should be the formal implementation of green activities because employees generally take something seriously when enforced by higher authorities. As indicated by the review, the employee selection process in these organizations seriously lacks analysis of green personality criteria, thereby placing more emphasis on its formal implementation. Similarly, green job designing and analysis is also found to be seriously missing. No environment-specific requirement is looked for in any job.

Some officials in defense organizations have commented on green HRM as an abstract concept having no place in such organizations (Mishra *et al.*, 2014). This attitude needs to be modified through proper training and development. The organizations should provide formal training in raising more awareness among their workforce with the ultimate objective of developing green employees. Although adopting green training sessions may appear costlier to top management in the short run, these measures are likely to pay back in the long run. Being a green employer adds to the brand name, which can lead to more publicity and profits in the long run. In addition, it can also provide inner satisfaction to employees, for they have also contributed their share towards the save the earth mission. Organizations also require including some points on green employees' performance during the appraisal process. There must be some formal rewards for encouraging employees towards this end. All these steps can prove their worth in the successful integration of environmental management with HR.

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