

Practices of Green HRM in Public Sector Enterprises in India and Their Alignment with SDG Goals

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Abstract—In the present time, organizations are expected to contribute not only to profits and economic growth but also to the protection of the environment. Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) is a modern approach where human resource activities such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and rewards are carried out in a way that supports environmental goals. In India, Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) are very large organizations with a huge workforce and wide operations. Because of their size, they consume large amounts of energy and natural resources, which makes them responsible for adopting sustainable and ecofriendly practices.

This paper explains how PSEs in India are using Green HRM practices such as green recruitment, green training, green performance management, eco-friendly workplace initiatives, and green compensation. It also shows how these practices are directly linked with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) like affordable and clean energy, responsible consumption, climate action, and sustainable industrial development. The paper also discusses the challenges faced in adopting Green HRM and suggests ways to improve it. Overall, Green HRM is found to be an effective method for balancing economic development and environmental sustainability in the Indian public sector.

Index Terms—Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM), Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) India, Sustainability, Environmental protection, green recruitment, green training, green performance management, Eco-friendly workplace, green compensation, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Climate action, Responsible consumption, clean energy, Sustainable industrial development

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, environmental problems are becoming very serious. We can see smoke and dust in

the air, plastic in rivers, and forests being cut down for industries and cities.

Climate change is bringing floods, heat waves, and droughts. Scientists are warning that if we do not take action, the earth will become difficult to live on. Because of these problems, the idea of sustainable development has become very important. Sustainable development means that we should use natural resources carefully, so that people today can live well, but at the same time, future generations should also have the chance to live a good life. If we waste everything now, our children will suffer later.

To guide all countries in this direction, the United Nations (UN) introduced the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. These goals focus on poverty reduction, good health, education, gender equality, clean water, affordable energy, climate action, and many other areas. All the countries, including India, agreed to follow these goals.

Now the question comes: Who should take action to achieve these goals? Of course, governments and citizens are important, but companies and organizations also have a big role.

They use a lot of electricity, fuel, water, and raw materials. They also produce waste and pollution.

If companies continue to work without responsibility, it will be very hard to achieve sustainability.

This is where a new idea has come up—Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM).

Green HRM means connecting the management of employees with environmental protection.

For example, when a company hires new people, it looks for candidates who care about the environment.

When it trains its staff, it includes lessons on saving energy and reducing waste. When it rewards employees, it gives recognition to those who bring eco-friendly ideas. In India, Public Sector Enterprises

(PSEs) are very large companies owned by the government. They work in important sectors like energy, oil, gas, steel, transport, and electricity. Examples are NTPC, ONGC, SAIL, BHEL, and Indian Railways. These organizations employ millions of people and make a huge contribution to the economy. But they also consume massive amounts of natural resources. If they are not careful, they can cause pollution on a very large scale. For this reason, Indian PSEs have started adopting Green HRM practices. By doing this, they are not only helping the environment but also supporting India's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals.

A. Concept of Green HRM

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) is a modern approach that connects human resource practices with environmental sustainability. It means that HR policies such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and employee involvement are designed in a way that supports eco-friendly goals. The main idea is to manage employees in such a manner that they contribute not only to organizational success but also to the protection of the natural environment. In simple words, Green HRM is about making the workplace environmentally responsible.

It motivates employees to adopt green practices like saving energy, reducing waste, recycling materials, and using resources wisely. Organizations also encourage staff through awareness programs and reward systems to follow eco-friendly behavior.

The concept is becoming important because businesses are expected to focus not just on profit but also on the planet. By integrating sustainability into HR practices, companies can reduce their carbon footprint, build a positive image, and support long-term growth. Thus, Green HRM is both a people-centred and environment-friendly approach that benefits employees, organizations, and society.

B. Examples of Green HRM are

1.Green Human Resource Management focuses on integrating environmental responsibility into human resource practices. One widely adopted practice is the use of digital systems for hiring and employee training. Online recruitment portals, virtual interviews, and e-learning platforms help organizations reduce paper consumption and limit unnecessary use of physical resources.

2.Another significant practice involves encouraging environment-friendly travel habits among employees. Organizations motivate their workforce to use public transportation, car-sharing facilities, or non-motorized transport. These initiatives contribute to lower fuel usage and reduced air pollution.

3.Energy conservation within the workplace is also an important aspect of Green HRM. Employees are sensitized to responsible energy use, such as switching off electrical equipment when not required. Such behavioral practices promote efficient energy utilization and support environmental conservation.

4.Organizations also introduce incentive mechanisms to recognize employees who actively participate in eco-friendly initiatives. Activities such as waste reduction, recycling programs, tree plantation drives, and minimizing plastic use are often acknowledged through rewards, which strengthens sustainable behavior. In addition, many organizations invest in energy-efficient infrastructure, including LED lighting systems, solar energy solutions, and low-energy equipment. These measures help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support long-term environmental sustainability.

C. Importance of Green HRM in Indian PSES

1.Environmental Sustainability

Green HRM promotes environmentally responsible behavior among employees by encouraging practices such as energy saving, waste minimization, and efficient use of resources. These initiatives help reduce the ecological footprint of Public Sector Enterprises and support long-term environmental protection.

2.Reduction in Operational Costs

By adopting paperless HR systems, optimizing energy usage, and encouraging recycling, Green HRM contributes to significant cost savings. For large PSEs, even small reductions in resource consumption can result in substantial financial benefits over time.

3.Increased Employee Environmental Awareness

Green HRM creates awareness among employees regarding environmental challenges and sustainability practices. Through training programs and daily workplace practices, employees develop eco-conscious habits that extend beyond the organization.

4. Development of a Positive Work Culture

The implementation of Green HRM helps build a work environment where sustainability becomes a shared organizational value. Employees feel motivated and

engaged when they see their organization contributing positively to society and the environment.

5.Improved Corporate Image and Reputation

Public Sector Enterprises adopting Green HRM are perceived as responsible and forward-looking organizations. This enhances their public image and strengthens trust among stakeholders, including government bodies, employees, and society at large.

6.Compliance with Environmental Laws and Policies

Green HRM supports adherence to environmental regulations by integrating legal and ethical standards into HR policies. This reduces the risk of non-compliance, penalties, and reputational damage.

7.Support for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Green HRM aligns organizational practices with global sustainability objectives such as climate action, responsible consumption, and environmental conservation. This alignment helps PSEs contribute meaningfully to national and international sustainability agendas.

8.Long-term Organizational Sustainability

By embedding environmental responsibility into HR practices, Green HRM ensures balanced growth that considers economic, social, and environmental aspects. This approach supports the long-term stability and resilience of Public Sector Enterprises.

D. Practices of Green HRM in Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs)

1.Green Recruitment and Selection – PSEs are now giving importance to hiring employees who are environmentally conscious and care about sustainability. Job

advertisements, interviews, and selection procedures highlight the organization's green initiatives. This ensures that new employees are aligned with the organization's ecofriendly values from the start.

2.Eco-friendly Training and Development – Employees are regularly trained on environmental awareness, energy-saving techniques, and sustainable practices. Workshops, seminars, and online programs are organized to develop skills for reducing waste and conserving resources. This creates a knowledgeable workforce that actively supports green initiatives.

3.Green Performance Management – Employees' contributions to environmental initiatives are included in performance appraisals. Those who actively participate in sustainability programs, like reducing paper use or saving energy, are recognized and

rewarded. This motivates employees to adopt eco-friendly practices in their daily work.

4.Paperless and Digital Work Culture – Many PSEs are reducing paper consumption by switching to digital documentation and online reporting systems. Emails, online forms, and electronic approvals replace traditional paper-based methods. This not only saves trees but also makes work processes faster and more efficient.

5.Energy and Resource Conservation – PSEs implement measures such as energy efficient lighting, water-saving systems, and eco-friendly office equipment. Regular monitoring of resource usage is done to reduce wastage. These initiatives help in lowering operational costs and minimizing environmental impact.

6.Employee Engagement in Green Initiatives– Employees are encouraged to participate in tree plantation drives, recycling campaigns, and awareness programs. Green clubs or eco-teams are formed within the organization to actively involve employees. This strengthens teamwork while promoting environmental responsibility.

7.Green Rewards and Recognition – Organizations recognize and reward employees who contribute significantly to sustainability efforts. Awards, certificates, or incentives are given to motivate others. This builds a culture of appreciation and encourages continuous participation in green activities.

8.Compliance with Environmental Regulations – PSEs strictly follow government laws and environmental guidelines to ensure safe and sustainable operations. Compliance reduces legal risks and demonstrates the organization's commitment to protecting nature. It also sets a good example for other organizations in the industry.

9.Sustainable Procurement Practices – Some PSEs prefer suppliers and vendors who use ecofriendly materials or follow green manufacturing practices. Procurement policies emphasize recycling, renewable resources, and reducing carbon emissions. This extends the organization's green impact beyond its own operations.

10.Integration with Organizational Strategy – Green HRM practices are not standalone activities but are integrated into the organization's long-term strategy. Sustainability goals are linked with business objectives, ensuring environmental responsibility

becomes part of the company culture. This helps in achieving both ecological and organizational growth.

E. Case Studies of Green HRM in Indian PSES

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) is becoming increasingly important in Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) as these organizations have a large workforce and significant environmental impact. Many PSEs have adopted green practices in their HR policies to promote sustainability, reduce environmental impact, and encourage employees to be ecoconscious. Here are some examples:

1. Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)

IREDA has focused on promoting renewable energy projects and energy-efficient operations. The organization encourages employees to actively participate in environmental initiatives, such as reducing energy consumption and adopting sustainable office practices. Employees are trained to understand the importance of renewable energy and the environmental benefits of their projects. This approach not only reduces the ecological footprint but also builds a culture of sustainability within the organization.

2. State Bank of India (SBI)

SBI has introduced several green HRM practices, including eco-friendly recruitment and training programs. Employees are encouraged to participate in environmental awareness workshops and campaigns. SBI also integrates environmental performance into employee appraisals, rewarding those who contribute to sustainability goals. The bank's efforts to reduce paper usage, promote digital banking, and engage employees in green initiatives have helped it create a more sustainable and responsible workplace.

3. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)

ONGC has implemented green HRM practices to minimize environmental impact in its operations. The organization focuses on recruiting employees who value environmental sustainability and providing training on eco-friendly practices. Employees are recognized for their participation in initiatives such as energy conservation, waste management, and reducing pollution. These measures have helped ONGC reduce its carbon footprint while creating a workforce committed to green practices.

4. National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC)

NTPC has integrated green HRM practices to enhance environmental responsibility. Employees are selected and trained to support sustainability goals, including energy efficiency and reducing emissions. NTPC encourages participation in tree plantation drives, recycling programs, and environmental awareness campaigns. Performance appraisals also include contributions to green initiatives, motivating employees to actively take part in sustainability efforts.

5. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)

BHEL has adopted comprehensive green HRM policies that include eco-friendly recruitment, training, and employee engagement. Employees are provided with knowledge and skills to implement sustainable practices at work. The company also rewards employees for contributing to environmental initiatives, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and promoting recycling. These efforts have strengthened BHEL's reputation as a socially responsible and environmentally conscious organization.

These case studies show that Indian PSEs are not just focusing on business growth but also on environmental sustainability through Green HRM. By integrating eco-friendly practices into HR policies, these organizations encourage employees to participate in green initiatives, reduce operational impact on the environment, and align their operations with sustainable development goals. Green HRM in PSEs demonstrates that economic growth and environmental responsibility can go hand in hand.

F. Alignment of Green HRM with SDG Goals

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) focuses on eco-friendly practices in human resource policies and workplace operations. By implementing Green HRM, organizations not only reduce their environmental footprint but also contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The alignment can be explained as follows:

1. SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy

Green HRM encourages organizations to adopt energy-efficient systems like LED lighting, solar panels, and energy-saving office equipment. Employees are trained to switch off unused devices, conserve electricity, and monitor energy consumption.

Workshops and awareness programs are organized to teach staff how small actions, like reducing air conditioner usage or using natural light, can save energy. Over time, these practices help reduce the organization's carbon footprint and contribute to clean and affordable energy initiatives.

2. SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

Green HRM promotes safe and eco-friendly work environments that improve employee wellbeing and productivity. Employees feel more motivated and satisfied when their workplace is clean, green, and sustainable. Organizations save costs by reducing waste and conserving resources, which supports long-term economic growth. Additionally, Green HRM encourages innovation and responsible work practices, enabling organizations to achieve growth without harming the environment.

3. SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production

Green HRM emphasizes reducing waste, recycling, and using digital tools to limit paper and resource usage. Employees are trained to use resources wisely, segregate waste, and avoid unnecessary consumption. Organizations adopt sustainable procurement practices, buying ecofriendly materials and supporting green vendors. These measures ensure that production and workplace activities are environmentally responsible. Over time, these habits create a culture of sustainability and mindful consumption among employees.

4. SDG 13 – Climate Action

Through Green HRM initiatives, organizations take active steps to reduce carbon emissions. Employees are encouraged to use public transport, carpool, cycle, or work from home when possible. Awareness campaigns and workshops educate staff about climate change and its effects on the environment. Organizations may also invest in green technologies and renewable energy sources. Together, these actions help fight climate change and build a culture of climate conscious employees.

5. SDG 15 – Life on Land

Organizations practicing Green HRM often organize tree plantation drives, maintain gardens, and promote biodiversity awareness. Employees are involved in these activities, learning the importance of conserving natural habitats. Green HRM encourages the use of eco-friendly landscaping and sustainable land management practices. These efforts help protect

plants, animals, and soil health, contributing to ecosystem preservation. By participating, employees develop a sense of responsibility toward the environment.

6. SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

Green HRM encourages collaboration between employees, departments, and even other organizations to achieve sustainability targets. Knowledge-sharing workshops, joint green projects, and eco-initiatives strengthen teamwork and partnerships. Organizations may partner with NGOs, government agencies, or other companies to enhance the impact of green practices. These collaborations ensure collective progress toward achieving global sustainability goals. Employees also learn the value of teamwork and shared responsibility in protecting the environment.

G. Challenges in Implementing Green HRM

Implementing Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) in Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) can be highly beneficial for environmental sustainability. However, organizations often face several challenges that can slow down or limit the effectiveness of these initiatives.

1. Lack of Awareness and Knowledge

Many employees and managers may not fully understand the importance of green HRM or environmental sustainability. Without awareness, employees might not follow eco-friendly practices, and managers may not prioritize green initiatives. Regular training, workshops, and awareness programs are essential to educate staff and build a culture of sustainability.

2. Resistance to Change

Employees often resist changes in traditional work processes, such as shifting from paper based work to digital documentation or adopting energy-saving routines. Resistance can stem from habit, lack of understanding, or fear of additional workload. Overcoming this challenge requires clear communication, guidance, and incentives to motivate employees to adopt green practices.

3. High Initial Costs

Implementing Green HRM practices, such as installing renewable energy systems, energy efficient equipment, or sustainable office infrastructure, can be expensive initially. PSEs with budget constraints may find it difficult to invest in these practices. However, the long-term benefits, like cost savings from energy

efficiency and reduced waste, often outweigh the initial expenditure.

4. Limited Expertise and Skills

Some PSEs may lack professionals with knowledge of green practices and sustainability. Without proper expertise, planning and implementing green HRM initiatives becomes challenging.

Collaboration with consultants, NGOs, and sustainability experts can help organizations gain the required skills and guidance.

5. Integration with Existing Systems

Green HRM practices need to align with existing HR policies, business strategies, and operational systems. Departments may work in silos, making coordination difficult. Careful planning, Cross department collaboration, and clear guidelines are essential to successfully integrate green initiatives into organizational processes.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation Challenges

Tracking the progress of green initiatives and measuring their impact can be difficult. Organizations may lack proper tools or metrics to evaluate sustainability outcomes. Regular audits, assessments, and feedback mechanisms are necessary to monitor performance and identify areas for improvement.

7. Cultural and Behavioral Barriers

Changing employee mindset and organizational culture to prioritize sustainability takes time. Some employees may not see immediate benefits from eco-friendly practices and may neglect them. Continuous motivation, awareness campaigns, and leadership support are needed to embed sustainability in the organizational culture.

8. Policy and Regulatory Constraints

While government policies encourage sustainability, sometimes the lack of clear guidelines or bureaucratic hurdles can slow down the adoption of green HRM practices. Organizations need to stay updated with regulations and adapt their policies accordingly to ensure compliance while promoting sustainability.

H. Recommendations

To successfully implement Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) practices in Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs), organizations need to adopt structured strategies. The following recommendations can help overcome challenges and ensure sustainable outcomes:

1. Increase Awareness and Training Programs

Organizations should conduct regular workshops, seminars, and training sessions to educate employees and managers about environmental sustainability and green practices. Awareness programs should focus on practical steps employees can take, such as reducing energy use, recycling, and conserving resources. This will help build a green mindset across all levels of the organization.

2. Provide Incentives and Recognition

Employees who actively participate in green initiatives should be rewarded through recognition, bonuses, or promotions. Public acknowledgment of eco-friendly behavior motivates others to follow suit. This helps create a culture where environmental responsibility is valued and consistently practiced.

3. Adopt Digital and Paperless Systems

PSEs should move towards digital documentation, online reporting, and automated systems to reduce resource consumption. E-communication, online forms, and digital approvals minimize paper usage, lower costs, and support environmental sustainability. Over time, digital transformation also makes monitoring and reporting easier.

4. Integrate Green Practices into HR Policies

Green HRM should be embedded in recruitment, performance appraisal, training, and employee engagement policies. Including sustainability goals in official policies ensures that employees adopt eco-friendly behavior as part of their regular work routine. This integration aligns HR practices with organizational sustainability objectives.

5. Encourage Employee Engagement and Participation

Organizations should involve employees in eco-friendly initiatives such as tree plantations, recycling drives, and awareness campaigns. Forming green teams or eco-clubs can promote teamwork and increase participation. Engaged employees are more likely to take ownership of sustainability goals and implement green practices effectively.

6. Monitor and Evaluate Green Initiatives

Regular audits, assessments, and feedback systems should be in place to track the progress of green initiatives. Monitoring helps identify gaps, measure the impact of practices, and continuously improve sustainability strategies. Performance metrics can also be linked to employee appraisals for better accountability.

7. Collaborate with External Experts

Organizations can partner with NGOs, government agencies, academic institutions, or consultants to gain expertise and implement effective green practices. Collaboration can help PSEs access knowledge, technology, and best practices, ensuring successful implementation of green initiatives.

8. Promote Leadership Support

Leadership plays a crucial role in driving Green HRM. Top management should demonstrate commitment to sustainability through policies, resource allocation, and active participation in green initiatives. Leadership support inspires employees to adopt eco-friendly practices and strengthens the overall organizational culture.

II. CONCLUSION

Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM) has become an essential strategy for Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) to achieve environmental sustainability while maintaining operational efficiency and long-term growth. By integrating eco-friendly practices such as green recruitment, sustainable training, resource conservation, digitalization, performance management, and employee engagement, PSEs can ensure that their workforce actively contributes to reducing environmental impact. Case studies from organizations like IREDA, SBI, ONGC, NTPC, and BHEL highlight how practical implementation of Green HRM initiatives leads to energy efficiency, waste reduction, and a culture of environmental responsibility. Despite challenges such as lack of awareness, resistance to change, high initial costs, limited expertise, and difficulties in policy integration, organizations can overcome these obstacles through training programs, incentives, leadership support, and strategic collaborations. Moreover, aligning Green HRM with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) enables PSEs to contribute to global objectives like clean energy, climate action, responsible consumption, and sustainable economic growth. By adopting Green HRM comprehensively, Indian PSEs not only protect the environment but also foster a motivated, responsible, and eco-conscious workforce, demonstrating that economic development and sustainability can go hand in hand, creating a positive impact for both the organization and society at large.

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