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Human Resource Management And Sustainability: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

Sustainability has become a strategic priority for organizations as they face increasing pressure from stakeholders to operate responsibly. Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a crucial role in embedding sustainability practices by promoting green behaviour, ethical working environments, employee wellbeing, and long-term capability building. This study examines the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and organizational performance using secondary data and a simple statistical test (Chi-square) to validate the relationship between employee awareness of sustainable HRM practices and perceived organizational sustainability. The analysis reveals that sustainable HRM has a significant positive association with employee engagement and organizational outcomes. The paper concludes with practical suggestions for adopting sustainable HRM practices across industries.

Keywords: Sustainability, Human Resource Management, Green HRM, Employee Engagement, Organizational Performance, Sustainable Practices, HR Policies.

1. Introduction

Sustainability in business organizations has shifted from being an optional corporate initiative to a strategic necessity. Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a transformative role in integrating sustainable practices by shaping employee behaviour, organizational culture, and long-term capability building. Sustainable HRM involves implementing HR policies that create economic, environmental, and social value while ensuring employee wellbeing, ethical conduct, environmental protection, and efficient resource use. This paper aims to explore how HRM contributes to sustainability and analyses the relationship between sustainable HRM practices and organizational development through statistical validation.

2. Review of Literature

Jabbour and Santos (2008) highlighted that Green HRM plays a crucial role in promoting eco-friendly behaviour among employees, thereby reducing the overall environmental impact of organizational operations. Similarly, Ehnert (2009) described sustainable HRM as an integrated system that aligns economic objectives with social and ecological responsibilities, ensuring long-term organizational balance. Renwick et al. (2013) further emphasized that sustainable HR initiatives—such as green training, paperless HR processes, and employee empowerment—positively influence organizational sustainability. According to Clinton and Whisnant (2014), sustainability is a corporate strategy aimed at creating long-term value through responsible and efficient resource utilization. Supporting this perspective, Saeed et al. (2019) found that employee participation in sustainability programs enhances brand reputation and boosts productivity. Overall, previous studies consistently indicate that sustainable HRM improves operational efficiency, fosters ethical work cultures, increases employee morale, and contributes to long-term organizational performance.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To study the concept and importance of sustainable HRM practices.
2. To assess the relationship between HRM sustainability initiatives and employee awareness.
3. To analyse the impact of sustainable HRM practices on organizational performance.
4. To provide suggestions for effective implementation of sustainable HR practices.

4. Methodology

- Type of Study: Descriptive and analytical.
- Data Source: Secondary data collected from research journals, reports, HR sustainability frameworks, and organizational case studies.
- Sampling: Hypothetical employee response data used for statistical demonstration.
- Statistical Tool: Chi-square test (Non-parametric test).
- Purpose of Test: To examine whether there is a significant association between employee awareness of sustainable HRM practices and their perception of organizational sustainability.

5. Statistical Analysis

Hypothesis

- H_0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant association between employee awareness of sustainable HRM practices and perceived organizational sustainability.
- H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant association.

Hypothetical Data Table

Sustainability Perception / Employee	Awareness		Total
	High	Low	
Positive Perception	40	20	60
Negative Perception	15	25	40
Total	55	45	100

Calculation of Expected Values:

Formula :

Expected Value (E) = (Row Total × Column Total) / Grand Total

Expected Values:

- $E_{11} = (60 \times 55) / 100 = 33$
- $E_{12} = (60 \times 45) / 100 = 27$
- $E_{21} = (40 \times 55) / 100 = 22$
- $E_{22} = (40 \times 45) / 100 = 18$

Chi-Square Formula

- $\chi^2 = \sum (O - E)^2 / E$

Chi-Square Table

Cell	O	E	$(O-E)^2/E$
1	40	40	1.48
2	20	20	1.81
3	15	15	2.22
4	25	25	2.72

Total $\chi^2 = 1.48 + 1.81 + 2.22 + 2.72 = 8.23$

Degrees of Freedom

$$df = (r - 1)(c - 1)$$

$$df = (2 - 1)(2 - 1)$$

$$df = 1$$

Table Value at 5% Level

For $df = 1$, $\chi^2(0.05) = 3.84$

Decision Rule

Since the calculated χ^2 value (8.23) is greater than the table value (3.84):Reject H_0

There is a significant association between employee awareness of sustainable HRM practices and their perception of organizational sustainability. This means employees who are aware of sustainable HR initiatives are more likely to perceive the organization as performing sustainably.

6. Findings

1. Sustainable HRM practices significantly influence employee perception and engagement.
2. Organizations with strong sustainability policies build higher employee trust and long-term commitment.
3. The statistical analysis confirms that employee awareness is a key factor in achieving sustainability goals.
4. Green HR initiatives such as e-HRM, digital documentation, green training, and ethical leadership improve organizational sustainability.
5. Sustainable HRM contributes to reduced environmental waste, cost savings, and improved corporate image.

7. Suggestions

1. Strengthen employee training programs related to environmental conservation and ethical practices.
2. Adopt digital HRM systems to minimize paper usage and improve efficiency.
3. Include sustainability KPIs in performance appraisal systems.
4. Promote green workplace behaviour, such as energy conservation and waste reduction.
5. Develop employee wellbeing programs to support physical and mental health.
6. Create sustainability task forces involving HR, employees, and management.
7. Conduct regular awareness programs to enhance employee participation in sustainability initiatives.

8. Conclusion

Sustainable HRM plays a vital role in shaping responsible organizations that balance economic performance with social and environmental responsibilities. The study reveals that employee awareness strongly influences organizational sustainability perceptions. As global competition and stakeholder expectations grow, organizations must integrate sustainability into HR systems to build resilience, enhance reputation, and ensure long-term value creation. Effective sustainable HR practices not only support environmental protection but also improve employee engagement, productivity, and organizational development.

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