

A Study on ‘HR Practices for achieving Sustainable Development Goals’

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Abstract: A study exploring the relationship between HR practices and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) finds that integrating sustainability into HR practices is crucial for organizational success. Key HR practices like recruitment, performance management, training, and employee engagement play a vital role in fostering a sustainable workforce and driving progress towards SDGs. Understanding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): In the 1970s, the idea of "sustainability" was first related with the environmental and economic dimensions; then social dimension was added. The World Commission on Environment and Development's renowned Brundtland Report, which was released in 1987, established the concept of sustainable development and made the advancement of human resources (HR) a key priority in order to boost economic activity and support the sustainability of organisations and society as a whole. (Campos-García, et al, 2024) Since then, a dual perspective has led to an increase in interest in understanding the relationship between sustainability and HR. First, HR may contribute significantly to business sustainability—what people can accomplish for organizations—through their knowledge, methods of operation, abilities, abilities, values, and attitudes. Employees can, on the one hand, help create and preserve a sustainable competitive advantage (Ehnert, 2014).

Keywords: Development, employees, human resources, organization, sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources or HR management practices that are sustainable are significant in building an organizational climate that maximizes economic results while uplifting individuals and the environment at the same time. Cooper, Walker & Wootton (2012) have revealed the ways in which the institution of sustainable HRM practice may be facilitated into organizations. Here is a breakdown of these practices in relation to diversity and inclusion, employee health, wellness, and engagement, learning and development opportunities, and providing a sustainable workplace.

Importance of Integrating SDGs into HR Practices:

Incorporation of SDGs in HRM practices entails comparing and anchoring general managerial policies as well as programmes to sustainability (Sharma & Gupta, 2021). The integration is essential to guarantee that the sustainability culture is embraced across the organization, thus improve organizational image, and promote innovation for sustainable practices within the organization (Lalwani & Anand, 2019). In terms of Human Resource Management, it supports the delivery of the EVP that encompasses valuable work, advancement opportunities, employee values and attitudes toward work and respective organizational culture (Bansal & Sharma, 2018).

Enhancing Employee Value Proposition (EVP): The concept the Employee Value Proposition (EVP) relates to the various forms of incentives given by the organisation to the human capital in exchange for their ability, proficiency and loyalty as stated by Armstrong and Taylor (2014). This way, by implementing SDGs into EVP, organizations can distinguish themselves as organized and responsible employers of choice that align with the framework of sustainable development (Jain & Sharma, 2017). This alignment does not only help to ensure that the organisation attracts the most qualified candidates, but employee participation, morale, and working stability are improved as well (Sharma & Gupta, 2020).

Diversity and Inclusion: It will also be important to inform the analysis by noting that diversity and inclusion are important categories of sustainable HR management. They make sure all the workers or staffs regardless the colour, race, gender, or origin they come from in the society have the chance to perform to the best of their abilities and produce.

Equal Opportunity Policies: Employees also demand that their organizations protect their rights and grant them equal employment opportunities during recruitment as well as equal pay for equal work. This refers to establishing an equitable hiring procedure to make sure that no one is a favoured employee and making equal provision of tools

and incentives to everyone.

Initiatives for Underrepresented Groups: Certain and particular diversity programs and policies are implemented with a view of targeting a class or a category of employee who has been marginalised or has received less opportunity in the workplace and these include; women, gender, ethnic minorities, and individuals with disabilities. These efforts might encompass sponsoring of a prototype, establishment of a patronage programme and capacity for diversity projects and a demonstrative search to forward diversity in the company.

Employee well-being: Promoting for the wellness of the workers is often a fundamental part of maintaining long-term sound HRM strategies. Taking care of the health of its employees will not only improve the statistics achieved per employee, but also improve the general satisfaction of employees at the workplace.

Health Programs: Promising health care provision services and programs provide health care with physical, community and mental health embraced. This can encompass medical privileges where one is taken care of in terms of physical health, therapy, nutrition, and exercise such as Yoga classes, are some of the ways through which one can receive care.

Work-Life Balance Initiatives: Managers encourage the corporate management of time by providing flexible working hours, home-working opportunities, and practicable employment policies that include parental leave and paid leave. But beyond revenue generation, work-life balance can prevent burnout, attract and retain top talents, and enhance overall organizational performance.

Continuous Learning and Development: This is an essential part of the corporate learning process, particularly it is critical for developing a competent and flexible workforce. These practices help maintain that employees remain competitive to serve the organization as well as to continue feeling motivated.

Training and Development Programs: Continued investment in training along with offering relevant new courses or workshops ensures employees acquire new and adequate skills. Technology begins to develop may encompass headedness skills as well as other personality refinements.

Upskilling and Reskilling: Employment is fluid and so upskilling which is a process of improving on the skills applied when carrying out one's current job and or reskilling which is the process of acquiring new skills so that one can carry out a different job are paramount in today's job market.

Sustainable Work Environment: Sustainable work environment in this respect refers to practices adopted in order to reduce impacts on the environment and at the same time enhance sustainability at the place of work.

Environmental Sustainability Initiatives: Organisations implement measures that will help them conserve resources, reduce their carbon footprint or use environmentally friendly ways of completing their production processes. They can also comprise of the concepts like sustainably sourcing and thereby bringing down the carbon intensity.

ELABORATION:

Integrating SDGs into HR:

By aligning HR policies and practices with sustainability goals, organizations can create a culture that prioritizes environmental, social, and economic well-being.

Recruitment and Workforce Planning:

HR can play a key role in identifying and attracting talent with the skills and knowledge needed for sustainable transformation, including expertise in green technologies and sustainable business models.

Performance Management:

Performance management systems can be designed to reward employees for their contributions to sustainability initiatives, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and promoting ethical practices.

Training and Development:

Employee training programs can equip employees with the knowledge and skills needed to implement sustainable practices and contribute to the company's sustainability goals.

Employee Engagement:

Engaging employees in sustainability efforts can increase their sense of ownership and commitment to the organization's goals.

Sustainable HR Practices:

This includes a range of activities such as promoting diversity and inclusion, implementing fair labor practices, and ensuring health and safety at work, all of which contribute to the overall sustainability of the organization.

The need for research in this area has become increasingly important. Human resource management and the SDGs are linked through the shared element of the human factor, as individuals' attitudes, behaviours directly influence social, environmental and organisational practices (Chams & García-Blandón,). Several of the SDGs are directly linked to HRM, such as those promoting decent work, gender equality and reducing inequalities, while others have an indirect influence. Previous studies (e.g. Chams & García-Blandón,) indicate the growing recognition of HRM's role in driving sustainable development. This collection aims to address these gaps and encourage HR professionals to integrate sustainable development into their everyday roles, through HR practices that enable employee outcomes, with a specific focus in Indian context.

Brewster and Brookes) suggest that research on SDGs being realised through HR practices will be fruitful if HR

practitioners are able to make a significant contribution to society in achieving the SDGs meaningfully. As such, HR practitioners could play a significant role in embedding the SDGs into organisational frameworks. Their influence, in the workplace, could be extended to shaping policies that promote gender equity, provide decent work and enhance employee well-being, while advancing social responsibility, environmental care, and providing equitable working conditions.

Achieving sustainability along with care for nature, social equity, and economic development has also got attention. The concept of sustainability refers to shaping the future by the actions of today. It is vital to acknowledge the needs and wants of the future generations along with the present generations and should go forward by maintaining a balance in catering to the needs and wants of the present together with future generations. The aspect of development is deficient without giving consideration for sustainable elements in the growth process. Sustainable development tries to keep a sense of balance between development and care for the environment. It encourages intergenerational justice, that is developmental benefits must be paralleled with the influence on the ecology for future and present generations. Though development is critical or in fact imperative, the influence on the ecology must be examined prior to commencing such development. There are two solid principles of Sustainable Development.

The first principle, the Precautionary Principle states that any action that could drive to endanger the environment or human health, with no systematically recognized indication of its influence needs precautionary and mitigating actions. Alternatively, the Polluter Pays Principle reveals that those who are accountable for making damage or pollution to the organic environment, are expected to meet the expense of developing or preventing the destruction of human health or the environment. Henceforth sustainable development is not only the obligation of professionals, environmental experts, or the government. That one demands conscious interventions from people around various disciplines and interests. Harmonizing, environmental, social, and economic aspects simultaneously have to turn into a frightening concern for humanity and, especially for companies. While businesses operate on the fundamental theory of sustaining the principal amount of the organisation, they however hardly intend to preserve the environmental and social resources. Sustainability involves numerous matters to various communities, in the core, it is affected by realizing the requirements of society at the moment deprived of compromising the capacity of upcoming generations to achieve their specific desires (WBCSD, 2005).

The sustainable development principle is obtaining its means in business operations by acknowledging the necessity of the industry on human and natural resources. The commercial activity must be accomplished in such a manner that it enhances environmental and social sustainability by enabling development instead of turning it into a limitation. Sustainable development for businesses implies constructing strategies and methodologies to

accomplish the current requirements of the corporates and their stakeholders while maintaining and preserving the human and natural resources for impending requirements. With the aim of improving the importance of the business, the procedures and processes of the enterprise have to incorporate environmental, social, and economic opportunities. Creating a presumed image in the business world and sustaining it are two distinct business aims, but they are mandatory to be combined from the perspective of sustainable development. India is forecasting sustainable development though it is a developing economy meeting massive economic and societal encounters.

One of the key areas is to adjust to climate variation, business revolution and infrastructure, usage of reasonable and renewable energy, and construction of sustainable capitals and societies. Through the increased value of an investment in the health and education sector, human beings became human resources. Presently human resources are considered central to commercial growth and the development of human resource capital could contribute a significant input to sustainability. HR is now aware of the importance of sustainability initiatives and can lead the organisation towards this. However, sometimes the objective of sustainability is frequently made restricted to the CSR initiatives that the HR division takes on. Basically, the HR department is more concerned with the employment-related function of a company and it is vital that it integrates sustainable development programs in its actions and processes. The HR initiatives toward sustainable development have a corresponding positive influence on the employees' performance, and attitudes. HR is therefore responsible to develop a sustainable culture where the employees possess a sense of gratefulness and reverence towards the organisation and contribute significantly to the processes aiming at the overall sustainability of the organisation. This paper particularly aimed to find the significant contribution of HR practices to achieving sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

Sustainability is often associated with the natural environment, but it is actually multidimensional architecture that includes profit objectives, the Planet, and the people. In any organization, Human Resource Management (HRM) work should focus on achieving sustainability policies related to people, a section often overlooked in sustainability negotiations. Continuous Human Resource Management—a collection of personnel policies, procedures, and policies focuses on assisting financial, social, and environmental goals by managing people—the difference between organizational success and organizational efficiency. Only by involvement Sustainable HRM the organization can achieve its highest potential by increasing its capacity for this "part of the people" to achieve the goals and strategy of its business, present and future. Continuous Human Resource Management enables an organization to achieve its goals, while simultaneously empowering its employees to maximize their potential and achieve their goals in life. We present a review of sustainability and HR literature, and then we want to integrate these two ideas with a focus on opportunities for

sustainable use in HR development. A shift towards sustainable HRM is essential for organizations to achieve both their business objectives and contribute to the SDGs. By incorporating sustainability into all aspects of HR, organizations can improve employee engagement, enhance their reputation, and contribute to a more sustainable future. The integration of SDGs into HR practices is not just a trend, but a strategic imperative for long-term organizational success.

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