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Green human resource management

A framework for sustainable organizational development in an emerging economy

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to explore the status and challenges of green human resource management practices in India, an under-researched area. Further, it proposes a theoretical framework to fill the identified gaps and build a sustainable organization.

Design/methodology/approach – Multimethod approach was used. The research was conducted in two phases. Archival research was conducted in the first phase, and a case study technique was employed in the second phase. In the first phase, an extensive literature review was carried out to gather insights on prevalent green human resource activities and their link with sustainable organizational development. In the second phase, data were collected from the manufacturing organizations to analyze the status of the activities identified in the first phase.

Findings – This study highlights status of green human resource practices such as environmental training, green recruitment, performance appraisal, employee involvement and compensation. The findings suggest that there is further scope to utilize the full potential of GHRM practices for encouraging pro-environmental behavior in the organizations. Analyses of data also reveal that top-management support and mutual learning among departments are crucial to facilitate green behaviors among employees.

Research limitations/implications – This study provides a comprehensive literature review of green-human resource management practices. It suggests an interdisciplinary framework for building holistic sustainable organizations by integrating learnings from green human resource management, green supply-chain management, competitive advantage strategy and green corporate social responsibility. It highlights gaps in the system and provides insights to managers and policy makers on building holistic sustainable organizations.

Originality/value – This study fulfills the need to explore green human resource management in emerging economies like India. Studies like these are more important in developing countries, which have alarming environmental concerns and poorly implemented government regulations.

Keywords Green supply chain management, Sustainable development, Green competitive advantage, Green corporate social responsibility, Green human resource management, Green organizations, Sustainable organizational development

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

With increasing environmental ramifications, organizations globally are expected to take responsibility for environmental management (Rondinelli and Berry, 2000). As per the economists, the environmental management is a priority for India because increasing

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industrialization, entrepreneurial nature and foreign investment will promote the growth of Indian economy, but, at the same time, it will demand more resources and will contribute to environmental pollution. A recent study by the World Bank reports that the environmental degradation costs India about \$80bn a year; India has 13 out of 20 most polluted cities; and 23 per cent of its child deaths could be attributed to environmental factors (Mallet, 2013 Financial Times). As per the Twelfth Five Year plan, micro small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) not only contribute to over 40 per cent industrial production and over 45 per cent of India's export but also account for substantial pollution load of India. India is already experiencing dangerous environmental conditions. In the recent past, India has faced several natural calamities (List of natural disaster in India, 2016) such as the landslide in Pune (2014), floods in Chennai (2015), a massive earthquake of magnitude 8.2 Richter in the Himalayan region and of magnitude 6.7 Richter in Manipur (2016) and large-scale fire destructing Uttarakhand forests (2016). Experts have claimed exploitation of natural resources as one of the key causes of such calamities. Hence, to avoid further environmental deterioration owing to the exploitation of natural resources, it becomes organizations' responsibility to plan sustainable development and facilitate environmental growth. Moreover, organizations may also benefit from adopting environmental management interventions as research has found that pro-environmental activities have a positive relation with employer branding, public image, marketing opportunities, improved sales, potential cost saving and competitive advantage (Khanna and Anton, 2002; Christmann, 2000; Shrivastava, 1995).

Environmental management is considered as an offshoot of a broader accounting agenda, known as "triple bottom line", which integrates social, environmental and financial aspects (Elkington, 2006). Triple bottom line analyzes an organization's performance in a broader perspective rather than being restricted to profit-making. The environmental dimension refers to attaining a balance between organizational growth and conserving natural resources for future generations (Daily and Huang, 2001; Jennings and Zandbergen, 1995; Ramus, 2002). While the importance of environmental sustainability is discussed as a primary objective, there is no conformity on the approach that the organizations adopt for achieving the same. Therefore, it is important to explore the initiatives taken by the organizations to avoid environmental disruptions and attain sustainable growth. As this field is under-researched, it is worthwhile to point out gaps and suggest possible measures for overcoming them (Daily and Huang, 2001; Renwick *et al.*, 2013).

Researchers have suggested that environmental disruptions are often a result of certain human activities. Therefore, one basic approach for curtailing such disruptions can be exploring and altering the causal human behavior (Ones and Dilchert, 2012; Oskamp, 1995, 2000). Only a few organizations explore the internal factors, such as the role of human behavior in protecting the environment (Davis and Challenger, 2013; Ones and Dilchert, 2012), as most of them undertake environmental development initiatives outside their boundaries (Uzzell and Moser, 2009). Studies on green human resource management (GHRM) are significant as it is a branch of green management philosophy which explores the role of human behavior in environmental management (Jackson and Seo, 2010) and sustainable development (O'Donohue and Torugsa, 2016). Opatha and Arulrajah (2014) have explained GHRM as the policies, practices and systems of an organization green that make its employees green for the benefit of the individuals, society, natural environment and business. In GHRM various human resource practices, such as recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, compensation and benefits and training, are designed in a manner to create a workforce that understands and promotes green behavior in the organization (Mathapati, 2013).

Further, organizational strategies for environmental management and sustainable development will succeed when they are well-aligned with its human resource practices (Ichniowski *et al.*, 1997; Mendelson and Pillai, 1999; Collins and Clark, 2003). The effectiveness of any strategic measure is dependent on the availability and capability of its people (Boselie *et al.*, 2001; Paauwe and Boselie, 2003; Jiang *et al.*, 2012). Thus, efficient workforce and human resource systems are critical for an impactful environmental growth strategy. As GHRM links people with environmental sustainability, it helps in bridging the gap between available vs required technically and managerially skilled workforce for successful implementation of environmental management systems (Daily and Huang, 2001; Renwick *et al.*, 2013). Research on GHRM can suggest strategic measures for building the capability of employees and creating a supportive culture which facilitates in adopting pro-environmental behavior.

Though many scholars have highlighted the importance of GHRM in promoting environment-friendly behaviors among employees, it is still a less-researched area (Del Brio *et al.*, 2007; Jabbour and Santos, 2008; Jabbour *et al.*, 2010; Jackson *et al.*, 2011; Ones and Dilchert, 2012; Rimanoczy and Pearson, 2010). Moreover, the available literature on GHRM primarily provides insights in the Western context (Renwick *et al.*, 2013). Considering the significance of Asian economic development and environmental crisis, it is equally important to explore the same in the Asian context. In India, GHRM is an under-researched area, although green organizations are the need of the hour. Hence, it has become important to explore GHRM in India. The objective of this study is to identify gaps by exploring the status of GHRM practices in India. It suggests measures to address the gaps and identify key motivating factors for the employees to exhibit environment-friendly behaviors and practices within the organization. Finally, it suggests an interdisciplinary framework to build a green organization.

The study is divided into two phases. In the first phase, literature is reviewed to understand various green human resource practices across the world to extract the themes for collecting data, as there is limited information available in the Indian context, and this study being one of the few empirical studies conducted on GHRM in the Indian context. In the second phase, using the extracted themes, data are collected for reviewing the GHRM status in the Indian organizations.

2. Literature review

One of the key responsibilities of a human resource professional is getting the support of the employees to implement environment-friendly initiatives (Priya *et al.*, 2014). Jabbour *et al.* (2010) highlighted the importance of human resource management in different stages of environmental management system. Ahmad (2015) emphasized on the role of human resource in engaging employees and promoting practices such as carpooling, recycling and conservation of energy. Renwick *et al.* (2013) developed a theoretical model where distinguished policies in the field of recruitment, performance and appraisal management, training and personnel development, employee relations and reward systems are considered powerful tools for aligning employees with a company's environmental strategy.

Green recruitment and selection process has two parts:

- (1) employing eco-friendly ways for hiring such as online tools, limited paper usage at the time of recruitment and selection process; and
- (2) measuring green attitudes at the time of selection, considering people who value green practices and follow basic environment-friendly activities such as recycling, less printing and conservation of energy.

Individual's personality factors should be incorporated in green recruitment (Dilchert and Ones, 2011). They have also developed a scale to measure employee's preferences toward green behavior. Individual's green competencies are crucial for pro-environmental performance (Subramanian *et al.*, 2016). On the other hand, even candidates are likely to be attracted toward organizations that are environment-friendly and branded as "green". An effective way to attract new talent is by gaining a reputation of "green employer" (Phillips, 2007; Stringer, 2009; Guerci *et al.*, 2016). The study by Brekke and Nyborg (2008) took a theoretical approach and built a model to explain how environment-friendly organizations can attract responsible employees. They advocated that for all other conditions being the same, people are more likely to join socially responsible organizations. It was found that environmental commitment of the company has a positive impact on its brand image, and candidates gave value to the environment-friendly strategies adopted by the organization (Grolleau *et al.*, 2012).

The performance management system helps in analyzing the current efficiency of an employee, finding gaps, exploring measures for improvisation and in setting future targets. Performance management is considered as one of the key human resource practices for promoting environmental behavior and sustainable development, thus advocating green performance management (Gholami *et al.* (2016). Green performance appraisal may be significant because when a behavior is measured to judge an individual, its perceived value rises and efforts to comply with the same are increased. Thus, including green behaviors in the performance appraisal system will facilitate their adoption among employees. Compensation and reward system is a significant human resource process through which employees are rewarded for their performance. This system attunes individual's and organization's goal. It motivates the employees to put extra efforts, which is required to meet the deliverables. By green compensation and reward system, it means to align the system with green behaviors and activities adopted within the organization. While performance management system ensures evaluation of green behaviors, a green compensation system ensures that the result of the assessment is linked with rewards and benefits. A study conducted on 469 US firms operating in high-polluting context reported that the CEO of the firms with high environment-friendly performance were paid more than those of nonenvironment-friendly firms. Further, long-term company results were linked with greater pollution prevention success in accordance to pay (Berrone and Gomez-Mejia, 2009). Thus, green compensation and reward system can act as a potential tool to promote green behaviors in the organization.

There are examples as to how modern organizations are using green compensation and reward system for promoting environment-friendly behaviors; for instance, CIPD/KPMG conducted a survey, which indicated that eight per cent of the organizations in the UK were rewarding green behaviors with various types of awards and financial incentives (Phillips, 2007). Employees should be rewarded with bonuses for their efforts in creating an environment-friendly culture (Liebowitz, 2010). Rewards should be given for promoting green behaviors in the workplace, lifestyle and reducing carbon footprints (Pillai and Sivathanu, 2014).

Green employee involvement is defined as "Creating an environment in which people have an impact on decisions and actions that affect their jobs" (Quagraine, 2015, p. 3). Employee involvement is about taking suggestions from employees on new environmental strategies and collecting feedback to improve the existing practices. Employee involvement motivates employees, makes them responsible and improves their cooperation in the greening of the organization. Phillips (2007) explained, "The use of employee participation in green HR has been noted to help prevent pollution from workplaces". Employee

involvement, particularly at the managerial level, is a crucial factor to motivate pro-environmental behavior among employees (Zibarras and Coan, 2015). It was found that emissions reduction at the workplace level is more likely where employee participation has a substantive role, including deeper and wider influence in organizational decision-making (Markey *et al.*, 2016).

Employee involvement also implies empowering employees for taking decisions. Research has shown that empowerment promotes self-control, innovative thinking and problem-solving and is directly related to productivity and performance (Renwick *et al.*, 2013; Wee and Quazi, 2005). Green employee empowerment is key to enhancing an organization's outcome, where employees are motivated to pursue green goals more effectively and efficiently (Tariq *et al.*, 2016). Organizational citizenship behavior for environmental concern is a discretionary activity and impacts the environmental performance of the firm (Paillé *et al.*, 2014). Daily *et al.* (2012) conducted a study in Mexico and found that environmental performance is positively related to employee empowerment.

One of the ways to increase employee involvement in environmental-friendly activities is by forming environmental teams of "eco-intrapreneurs" (Mandip, 2012). Eco-intrapreneurs are those employees who are ecologically oriented. They have intention and skills to organize organization's financial, human and natural resources in a way that adds value to products or services in an ecological way. Other possible ways to increase employee involvement is by building green-oriented values and culture (Guerci and Carollo, 2016) and providing pro-environmental training. (Renwick *et al.*, 2013).

Green training and development aim to improve employee's awareness and knowledge on environmental issues, build positive attitude, take a proactive approach toward environmental concerns and develop competencies to conserve energy and reduce waste (Zoogah, 2011). Environmental-training is reported as one of the most crucial aspects of human resource practices (Jabbour *et al.*, 2013). In a study conducted in Brazil, it was reported, "environmental-training for mitigating climate change" is relevant for the systematic development of low-carbon products (Saturnino Neto *et al.*, 2014). Further, both direct and moderating effects of employee training were found on the organization's sustainable development (Ji *et al.*, 2011). Employee training is crucial for successful implementation of the environmental management system and creation of an environment-friendly culture in the organization (Teixeira *et al.*, 2012). Environmental-training leads to better performance of environmental management system (Sarkis *et al.*, 2010). Perron *et al.* (2006) did a multiple case study research and found that it is important to conduct specialized and customized environmental-training, i.e. as per the need of the organization. They also emphasized to evaluate the effectiveness of training program with a valid instrument.

3. Methodology

This study uses a multi-method research to achieve its objective. The study is divided into two phases. In the first phase, archival research was conducted. Archival research can be used in various fields for building a reliable knowledge base (Tranfield *et al.*, 2003). In this study, archival research provided insight on existing GHRM practices by congregating available research studies. A literature review of past ten years research (2006 to 2016) was conducted using search engines such as EBSCO, PROQUEST, JSTOR and Google Scholar. The keywords used were "GHRM", "GHRM with environmental management", "GHRM and corporate social responsibility" and "GHRM and sustainable development". Table I provides a summary of the studies, which were reviewed for archival research in the first phase of the study.

Authors (Year)	HRM practices	Methodology	Findings	Country
Markey <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Employee involvement	Empirical	Employee participation increases emissions reduction	Australia
Guerci <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Recruitment	Empirical	Support the impact of a green reputation on attracting applicants, but no impact of information on the recruitment website about company environmental policies and practices	Italy
Guerci and Carollo (2016)	Recruitment, environmental training, employee involvement, performance management and compensation management and employee involvement	Empirical	Explores the HRM-related paradoxes perceived by organizations developing environmental sustainability via HRM	Italy
Gholami <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Performance management and employee involvement	Empirical	Performance management and employee involvement are crucial for sustainable development	Malaysia
Subramanian <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Recruitment and selection	Empirical	Individuals' green competencies are crucial for pro-environmental performance	China
Tariq <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Employee empowerment and motivation	Theoretical	Showed that there exists a potential mediating effect of employee empowerment on employee motivational levels for pursuing GHR practices	Literature Review
Zibarras and Coan (2015)	Employee involvement	Empirical	Managers' involvement is one of the most crucial practice to encourage pro-environmental behavior	U.K.
Ahmad (2015)	Green HR initiatives	Theoretical	Review of green human resource initiatives, such as conservation of energy, recycling and waste disposal, paperless office, green building and green reward system	Literature Review
Saturmino Neto <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Environmental training	Empirical	Environmental training facilitates development of low-carbon products	Brazil
Pailé <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Employee Involvement	Empirical	Organizational citizenship behavior for the environment fully mediates the relationship between strategic human resource management and environmental performance, and that internal environmental concern moderates the effect of strategic human resource management on organizational citizenship behavior for the environment	China

(continued)

Table I.
Summary of articles
included in the
literature review

Table I.

Authors (Year)	HRM practices	Methodology	Findings	Country
Pillai and Sivathanu (2014)	Compensation and reward system	Theoretical	Green rewards can be used for promoting green behaviors in workplace and lifestyle, reducing carbon credits	Literature Review
Priya <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Green HR initiatives	Theoretical	A key role for HR environmental executives is to guide line managers for gaining full staff co-operation for implementing environmental policies	Literature review
Jabbour <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Environmental training	Empirical	Training was found to obtain the highest average among human resource practices	Brazil
Renwick <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Employee motivation and involvement	Theoretical	Employee training and opportunities provided are crucial	Literature review
Grolleau <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Recruitment, employer branding	Empirical	Employees are concerned with the value that company gives to green initiative	France
Teixeira <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Environmental training	Empirical	Good training supports implementation of environmental management system and positive culture	Brazil
Daily <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Employee empowerment, environmental training, and teamwork	Empirical	Implementation of green management principle is associated with empowerment, good training and positively effects employee performance	Mexico
Dilchert and Ones (2011)	Recruitment	Theoretical	Suggested to incorporate personality factors into green recruitment	Literature Review
Ji <i>et al.</i> (2011)	Environmental training	Empirical	Employee training has direct and moderating influence on sustainable development	China
Daily <i>et al.</i> (2011)	Environmental training, Employee involvement, Team work	Empirical	Training and employee involvement will help employees understand opportunities and challenges associated with environmental management system. Team work plays a mediating role between independent variables and environmental performance	USA
Zoogah (2011)	Environmental training	Theoretical	Green training and development educate employees about the value of environmental management, provide opportunity to engage them in environmental problem-solving and build their competencies	Literature review
Sarkis <i>et al.</i> (2010)	Environmental training	Empirical	Training leads to positive perception of environmental management system	Spain

(continued)

Authors (Year)	HRM practices	Methodology	Findings	Country
Liebowitz (2010)	Green HR initiatives	Theoretical	Emphasize on changing various human resource system to cultivate a sustainable culture	Literature Review
Jabbour <i>et al.</i> (2010)	Green HR initiatives	Empirical	Importance of human resource dimensions in different stages of environmental management	Brazil
Berrone and Gomez-Mejia (2009)	Green rewards and compensation	Empirical	The firms having eco-friendly performance paid their CEOs more than non-eco-friendly firms	U.S.A
Stringer (2009)	Recruitment	Empirical	Graduates and other job applicants pay attention to the environmental management practices and performance of companies and use such information when deciding where to apply	U.S.A
Renwick <i>et al.</i> (2008)	Recruitment, environmental training, employee involvement, performance management and compensation	Theoretical	Reviews literature on green HRM	Literature review
Brekke and Nyborg (2008)	Recruitment	Theoretical	Employees will prefer environmental friendly companies more than non-environmental friendly companies, especially in case offered same pay	Norway
Philips (2007)	Recruitment and compensation	Empirical	Increasingly, firms are beginning to recognize that gaining a reputation as a green employer is an effective way to attract new talent	UK
Collier and Esteban (2007)	Green rewards and compensation; op-management support	Theoretical	Organizational culture, top-management attitude and associated rewards impacts employees motivation and commitment for CSR 'buy-in'	Literature review
Perron <i>et al.</i> (2006)	Environmental training	Empirical	Emphasized on customized environmental training and its evaluation	Canada

Table I.

With the understanding from the literature review, ten GHRM practices were identified. These ten identified GHRM practices include recruitment and selection, environmental learning and awareness, performance appraisal system, compensation/reward system, employee involvement, ISO certification, green teams, green corporate social responsibility (CSR), green cafeteria and green printing and recycle of paper. In the second phase, the objective was to map application of the ten identified GHRM practices in the Indian manufacturing organizations. Specifically, two points were explored:

- (1) The status of GHRM practices.
- (2) What are the key factors, which may further motivate implementation of GHRM practices?

A total of 16 human resource professionals were interviewed across six organizations. It was ensured that at least two human resource professionals participated from each organization. Duration of interview varied between 40 and 65 min. The languages of communication were English and Hindi (local language). In cases where respondents gave the permission, interviews were recorded. Field notes were taken in all the interviews.

The interview questions were framed to understand the current status of the organizations in GHRM practices identified from the archival research. The questions were open-ended, such as Are there any environmental training provided by the organization? What is the nature of that training? Is there a feedback mechanism to collect suggestions/opinions of employees with regard to the environmental initiatives? What is the process to document such feedbacks? Are there any initiatives taken by the organization to implement employee feedbacks? After every interview, the researcher shared her understanding with the concerned respondent to ensure that the data collected are not biased or misunderstood by the researcher. This process also enriched the quality of the data as it provided an opportunity to the interviewees to contemplate and further share information, which was missed during the interview. Face-to-face discussions also allowed to clarify any doubts owing to the difference of opinion for a particular point between the two (or more, as the case may be) respondent from the same organization.

3.1 Sample

Data from six manufacturing organizations were collected. These organizations were operating as paints, automobiles and electronics manufacturers. There were two main reasons to focus on the manufacturing sector. First, the manufacturing sector is largely involved in the utilization of natural resources, and there is a grave need to monitor industrial pollution in this sector. Second, the manufacturing sector is considered significant as it can help India cope with an economic crisis, create new jobs and boost the gross domestic product. There is increasing focus on the manufacturing sector by the Government of India, which is taking several initiatives to promote the same. The Chief Statistic Office of India forecasted that the manufacturing sector would grow at a robust pace of 9.5 per cent in 2015-2016 and 12.6 per cent in the third quarter of the following year. As there is high chance that the manufacturing sector will grow in the coming times, it is appropriate to focus on the same.

4. Results

Table II notes the ten GHRM practices extracted from the global trends as said earlier the first phase of this study. In the second phase, interviews were conducted to gather data on

Table II.
Status of green-HRM
practices across six
organizations

S. No.	Green HRM Practices	Org 1	Org 2	Org 3	Org 4	Org 5	Org 6
1	Recruitment and Selection:						
	Social media	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Online job portals	×	✓	×	×	✓	×
	Examine green traits	×	×	×	×	×	×
2	Environmental training and Learning:						
	Formal training	×	×	✓	✓	×	✓
	Informal ways	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Performance appraisal system	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Compensation/reward system:						
	Activities included in performance appraisal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Other exclusive green behavior	×	×	✓	×	×	×
5	Employee involvement	×	×	✓	×	✓	×
6	Green teams	×	×	✓	×	×	×
7	Pro-environment CSR	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓
8	Green cafeteria	×	×	✓	×	×	✓
9	ISO certification:						
	ISO 9001	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
	ISO 14001	×	×	✓	×	×	×
10	Green printing and paper optimization/recycle:						
	Online portals for policies and claims	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×
	Record usage of paper	×	×	×	×	×	×
	Paper recycle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: (✓) = practice is followed; (×) = practice is not followed; (-) = Not applicable, as ISO 140001 exists rather than ISO 9001

the identified GHRM practices. Table II also presents the data on the status of six manufacturing organizations in respect to these GHRM practices. Below are the descriptions for a better understanding of the same:

4.1 Recruitment and selection

The data were collected to understand whether the organizations record use of paper and optimally utilize it at the time of recruitment and selection; whether the organizations consider social networking sites for recruitment; whether during selection, factors such as green personality, green values, green attitudes, green skills or green behaviors were given due weight?

All the six companies confirmed using social media and online job portals for hiring. For example, a representative mentioned, "We make extensive use of social media for recruitment" (HR Representative, Organization 4, February 23, 2016). Four out of six companies (Organizations 1, 3, 4 and 6) agreed that social media websites, such as Twitter, Facebook, Linked-In and blogs, are good sources for advertising and attracting talent. The other two Organizations 2 and 5 emphasized on online job portals such as naukri.com, monster.com and shine.com.

None of the organizations mentioned about any provision to keep track of the amount of paper used during the recruitment and selection process. Further, none of the organizations had the provision for specifically assessing green behaviors or values or personality of the candidates at the time of selection.

4.2 Environmental-training and learning

Under this category, the purpose was to explore the training and other learning activities that the organizations engaged in for increasing environmental awareness and inculcating green behaviors among employees. The data were collected to understand time and money invested to increase employee's awareness and capabilities to promote green behavior in the organization; environmental training programs; whether feedbacks from such training programs were implemented in similar forthcoming activities; whether there is any other activity that the organizations conduct for environmental development?

The researcher was unable to get information on the amount of money invested in providing training to employees for promoting green behavior/activities. Further, only three organizations mentioned that they had conducted formal environmental management training (Organization 3, 4 and 6). Feedbacks from trainees on the usability of the training were collected and documented for future reference. Other environmental learning and awareness initiatives, such as internal meetings and campaigns, were commonly practiced by all the organizations. Organization 1 informed that they had recently organized a program where a session focused on "environmental awareness and international best practices". Organization 3 closely worked with an NGO, which organizes campaigns to "save and plant trees". This organization's attempt to link its people with the NGO stimulated importance and awareness for a healthy environment. The human resource representative from the organization stated, "We have posters emphasizing on saving and planting trees displayed at various locations in our office. We are also invited to volunteer for such pro-environmental activities from an NGO" (HR Representative, Organization 3, February 15, 2016). A representative of Organization 5 informed:

Guards switch-off unrequired lights after office hours [...] Once we were shown data on how much energy and money can be saved if we turn off PCs, TVs, lights, even switches after re-charging mobile, etc. They advised to make it a habit and practice it beyond office boundaries like home (HR Representative, Organization 5, March 14, 2016).

4.3 Performance appraisal system

The data were collected to understand whether adopting and promoting green behavior by the employees was considered as one of the key performance indicators and measured during the performance appraisal process.

It was found that all the six organizations considered indicators such as wastage of raw material, some defective items in a cycle of production, timely service of the machinery, employee's proactive initiative to avoid any damage and sharing knowledge for efficiently running the plant. As stated by an HR representative of Organization 4, "We keep track of the amount of waste in every cycle of production. The person in charge is responsible for maintaining the loss within the allowed limits". Though these points will affect the profit line, and thus are essential for any manufacturing organization, it must be noted that they are also environment-friendly. For example, if an employee is assessed on how promptly he scrutinizes the machinery, then it not only increases machinery's life but also avoids environmental damage owing to its improper functioning.

4.4 Compensation and reward system

The data were collected to understand if green behaviors were applauded through any means, such as monetary rewards or recognition. All organizations confirmed that the pro-environmental criteria referred in the performance appraisal category were rewarded. Further, Organization 3, which was associated with an NGO working for preserving nature,

mentioned that recognition was given to employees who used to volunteer in the “save and plant trees” campaign. The associated representative stated, “Photograph and experience of volunteers were published in company’s magazine” (HR Representative, Organization 3, February 5, 2016). The Organization 4 representatives mentioned, “[. . .] People who share inputs on efficient functioning/avoiding wear and tear of machinery are given financial incentive, praised and may receive ‘Employee of the year’ award” (HR Representative, Organization 4, February 26, 2016).

4.5 *Employee involvement*

In this category, an attempt was made to understand if organizations collect and incorporate feedback on environmental policies from its employees. An attempt was also made to understand employee’s involvement in the promotion and execution of environmental practices in the organization.

Organizations 3 and 5 informed that they collected feedback from their employees on “how to make their organization an environment-friendly place”. However, only Organization 3 mentioned that they had applied some of the suggested points, which were considered as valid by the management. As quoted:

[. . .] There are various recreational clubs. An employee suggested us to have a “bicycle club”. In this, we rent bicycles to those who like bicycling. The time-to-time club also organizes group bicycle rides. Many people joined because of peer influence and good feedback (HR Representative, Organization 3, 5th February 2016).

Another suggestion implemented was “[. . .] Put posters like, ‘Switch off the lights if you are the last one to leave’, ‘Save water: small adjustments can make big impacts’ etc. at various places including washrooms” (HR Representative, Organization 3, February 5, 2016). In the case of Organization 5, it was shared that the feedback collected is yet to be documented and processed. There was some interest shown for involving employees like, “So far no such attempt is made but going forward we will certainly involve our people in this [. . .] it will be a management decision” (HR Representative, Organization 6, May 19, 2016).

4.6 *Green teams*

It was explored whether a specific team or task-force was formed to analyze issues, brainstorm ideas and explore how, where and when environmental interventions can be introduced in the organization.

Only Organization 3 mentioned about having a dedicated team for promoting green behaviors within the organization. The representative of Organization 3 said:

[. . .] Since our CSR teamwork works in this area, it closely monitors such issues and suggest steps which are environment-friendly. They are also responsible for getting the buy-ins and financial approvals for the execution of plans (HR Representative, Organization 3, February 5, 2016).

A representative from Organization 2 mentioned, “We have people in the quality-control department, who keep a check on any possible environmental hazard” (HR Representative, Organization 2, January 11, 2016). On asking if these people are only responsible for promoting green behaviors within the organization the representative replied, “No, this is just one of the many things they do rather, it is not about promoting green behaviors, but to curtail environmental deterioration because of production” (HR Representative, Organization 2, January 11, 2016).

4.7 Green corporate social responsibility

In many organizations, CSR is either dealt by an HR team or are carried out in close association with the HR department. Therefore, this category was also explored. The purpose was to explore if CSR activities of any organization directly impact development or preservation of the environment.

All the organizations were performing CSR, which was either associated with the environmental development or social issues (rural development, child labor and education). However, data were collected specifically on the activities that were related to environmental development, referred as “Green CSR”. Some of the green CSR was taking various steps to improve environmental impacts of organization’s activities such as finding ways to reduce carbon dioxide emissions (Organization 2) and association with an NGO focusing on the planting of trees (Organization 3). A representative from Organization 6 commented, “[. . .] We also conduct programs to raise awareness of environmental issues among our networks and suppliers” (HR Representative, Organization 6, May 19, 2016). Other organizations were involved in CSR, which were related to rural development, child labor and education.

4.8 Green cafeteria

Data were collected to estimate whether organizations adopt eco-friendly measures in cafeterias or dining halls.

Only Organizations 6 and 3 had few characteristics of the green cafeteria. A representative from Organization 6 mentioned:

We measure food left on plates per day and display the amount through an electronic machine, which is strategically placed where the buffet is organized. People consciously serve themselves when they are aware of how much food is wasted daily [. . .] Leftover is collected by an agency for making fertilizer (HR Representative, Organization 6, May 19, 2016).

Another stated:

We ensure minimum usage of plastic. Most of our utensils are of steel [. . .] We also have recycle-plastic dustbin placed near drinking water machine to dispose of water cups [. . .] Jute bags are used to buy vegetables and fruits in large quantity (HR Representative, Organization 3, February 5, 2016).

4.9 ISO certification

Data were collected regarding ISO certification, preferably ISO 14000 because it relates to environmental management. ISO certification was considered as a GHRM practice because human resource management such as performance appraisal system, communication, training and competency mapping are linked with ISO certification. All the six companies were ISO certified. Organization 3 had ISO 14000 certification, and others had ISO 9001 certification.

4.10 Green printing and paper recycle

Statistics have shown that wastage of paper is one of the primary concerns in the workplace. In this category, an attempt was made to understand the role of HR in providing a soft copy of internal documentation (including plans and policies) for facilitating less paper usage, recycling of paper, etc.

“Most of us have a precaution sign indicating ‘print only if required’ in our official e-mail account. This make people conscious and expresses company’s preference to avoid unnecessary printouts” (HR Representative, Organization 1, January 8, 2016). Organization 3

representatives mentioned, "As I told earlier, we have an online portal for certain policies and claims" (thus limiting the usage of paper), (HR Representative, Organization 3, February 5, 2016). Important documents, such as an employee handbook, reimbursement requests (only hard copy of bills needs to be submitted), travel assistance request and leave request, could be accessed through an online link thus avoiding unnecessary printing. Organizations 2, 4 and 5 also had an online process to claim for reimbursement of bills. All the organization had paper shredding machine and sold the paper shreds to waste-paper-recycle companies. For example, a representative mentioned, "Paper shredding not only enhances the security of documents but is also helpful in waste management" (HR Representative, Organization 5 April 21, 2016).

As a part of the study, representatives were also requested to share their insights on factors, which they feel are crucial for the greening of the organizations. The two key requirements, which were unanimously highlighted were strong and visible support from the top-management and mutual learning and integration of green practices across.

Representatives from all the six organizations consistently agreed that top-management's support and efforts are crucial for promoting environmental-friendly behaviors in the organization. Representatives also pointed a need for top-management to clarify the role of human resource professionals in promoting environmental-friendly behaviors in the organization. Organization 5 representative stated:

At my level, I help people in connecting and carpooling, but for a bigger impact we need clarity on how we can impact [. . .] more formalization and support is required.

Another mentioned, "These are policy level decisions, and willingness of top-management is a must". Few other experts highlighting the importance of leader's involvement are stated below:

The gravity of any new initiative are automatically increased if senior leaders are actively involved (HR Representative, Organization 2, January 11, 2016).

Green behaviors like switching lights, less printing, optimum use of water, carpooling are voluntary actions by employees [. . .] Therefore it is important that leaders should demonstrate such socially responsible behavior. Since these behaviors are linked with the habit of the people there is a need to conduct training and learning sessions to increase awareness and alter behaviors (HR Representative, Organization 4, February 26, 2016).

[. . .] One needs to be thoughtful about how to formally introduce it like include pro-environmental behaviors as a part of duty in the job description, communicate "greening" as an important goal, increase awareness among employees especially, the new hires about environment-friendly initiatives taken by the organization. This is not possible without top-management's go (HR Representative, Organization 5, April 21, 2016).

[. . .] most of the actions are preventive and reactive we need a more proactive approach from the management. It is a grave issue with serious repercussions (HR Representative, Organization 6, May 19, 2016).

Only representatives of Organization 3 were confident about top-management support for the promotion of green behaviors:

The company Magazine often has articles related to environmental issues from the head of CSR or his team. We also received an e-mail from the head of the CSR division on the Earth-day (HR Representative, Organization 3, February 15, 2016).

On probing about the content of the e-mail, it was told:

The e-mail briefed about various initiatives taken and future goals of the organization for environmental development. He congratulated employees for their support and also requested for further assistance. I know he also writes blogs on environmental topics (HR Representative, Organization 3, February 5, 2016).

In other cases, though leadership support was considered as an important factor, representatives were unsure about the top-management's outlook toward this issue. However, all the representatives agreed on the emphasis that the top-management gives to ISO certification.

As top-management thoughts are also reflected in vision and mission statements of the company, the researcher also examined them. It was observed that four of the six organizations had expressed the importance for greening in their vision or mission statement. For example, Organization 2 emphasized on "green products". Organization 4 mentioned, "Combating climate change and protecting natural resources" as one of their key responsibilities. Organization 6, a paint manufacturer, said on its website "Address green and sustainability through advanced polymers and chemistry". Though vision and mission statements reflect values of leaders, the representatives emphasized on the requirement for practical actions and presence of leaders for encouraging pro-environmental behaviors among employees.

Another common issue was the lack of mutual learning and integration of green practices across departments. A representative mentioned, "The idea for a holistic development is to learn and work together toward the same objective" (HR Representative, Organization 1, 8th January 2016). Another stated, "[. . .] for a successful greening of the organization, it is also important to connect its people with its process, technology, and supply-chain" (HR Representative, Organization 5, April 21, 2016). Additional excerpt echoing the thought was "[. . .] if we want to transform our company to 'green company' then we must work together and take steps which are commonly directed toward the goal of greening" (HR Representative, Organization 6, May 19, 2016).

5. Discussion

This section has two objectives. First, it summarizes interpretation of the findings. Second, it suggests a few interventions, which, if followed, can deal with the two key factors hindering greening of the organization in India.

The purpose of the study was to understand the status of GHRM practices in the Indian manufacturing sector and to explore factors that may encourage green behaviors. The data analysis suggests that the organizations have certain existing practices of GHRM, but these practices are neither formally organized under GHRM initiatives nor diligently followed. Though there are instances of all organizations making efforts to increase awareness through informal means, such as posters and internal campaigns, only three provided environmental training. Moreover, no details were available on environmental training budget. A probable reason for the prevalence of informal means in raising awareness is that they are less expensive than formal environmental training. Further, no attempt was made to evaluate the effectiveness of such informal approach for raising awareness. [Barr \(2003\)](#) raised questions about the extent to which informal means bring changes in employee's behavior. Irrespective of the potential cost, it is important that organizations provide their employees with formal education programs and training to promote pro-environmental behavior. Evaluation and feedback for formal training programs should also be documented.

In the case of recruitment and selection, currently, organizations are only practicing “use of online portals and social media”. No consideration was made for accessing green personality and skills in the selection process. During performance appraisal, only those aspects, which are about production and machinery were evaluated. There is no particular point about green behaviors, which are measured in the appraisal process. Green key performance indicators provide a comprehensive view of the manufacturer’s environmental performance and a method to collect, visualize and prioritize improvement efforts (Kurdve and Wiktorsson, 2013). It was also revealed that compensation was linked with only those aspects, which were about proper functioning and maintenance of the machinery. Rewards were not used extensively to encourage the pro-environmental behavior. Only two organizations linked rewards exclusively with green behaviors such as for voluntarily planting trees and educating peers to reduce wastage. One reason for the insufficient use of a reward system is that employees are motivated for different reasons, and thus it is hard to implement a reward system, which can cater to the need of everyone (Fernandez *et al.*, 2003).

Further, the findings suggest that there were issues with the conceptualization of the green team, which may also be useful in aligning activities among departments. Pro-environmental behavior from employees is a kind of change that employees are expected to bring in their action. Any change to be successful needs acceptance and willingness from the people who will execute it. Though willingness can be attained by involving people, the data represent that not many efforts were made to take feedbacks and suggestions from the employees.

It is also noted that none of the organizations have a mechanism to access the impact of a particular GHRM initiative on employee’s pro-environmental behavior. All this, despite the fact that several empirical studies (Jabbour and Santos, 2008; Ramus, 2002; Ramus and Steger, 2000; Daily and Huang, 2001; Govindarajulu and Daily, 2004; Rimanoczy and Pearson, 2010; Jackson *et al.*, 2011) have highlighted a significant role of green human resource practices such as recruitment, appraisal, rewards and training, in greening of the organization. Further, it was observed that proper formalization and documentation of GHRM practices is lacking, thus making their existence at a superficial level. Without a formal system, it is also difficult to evaluate the impact of GHRM practices in promoting pro-environmental behavior among employees. There is a need to account for both the number of environmental initiatives introduced and their associated impacts on the environment (Ones and Dilchert, 2012). Moreover, if an organization can show evidence of how GHRM practices help in attaining a socially desirable “green goal” and providing additional benefits (such as cost control, employee productivity or talent acquisition), then it may act as a role model. Thus, this study suggests, there is high scope for Indian manufacturing sector to improvise GHRM practices. The positive line of thought is that the representatives of administered organizations accept and value the need for greening. They expressed eagerness to receive clarity on their roles and how can they support the greening of the organization. They were also ready to explore new and innovative measures; for instance, representatives from Organization 6 showed interest in incorporating employee involvement and representatives from Organizations 2, 4 and 5 liked the idea of having “green teams”.

5.1 *The two key challenges*

The representatives unanimously desired actions on two key factors: top-management support and involvement, and integration between activities across departments. Though top-management support was considered crucial by all the representatives for motivating employees and facilitating pro-environmental behaviors, only one (Organization 3) in six

organizations agreed about its presence. Top-management support is a key requirement in the Indian organization because the country has a power-distance culture, where employees look for their seniors' consent and preference in initiating any new behavior. Influence from senior managers can enhance the visibility and significance of the message. Moreover, top-management involvement will also facilitate other desired environment-friendly practices, such as employee empowerment, green teams and awareness raising campaigns. Research has also identified the role of leaders in promoting green behaviors. Leader's environmental descriptive norms, leadership style and demonstration of pro-environmental behaviors play an important part in the greening of organizations (Robertson and Barling, 2013). Involvement of leaders is a crucial factor for inculcating green values among employees (Siebenhüner and Arnold, 2007). Greening of the organization also demands a supportive environment-friendly culture, which in turn demands new leadership competencies, behaviors and mindsets (Rimanoczy and Pearson, 2010).

An interesting observation was that although research has indicated that vision/mission statements are signals from top-management to employees (Ramus and Steger, 2000) and four organization's vision/mission statements did include pro-environmental statement, the representatives emphasized on the need of active participation and physical perceptibility of senior management. This clearly indicated that strong ground action and presence of top-management is required, and mere pro-environmental vision/mission statements will not promote environment-friendly behaviors among employees.

The other key concern was that though the need for mutual learning and integration of greening practices across departments had been felt by all the representatives, there was no provision reported for the same. A probable reason for this may be a lack of formalization and strategic interventions about greening initiatives. Lack of participation from senior management will also hinder the occurrence of such organized interrelated set up.

In the paragraphs to follow, this study suggests measures for top-management support and integration of various divisions, as these were the two key concerns expressed during the interviews.

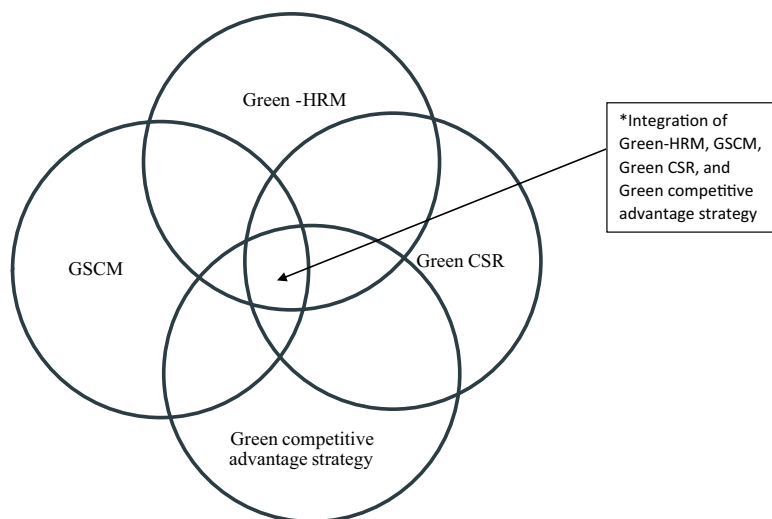
5.2 Measures to stimulate top-management support

Various measures can be suggested for inducing top-management support. Initiatives such as organizing conferences on this topic can be taken by the academic institutions and government bodies. Ways and avenues should be sought for information sharing between those leaders of business houses which are already environmentally conscious and others needing sensitization on green management practices and sustainable growth strategies. Other measures may be at a more basic level by introducing courses catering to the needs of GHRM in the curriculum of business schools. There are empirical studies (Mercer *et al.*, 2017; Erhabor and Don, 2016; Stern *et al.*, 2014) that have documented the positive role of education in promoting environmental awareness and sustainability. Leaders should be exposed to sensitive ecological models, such as Quintuple Helix innovation model, where the natural environments of society and the economy are also considered as drivers for knowledge production and innovation (Carayannis *et al.*, 2012). Social entrepreneurship, such as paper/plastic recycling, waste management and organic production, should be promoted as it will not only focus on environmental growth but also provide a support system for dealing with the waste material. Top-management support can also be increased with strict government regulations and ISO14000.

5.3 Measure to facilitate integration between departments

Regarding the second key concern (mutual learning and integration of green practices across departments), this study provides an example of aligning GHRM, green competitive advantage strategy, green supply-chain management (GSCM) and green CSR (Figure 1). Integration of various practices within the organization will help in mutual learning, which is required for building a holistic green organization (Kerr, 2006; Siebenhüner and Arnold, 2007). Moreover, the synergies created by the integration of GHRM, green competitive strategy, GSCM and CSR will support and bind the system. GSCM strategies involving functions of production and logistics can ensure the organization is indeed working in a sustainable manner. A sustainable supply-chain leads to long-term profitability and provides a competitive advantage. A sustainable system also helps in attracting and retaining talent. GHRM can learn from some of the established GSCM practices and can also provide a supporting structure for facilitating an organization's culture, which further promotes greening. Such integration is crucial in a highly globalized business scenario, where natural resources are limited, gains from economic activities are concentrated and having right talent is a matter of survival.

5.3.1 *Green human resource management and green supply-chain management.* Eco-design is a GSCM practice, which was highlighted by Büyüközkan and Çifçi (2012) when they identified that approximately 80 per cent of product-related impacts on the environment could be dealt at the time of product designing. Eco-design can be applied during product design and packaging design stages. The product design emphasizes that organizations should consider utilizing used or recycled components. Green packaging is ensuring that packaging is reusable, recyclable (Walker *et al.*, 2008) and does not involve the use of harmful materials (Büyüközkan and Çifçi, 2012). Building on learnings from GSCM one can also design other human resource systems such as performance management system, compensation management system and disciplinary management system such that



Notes: * Green HRM: Green human resource management; GSCM: Green supply chain management; Green CSR: Green corporate social responsibility

Figure 1.
Interdisciplinary
framework for
building a holistic
green organization

employees are encouraged to adopt green practices. For example, while evaluating employee's performance, one should give importance to green practices. Further, it is important that companies should link each team with their environmental targets. There should be financial as well as non-financial rewards, such as recognition and praises, which are associated with the target. One can also have a disciplinary committee, which is responsible for taking corrective measures against an employee who ignores pre-set rules of green conduct.

Employee practices (such as training, team building and socialization) are more easily followed across the supply chain than work rules and hierarchically determined conditions of employment (Scarborough, 2000). Once GHRM practices are integrated with GSCM practices, it may provide mutual support and facilitation. For example, linking performance appraisal with eco-design will motivate employees to work toward environment-friendly designs. Adequate environmental training may increase awareness and develop skills. Similarly, linking compensation and rewards with green practices may promote green behavior and build a green culture in the organization. The motivation for designing energy-efficient products and processes may be enhanced by linking them with incentives for increasing their acceptance (Gupta, 2008).

Another GSCM practice is green purchasing. Green purchasing implies an organization should also focus on green practices of its suppliers (Lee, 2008). An organization may collaborate with its suppliers, particularly if they are small or medium-sized, by environmental funding initiatives, joint research, training, etc. Collaboration may be useful in inculcating green practices among suppliers. Other than this an organization may simply demand its suppliers to follow ISO14000 for a long and fruitful business relationship. It has been observed, often external motivators such as customer preferences and government regulations are key drivers to follow ISO14000 (Heras-Saizarbitoria *et al.*, 2011; Vachon, 2007). One example of this is IKEA – one of the leading furniture and home accessories company. IKEA adopts compliance and evaluative approach with its suppliers to ensure they apply green practices. It also supports its suppliers with the required funds for meeting its code of conduct. Just like an organization makes an investment for green purchasing, it also needs to invest in creating a green workforce. For example, providing training to employees for building attitudes, skills and commitment toward greening. Environmental training can modify attitude, belief (cognitive), feeling (affect) and action (behavioral) toward greening. Further, as in green purchasing, one carefully selects its suppliers and follows strict compliance for environmental issues; similarly, during recruitment and selection, weight should be given to candidates who value pro-environmental behavior. Some other measures that can encourage green behaviors may be emphasizing it in the job description, insisting them during induction program, measuring the impact of the existing training system and resources and collecting feedback for improvising.

5.3.2 Green human resource management, green supply-chain management and green competitive advantage strategy. Moving forward, integration between GHRM, GSCM and green competitive advantage is explored. Green strategic interventions, such as GHRM and GSCM, can provide green competitive advantage either through innovation or cost reduction. When we refer GHRM as a cost reduction strategy, it is important to understand that green organizations may not only help in controlling adverse impact on the environment but also will earn positive reputation, brand value, increased sales, talent acquisition, engaged workforce, better employee productivity, motivation and retention. As pointed out by Dechant and Altman (1994), employee's perception about the behavior of organizations toward environmental concerns is important. In a survey done by Hewitt and Associates (2010), it was found that employees who perceived their organizations actively

participating in CSR were highly engaged. Neil Crawford, Hewitt's leader of the study, explained that employees have great regard for employer's CSR efforts. If for any reason an employer has to scale back on its CSR/environmental activities, then it can negatively impact employee's motivation and may cause employee turnover. Nielsen, the market research firm, found that 68 per cent of consumers in Australia are willing to pay more for products from companies who are concerned with the environment. According to an Ipsos Mori survey, 80 per cent (81 per cent in the USA) of respondents across 15 developed nations would prefer working for a company that "has a good reputation for environmental responsibility". A poll on green employment by MonsterTRAK.com, a job website, found that 92 per cent would be more inclined to work for a company that is environment friendly. Most importantly, Gallup's surveys suggest Indians are more worried about their environment than are people in rich countries (Pandimotta, 2011). Hence, at a larger level, greening initiatives help organizations with cost-saving because few major cost centers for any organizations, namely, talent acquisition, low productivity and employee turnover are minimized.

GHRM and GSCM are innovative measures to attain competitive advantage. The literature on innovation suggests that there is no dearth of research which focuses on product innovation for sustainable development. Whereas, process and service innovation for sustainable development is comparably less researched (Yarahmadi and Higgins, 2012). GHRM can contribute to process innovation by finding new ways to inculcate green behavior. It is possible by increasing participation, i.e. by involving employees in providing suggestions and feedback for the greening of the organization and providing flexibility to initiate new ideas in the organization, etc. Further, the focus should be on facilitating activities such as car-pooling, job-sharing, teleconferencing and virtual interviews, recycling, telecommuting, online training, e-filing of reimbursement claims, conducting energy consumption audits and optimally utilizing the energy-efficient office spaces.

5.3.3 Green human resource management, green supply-chain management, green competitive advantage strategy and green CSR. After exploring integration and mutual learning between GHRM, GSCM and green competitive advantage strategy, this study moves to the fourth quadrant of Figure 1: Green CSR. As organizations are an open system, their primary goal should be green CSR, i.e. creating common value for the wider good. Thus, organization's efficiency should not be limited to profit-making but should also be measured by calculating its impact on the environment and social developments. This multifaceted perspective to access organization's success considers benefit it brings to different groups of relevant stakeholders, i.e. employees, customers, shareholders and suppliers (Freeman, 1984). Environmental growth is desirable for humanity. The concept is broadly entitled in "stakeholder theory" and suggests that a firm should pursue strategies that consider the parties affected by decisions while trying to minimize damage or maximize benefits to the representative groups (Freeman, 1984).

For a sustainable economy, organizations need to look beyond their goal of profit-making and aim at creating common value. A large number of organizations claim to propel commendable CSR to attain common value. However, Lieberwitz (2005) explains that as CSR is a voluntary activity, organizations practice it at a superficial level and their main goal remains profit-making. Mintzberg *et al.* (2002) suggest that many organizations work on a series of half-truths with the main focus on profit. Driving factors for most of the CSR, including green CSR, are of external nature, such as government regulations, client pressure, customer attraction and desire to control risk. If green CSR initiatives are only taken outside the boundary of the organization, then it is difficult to attain the status of a truly green organization. It is important also to focus internally, involve employees, and bring changes

in policies and practices for an impactful CSR. GHRM can help in bringing such internal modifications. Interconnecting GHRM practices (such as green climate, recruitment, task-force, environmental-training, employee participation, performance management system, compensation and benefits system) with green CSR will bring clarity to employees about meaning and importance of greening for their organization. It will also build a robust system dedicated toward a pro-environmental goal with a willingness to incorporate necessary changes. Similarly, GSCM can contribute by enabling internal changes through green product development and green packaging. In the present scenario, where depletion of resources and increasing environmental hazards are primary concerns, greening of the organization will help in creating common value and competitive advantage.

Thus, integration between the four areas (GHRM, GSCM, green competitive advantage and green CSR) will create synergies across the organization leading to sustainable growth. Whereas, non-integration of the departmental activities may create conflict leading to foul practices, disapprovals and contradictions. The organizations operating in the intersection region will consider themselves to be responsible not only toward its profits but also toward its people and the planet. These organizations will aim for the wider good of all the stakeholders and will take responsibility for the impact its actions bring to the environment. To achieve their goal, they integrate their policies and practices such that they can create common value. Such rare and innovative conglomerate will also be a differentiating strategy, providing a competitive advantage. The intersection aims to form a “holistic green organization”, which not only meets its financial objective but also sets a sustainable example.

6. Limitations and recommendations for future research

A possible limitation of this study may be that qualitative research is often criticized being “impressionistic and subjective” (Bryman, 2004, p. 284). The research can get biased through the possible bias that the researcher may carry (McKinnon, 1988). In this study, attempts were made to control personal bias by following a rigorous process of constant comparison while coding, keeping theoretical sensitivity and through reflexivity. Moreover, after every interview, researcher had paraphrased her understanding to the concerned respondents thus clarifying any misconceptions. The process helped in improving the quality of data and controlled self-serving bias. Another concern for a qualitative research is that it raises questions on a generalization (Bryman, 2004). However, Kvale (1996) had explained that qualitative research attains analytical generalization through assertional logic.

Further, it needs to be mentioned that this study represents the outlook of human resource managers about the GHRM practices implemented in their organizations. It is advisable to explore the viewpoint of all employee groups (including non-managerial staff). Another limitation is that this study provides integration of only four areas as an exemplar for building a holistic organization. Future studies can extend this model and test it by involving other initiatives such as green marketing and green finance.

This study does not capture the impact of any of specific GHRM practices. A longitudinal study to track the impact of a specific GHRM practice will also be insightful. It will help organizations in deciding where to devote resources for the best pro-environmental effect. As most of the human resource representatives mentioned about support and clarity from top management on their role in the greening of the organization, it is suggested that future studies may explore the role of human resource professionals in facilitating GHRM practices. Human resource functions have responsibility for ensuring that policies, processes and systems throughout the organizations are interconnected, supported by the

management and are communicated clearly to all the employees (Rimanoczy and Pearson, 2010). Thus, human resource professionals may be perfect to influence environmental change (Dubois and Dubois, 2012). Further, it will be insightful to study the implementation of GHRM practices in association with organizational change principles because the greening of the organization through human resource practices will require changes at the organizational level.

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