

Green human resource management policies and practices in Ukraine

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Abstract. The main purpose of the study is to assess the development and implementation of GHRM policies and identify prospects for the dissemination of GHRM practices in Ukraine. The results of the survey confirmed the working hypotheses: the practice of developing GHRM policies in Ukraine has not become widespread and there are no effective mechanisms for implementing GHRM policies. The research showed the average level of respondents' assessment of their awareness of GHRM practices. The study confirmed a lack of effective mechanisms and tools for their implementation: units and employees responsible for implementing the GHRM policy; regulation of tasks, duties and responsibilities of employees; practices of planning the number of employees required for the implementation of environmental initiatives and activities; development of green competencies; informing employees about the GHRM policies implementation; involvement of employees in the formation of green policies and solving ecological problems; survey of employees' opinion on corporate green practices. The paper focuses on the necessity of disseminating the practices of developing and implementing GHRM policies, it is crucial to raise the awareness of managers and HR specialists.

1. Introduction

The environmental responsibility of citizens, as well as business and public organizations, are relevant today. It is due to climate change, environmental pollution, resources depletion, lack of drinking water, increasing disease incidences because of the hostile environment. The demand of the population, especially young people, as consumers for the environmental behaviour of goods and services producers is growing. Environmental policies and implementation of green practices by the organization is an essential criterion for the employer selection by candidates for vacant positions. Consequently, green policies are an integral part of the organization image in the labour market, and therefore the employer brand.

In this regard, socially responsible business and public organizations must change economic behaviour, develop environmental policies and implement green practices in all functions and business processes. In this context, implanting green practices in human resource management is critical because organizations need to have environmentally friendly employees. Such employees share the organization environmental policies, have green competencies, and are ready to initiate and implement green practices.



2. Literature review

Issues of green human resource management (GHRM) policies development, implementation of GHRM practices (recruiting, selection, training and development, staff motivation, etc.), the impact of GHRM on the company's environmental policies, the formation of environmentally friendly employee behaviour are the focus of many scientists.

Chaudhary [1] researches the role of GHRM in fostering the environmental performance of employees. The study shows that GHRM significantly predicts employee green behaviour.

The results of the study Gill, Ahmad and Kazmi [2] indicate the positive influence of GHRM policies on environmental performance and the partial mediating effect of employee eco-friendly behaviour between GHRM and environmental performance.

Fawehinmi, Yusliza, Mohamad, Faezah and Muhammad [3] examine the impact of GHRM on employee green behaviour through the mediation of environmental knowledge of lecturers in public research universities in Malaysia. The findings of the study show that GHRM affects employee green behaviour through the full mediation of environmental knowledge [3].

Rubel, Kee and Rimi [4] examine the influence of GHRM on green service behaviour through the mediating effect of green knowledge sharing based on bank employees' perceptions. The findings show the direct positive impact of GHRM on green in-role, extra-role service behaviour and green knowledge sharing. Green knowledge sharing also has a mediating effect between GHRM and green service behavior [4].

Hameed, Muhammad Naeem, Hassan, Naeem, Nazim and Maqbool [5] examine the relationship between GHRM practices and green transformational leadership toward encouraging employees' green creativity. The authors tested how green perceived organizational mediates the link between GHRM practices and employees' green creativity [5].

The article [6] is devoted to the theoretical foundation for implementing environmental issues into HRM practices.

Mousa and Othman [7] assess the implementation level of GHRM practices in Palestinian healthcare organisations, and their impact on sustainable performance. The research results show that the most influential practices were green hiring, and green training and involvement, the least influential green practice was green performance management and compensation [7].

The research of Esen and Ozsozgun Caliskan [8] is devoted to the effect of GHRM practices on environmental sustainability. The authors concluded that green movement in HR policies as recruitment, selection, training, and performance assessment can improve organization environmental performance.

Afum, Agyabeng-Mensah, Mensah, Mensah-Williams, Baah and Dacosta [9] investigate the combined effect of internal environmental management and GHRM on corporate reputation (CR), environmental performance (EP) and financial performance (FP). The result reveals, that internal environmental management has a significant effect on financial performance when implemented in isolation GHRM does not have a significant effect on it. The joint implementation of internal environmental management and GHRM give better results in terms of enriched corporate reputation, higher environmental performance and substantial financial performance improvement [9].

Jabbar and Abid [10] examine motivational factors of employees' environmental performance. The study elucidates that employees are more motivated to eco-initiatives by monetary and non-monetary rewards. Employees are more ready to take environmental initiatives when their managers encourage environmental ideas [10].

The results of the study [11] confirm the significant role of knowledge sharing in shaping innovation culture to improve business performance and build sustainable competitive advantage. The study findings could motivate HR managers and HR practitioners to place emphasis on environmental knowledge sharing and green corporate culture.

The results of research [12] show the direct effect of green recruitment, training, and development on organizational commitment. The study suggests that GHRM practices play a crucial role in the deployment of an environmental policy.

Raut, Gardas, Luthra, Narkhede and Mangla perform the analysis of GHRM indicators to identify the most significant ones in the automotive service sector [13]. The authors found that the most significant indicators are green organisational culture and adoption of green strategy and green training and development.

Indicator “green employee relations and union-management” highly depends on the rest of the indicators [13].

Although GHRM is of considerable interest to scientists, research on the practical aspects of implementing environmental practices in HRM remains limited and needs to be studied.

3. Methodology

Working hypotheses: first – the practice of developing GHRM policies in Ukraine has not become widespread (H1); second – there are no effective mechanisms for implementing GHRM policies (H2). To confirm or refute the working hypotheses, the authors conducted a sociological survey (in the form of questionnaires) from April 2021 to August 2021.

The main purpose of the study is to assess the development and implementation of GHRM policies and identify prospects for the dissemination of GHRM practices in Ukraine.

Objectives of the study:

- assessment of the level of respondents’ awareness with GHRM practices;
- assessment of the spread of GHRM policies development;
- assessment of the effectiveness of GHRM policy implementation;
- assessment of prospects for the spread of GHRM practices.

204 managers and HR specialists from Ukrainian companies took part in the survey.

For assessing respondents’ awareness of GHRM practices, we used a scale from 0 to 5 (0 – not aware at all, 5 – fully aware).

For assessing the spread of GHRM policies development, we used a standard symmetric scale of responses to the proposed statements: “strongly agree”, “rather agree”, “rather disagree”, “strongly disagree”, and “difficult to answer”.

Assessing respondents’ awareness of GHRM practices was analyzed based on statistical indicators: averages (arithmetic mean, median, mode), coefficients of variation and asymmetry, excess, etc.

4. Results

Table 1 contains the results of the statistical analysis of assessing respondents’ awareness of GHRM practices.

Table 1. Statistical indicators of assessing respondents’ awareness of GHRM practices.

Statistical indicators	Value
Arithmetic average	2.59
Standard error	0.11
Median	3
Mode	3
Standard deviation	1.56
Sample dispersion	2.45
Excess	-0.93
Asymmetry	-0.16
Interval	5
Minimum	0
Maximum	5
Total	528
Score	204

Source: constructed by the authors.

The statistical analysis indicates the average level of respondents' assessment of their awareness of GHRM practices. The calculated coefficient of variation is equal to 60.2% that is more than 33%. It indicates that respondents are heterogeneous according to an assessment of their awareness of GHRM practices. The asymmetry coefficient is negative (Table 1) and less (by modulo) than 0.25 ($|A| < 0.25$), indicating a low left asymmetry in the distribution of respondents' assessment of their awareness of GHRM practices.

A negative value of excess ($E_k < 0$) indicates that the distribution is flatter than normal. Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents by assessment of their awareness of GHRM practices.

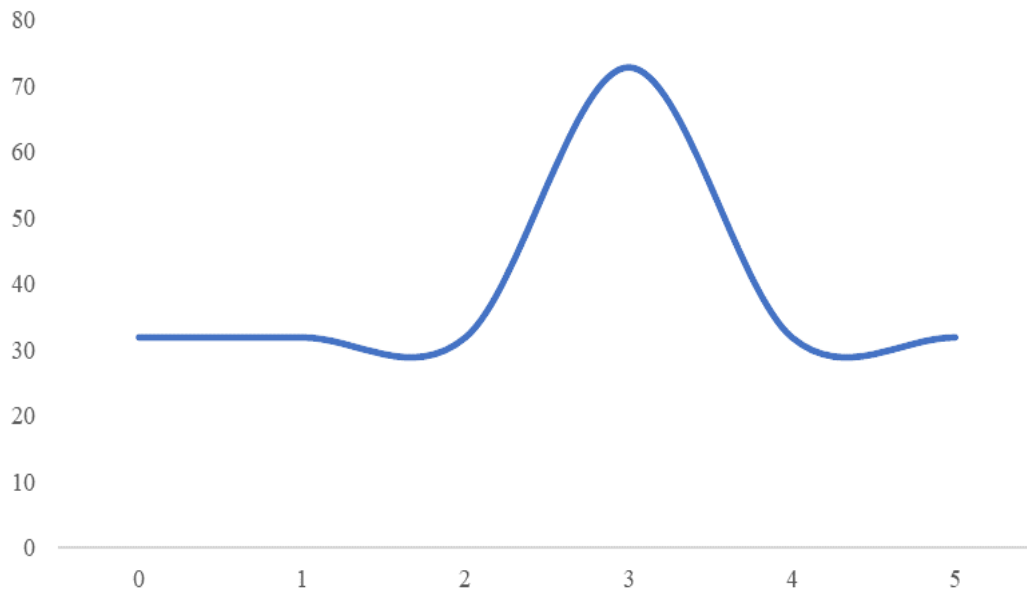


Figure 1. The distribution of respondents by assessment of their awareness of GHRM practices.

Thus, the results of the survey indicate the average level of respondents' assessment of their awareness of GHRM practice.

Table 2 contains the results of the survey on the implementation of GHRM policies in organizations. According to the data in Table 2, 45.1% of respondents confirmed that the organizations in which they work have GHRM policies. It is a good indicator considering the low level of managers' and HR specialists' awareness of GHRM practices.

At the same time, 41.2% of respondents affirmed that organizations have structural units responsible for implementing the environmental policies (centres of responsibility). Only 37.3% of respondents said that the organization identified positions responsible for environmental issues, such as green finance, GHRM. It indicates that some organizations that developed GHRM policies do not have departments and employees liable for their implementation. The lack of structural units and employees responsible for implementing the GHRM policies does not contribute to its practical implementation and, consequently, to implementing the GHRM practices. Only 31.4% of respondents stated that the organization defined the tasks, duties and responsibilities of employees involved in implementing environmental policies and included them in job descriptions. Consequently, some organizations, which appointed the responsible units for the GHRM policies implementation, did not develop the employees' tasks, duties and responsibilities.

The percentage of such organizations ranges from 6-10. The lack of regulation of the employees' tasks, duties and responsibilities does not facilitate the effective implementation of GHRM policies.

Table 2 The results of the survey on the implementation of GHRM policies in organizations.

Statements	Answers, % of respondents				
	strongly agree	rather agree	rather disagree	strongly disagree	difficult to answer
The organization has a GHRM policy	16.7	28.4	15.7	25.5	13.7
The organizational structure identifies the structural units responsible for the implementation of environmental policies (centres of responsibility)	22.5	18.6	10.8	36.3	11.8
The organization has positions responsible for environmental issues, such as green finance, GHRM	13.7	23.5	12.7	38.2	11.8
The organization defines the tasks, duties and responsibilities of employees involved in the implementation of environmental policy, and includes them in job descriptions	14.7	16.7	13.7	41.2	13.7
The organization plans the number of employees needed to implement environmental initiatives and activities	10.8	13.7	17.6	42.2	15.7
The organization has developed green (environmental) competencies and included them in job descriptions and job profiles (competency models)	8.8	18.6	17.6	40.2	14.7
The organization regularly informs employees about the implementation of green (environmental) policies	20.6	15.7	13.7	35.3	14.7
The organization involves employees in the formation of environmental policies and solving environmental problems	19.6	21.6	11.8	32.4	14.7
The organization surveys employees' opinions on corporate green practices	17.6	21.6	10.8	35.3	14.7
The organization plans to implement (improve) GHRM practices	24.5	17.6	8.8	16.7	32.4

The lack of practice in planning the number of staff required for implementing environmental initiatives and activities does not facilitate the effective implementation of GHRM policies as well. Only 24.5% of respondents indicated that the organization plans the number of employees needed to implement environmental initiatives and activities. Lack of the required number of employees can lead to non-fulfilment of certain tasks, improper performance, an increase of workload of existing employees, and, consequently, improper implementation of environmental initiatives. It can negatively affect the employees' efficiency and motivation. Redundancy of employees also has a number of negative consequences for the organization: increase in staff costs, reduction of business profitability, and the ability to invest in environmental issues.

In a survey, 27.5% of respondents stated that the organization developed green (environmental) competencies and included them in job descriptions and job profiles (competency models). Such practice contributes to the effective implementation of environmental policies in general and GHRM policies in particular. The development of green competencies makes it possible to include them in the requirements for candidates for vacant positions. It allows assessing candidates' environmental awareness and ability to green behaviour and selecting candidates familiar with environmental issues.

The practice of developing green (environmental) competencies makes it possible to prepare training programs focused on the development of green skills in employees, the acquisition of green knowledge and attitudes, and encourage employees to gain green skills.

The focus on acquiring green knowledge, skills and attitudes also facilitate developing a sustainable (green, environmentally friendly) corporate culture.

For assuring the effectiveness of GHRM policies, it is crucial to inform employees about its implementation. In a survey, 36.3% of respondents confirmed that the organization has such practices that indicate the transparency of GHRM policies.

A significant prerequisite for the effective implementation of GHRM policies is the involvement of employees in the development of environmental policies and the solution of environmental problems and the study of employees' views on corporate green practices. 41.2% of respondents said that the organization involves employees in the formation of environmental policies and solving environmental problems. In a survey, 39.2% of respondents confirmed that the organization surveys employees' opinions on corporate green practices.

It is necessary to pay attention to the low percentage of respondents (42.2%) who stated that the organization plans to introduce (improve) GHRM practices. It indicates a low level of social responsibility of business and public organizations in implementing environmental initiatives and encouraging employees to introduce green (environmental) practices.

The results of the survey confirmed the working hypotheses: the practice of developing GHRM policies in Ukraine has not become widespread (H1) and there are no effective mechanisms for implementing GHRM policies (H2).

5. Conclusions

The research of various scientists indicates that the GHRM practices implementation has a positive impact on the company's environmental policy, the formation of environmentally friendly employee behaviour and job performance. In this regard, business and public organizations must implement green (environmental) practices in HRM. However, the survey results showed the average level of respondents' assessment of their awareness of GHRM practices.

Regarding the existence of a GHRM policy, 45.1% of respondents said that the organizations in which they work have such policies. It is a good indicator considering the low level of managers' and HR specialists' awareness of GHRM practices. Despite the presence of GHRM policies in organizations, the study showed a lack of effective mechanisms and tools for their implementation:

- units and employees responsible for implementing the GHRM policy;
- regulation of tasks, duties and responsibilities of employees;
- practices of planning the number of employees required for the implementation of environmental initiatives and activities;
- development of green (environmental) competencies;
- informing employees about the GHRM policies implementation;
- involvement of employees in the formation of green policies and solving ecological problems;
- survey of employees' opinion on corporate green practices.

For disseminating the practices of developing and implementing GHRM policies, it is crucial to raise the awareness of managers and HR specialists. Relevant tools can be the organization of conferences, round tables, seminars, webinars, workshops on GHRM practices, the introduction of the discipline "GHRM" or modules in educational programs and curricula at universities and certification programs for HR professionals.

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