



GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN BANGLADESH: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The notion of 'green management' is a much talked issue and the 'go green' policies are adopting all over the world for the last few decades. Organizations in 21st century are much more conscious about the techniques to manage environment and Green Human Resource Management (GHRM or Green HRM) is one of them. In this study the authors try to highlight the concepts of Green HRM and its practices in the banking sector of Bangladesh. Green HRM can play a useful role in business in promoting environment related issues by adopting and following Green HR policies and practices. The objectives of the study are to assess and evaluate existing green human resource practices and provide some suggestions that can help the companies of Bangladesh for utilizing green human resource functions in order to achieve competitive advantage. This study tries to clarify the extent to which traditional HRM practices is reflected through the touch of green practices in each functions: job analysis, recruitment, selection, induction, performance appraisal, and reward management; and their contributions to the environmental sustainability. After the analysis, it has been found that the HR of this organization is adopting many environment friendly HR policies; it can introduce some more proactive green HR practices for making its sustainable programs perdurable.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Environment Management, Traditional HRM Practices, Human Resource Management Function

1. INTRODUCTION

Green Human Resource Management is emerging as an important thrust area for management which can have an enormous impact on people issues in an organization. The term 'green HR' is often used to refer to the contribution of HR policies and practices towards the broader corporate environmental agenda of protection and preservation of natural resources. There is a need for a proactive approach to environmental management across the world. Earlier success of a firm was strongly dependent on promotion of economic value. However today, organizations have to consider for the reduction of ecological footprints and give importance to social and environmental factors along with economical and financial factors in order to enable the organization to be successful in the corporate sector thereby enabling attainment of profit by the shareholders. The impact of our daily activities on the environment and the desire to go green has expanded from just individuals to organizations. Now a day, many organizations are volunteering to operate in a more environmentally responsible way, therefore in the near future; "being green" could become the norm. The awareness of green action can be demonstrated into natural environment, such as green product; green technology; green education; green life. Green

HRM comprises all activities, aimed at helping an organization carry out its agenda for Environment Management to enable it to reduce its carbon footprint and earn carbon credits, in areas concerning on boarding and acquisition of human resources, their induction, performance management, learning and development and compensation and reward management(Prasad 2013). Green human resource management (GHRM) research, defined as the HRM aspects of environmental management (EM), is relatively diverse and piecemeal.

Green HR has two essential elements: environmentally friendly HR practices and the preservation of knowledge capital (Prasad 2013). Most people say that Green HR involves reducing carbon footprint via less printing of paper, video conferencing and interviews, etc. Companies are quick to layoff when times are tough before realizing the future implications of losing that knowledge capital. Green HR initiatives help companies find alternative ways to cut cost without losing their top talent; furloughs, part time work, etc.

There is a growing need for the integration of environmental management into Human Resource (HR) and it is called Green HR. Many studies argued that system of environmental management can only be effectively implemented if the companies have the right people with the right skills and competencies. Therefore, the HR function becomes the driver of environmental sustainability within the organization by aligning its practices and policies with sustainability goals reflecting an environment focus. The HR strategy must reflect and inspire the ambitions of the HR team and other employees, aligning with the company's strategy, values and culture. According to Mandip (2012), Green HR is the use of Human Resource Management policies to promote the sustainable use of resources within business organizations and, more generally, promotes the cause of environmental sustainability.

Though many scholars have highlighted the significance of Green HRM in advancing environment-friendly behaviors among employees, it is still a less-researched area (Del Brío 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 Green HRM 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 (Pavitra Mishra, 2017). Due to the significance of this industry, it is a necessity to assess the Green human resource practices in a developing country like Bangladesh. The study also explore the impact of green HR practices on Rahimafrooz Bangladesh Ltd (RABL) where the impacts are shown by discussing the application of green HR on the HR functions as well as overall management system of RABL.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Green HR & Environment Management System

The term 'green HR' is most often used to refer to the contribution of people management policies and practices towards the broader corporate environmental agenda. Green HRM means using every employee interface in such a manner in order to promote and maintain sustainable business practices as well as creating awareness, which in turn, helps organizations to operate in an environmentally sustainable fashion. Typical green activities include video recruiting, or the use of online and video interviews, to minimize travel requirements While many employees often feel it is not their responsibility to protect the environment while they are at work, the new workforce of millennial are emphasizing environmental consciousness as they chose their

employers. There is also a broader opportunity to engage the workforce given that more and more people seek meaning and self-actualization in their jobs (Berry & Rondinelli, 1998). Other simple green actions include minimizing the amount of printed materials used in performance management, salary reviews and so on. While there is definitely a substantial amount of ‘green washing’ occurring in reducing waste, there are many opportunities here too. However, HR is never going to have a truly significant impact on a business through the improvement of HR processes alone so the greater opportunity is to contribute to the green agenda of the business as a whole.

The incorporation of environmental objectives and strategies into the overall strategic development goals of a company helps in arriving at an effective environment management system (Cherian & Jacob, 2012). There are a wide range of factors which influences the adoption of an environmental strategy by a company (Berry & Rondinelli, 1998) including financial performance (Sroufe, 2003), stakeholder pressure (González-Benito & González-Benito 2006) and corporate image (Sudin, 2011) emerging to be the most important reasons. There is also a great deal of empirical research which highlights the impact of environment management practices on performance of the organization using a number of different indicators (Crowe and Brennan, 2007, Yang et al, 2010; Iraldo et al., 2009).

2.2 Green Management Initiatives

In the past, sound economic performance of the firm was expected to guarantee corporate success by companies and its shareholders, but now it is no longer valid; economic and financial outcomes need to be accompanied by minimization of ecological footprints and increased attention to social and environmental aspects. Therefore, the new strategic issue, corporate environmentalism or green management emerged in 1990s and became a popular slogan internationally in 2000s (Lee, 2009). Green management is defined as the process whereby companies manage the environment by developing environmental management strategies (Lee, 2009) in which companies need to balance between industrial growth and safeguarding the natural environment so that future generation may thrive (Daily & Huang, 2001). This concept becomes a strategic dominant issue for businesses, especially multinational enterprises operating their business globally (Sudin, 2011). In summary, green management refers to the management of corporate interaction with, and impact upon, the environment, and it has gone beyond regulatory compliance and needs to include conceptual tools such as pollution prevention, product stewardship and corporate social responsibility (Hart, 2005; Siegel, 2009). Business firms play a key role in the issues of environmental management since they are part of our society and cannot be isolated from the environment, and in fact, they contribute most of the carbon footprints in the past (Liu, 2010). Application of innovative technology could alleviate the environmental deterioration by developing, for example, the biotech products and by searching for alternative energy to reduce the use of finite natural resources. Thus, business should put more effort into the research on innovative technology to minimize the impacts of environmental destruction by creating products that are nontoxic and less pollution to environment (Liu, 2010; Ozen & Kusku, 2008).

2.3 Green HRM - HR Factors affecting Green Management Initiatives

Many researchers, especially in the area of HRM, argued that the effectiveness and successful in any management innovation and strategic tools are depending on the availability and ability of their human resources employed in the strategic manners (Boselie et al., 2001; Paauwe & Boselie, 2003). HRM system is defined as a set of distinct but interrelated activities, functions,

and process that are directed at attracting, developing, and maintaining (or disposing of) a firm's human resources (Lado & Wilson, 1994).

Organization generally organizes HR practices into systems that are consistent with their culture and business strategy (Boselie et al., 2001). Many researchers agreed that HRM is the most effective tools which contribute to the creation of human capital, and in turn, contributes to organizational performance and competitive advantage (Boselie et al., 2001; Paauwe & Boselie, 2003). Currently, many corporations are implementing a proactive, strategic tool known as an EMS to gain competitive advantage (Daily & Huang, 2001). This system provides a structure that allows management of the firms the ability to better control the firm's environmental impacts (Florida & Davison, 2001). An EMS includes commitment and policy, planning, implementation, measurement and evaluation, review and improvement. Callenbach et al. (1993) argued that in order to carry out green management, employee must be inspired, empowered and environmentally aware of greening to be successful. On the other hand, to effectively implement green management initiatives and fostering environmental innovations, corporations require a high level of technical and management skills (Callenbach et. al., 1993; Jabbour & Jabbour, 2016). Among various benefits of Green HRM practices, one of the major advantages is that it can develop corporate image and brand. Green HR plays an important role in making the employees aware of and concerned for preservation of natural resources and contributes in pollution control, waste management and manufacture of eco-friendly products. Hence, researchers argues that to effectively implement green management initiatives through the implementation of EMS requires strategic implementation of HR systems that fit with organization's culture and long-term goals.

In an organization, from job design function to employee relations, HRM has gigantic potential in greening organization and its operations (Arulrajah et al, 2015). Following is the table that describes how the traditional HRM practices can be transformed into Green HRM practices.

HRM Functions	Green policies, procedures, or practices
Job analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion of environmental dimension in job description and job specification. - Highlighting the organization's policy through job circular. - Requiring employees green competencies as a special component in job specification.
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicating the employers' concern about green practices through recruitment message. - Giving priority to the candidates with green mindset.
Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selecting the candidates who are well aware of greening the job vacancies. - Preferring the candidates who in their private life were conscious and practiced green policies. - Asking the potential employees about green HRM policies and practices in the interview questions.
Induction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orient the employees to the organizational green policies and practices through induction process. - Make the new employees familiar with organization's green efforts.

	- Help them develop organizational citizenship behavior
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange training program both for managerial and non-managerial employees of the organization about the green practices both within and outside the organization. - Determine employees green training needs analysis. - Impart knowledge on green practices and policies by arranging seminars, programs in the organization.
Performance evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate that green practices as a criterion for performance evaluation of employees. - While evaluating the performance of individual employees, make sure that the green performance of that employee both individually and collectively considered
Rewards management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide employees with both financial and non-financial rewards for their green performance. - Among the financial rewards (incentives, bonus, and increment) are lucrative. - Among various non-financial rewards (certificate, recognition, and compliment) are noteworthy
Discipline management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish the organizational policies pertaining to the green practices. - Develop disciplinary system regarding the breach of environmental performance and green conduct within the organization.

3. OBJECTIVES

This paper has two objectives:

- I. to examine the existing green human resource management practices of Rahimafrooz Bangladesh Ltd (RABL) as a case study.
- II. to explore the impact of Green Human Resources Management on Rahimafrooz Bangladesh Ltd (RABL).

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The nature of this article is case study based. The case study method was used as it helps to explore an entire organization with all details that are necessary to carefully study the research problem and relate it to the activities of that organization (Zikmund, 2010). Here, the case study method helped the researchers to gather in depth knowledge regarding the sustainable initiatives undertaken by RABL. This study is designed to first take a look at the existing green human resource management practices and its impact on RABL. Both primary and secondary data have been used for data collection. This case study is based on the face-to-face interview with the manager of Human Resource Department and other personnel using an unstructured questionnaire who are the policy maker of the company. The sampling was purposive with an aim to get insightful response. The interview was taken focused on some important issues like; the concept of GHR, the importance and implementation process of GHR, etc. The following HR processes namely recruitment; performance management and appraisal; training and development; employment relations and compensation are covered in the study. Furthermore, the literature review in the relevant field, brochures of RABL, documents, and the company website

were the secondary sources of data for this study. Finally, due to time constraint, it was not possible to conduct extensive interviews and surveys which could make the research paper more informative.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 About Rahimafrooz Bangladesh Limited (RABL)

Rahimafrooz Bangladesh Ltd. (RABL) is the Group Parent Company that supports and guides the Strategic Business Units (SBU) from the Rahimafrooz Corporate Office (RACO). It ensures continuous management innovation, best utilization of technology, new initiatives, corporate governance and adoption of best global practices. Rahimafrooz has strengthened its market leadership at home while reaching out to international markets. Ranging from automotive aftermarket products, energy and power solutions, to a world class retail chain – the team at Rahimafrooz is committed to ensuring the best in quality standards.

5.2 Green Management Practices in RABL

Green HRM has emerged from companies engaging in practices related to protection of environment and maintaining ecological balance. Green HRM encompasses all activities aimed at helping an organization carry out its agenda for environment management to reduce its carbon footprint in areas concerns on boarding and acquisition of human resources, their induction, performance management, learning and development and compensation and reward management. The Green Human Resources Management (Green HRM) has emerged from companies engaging in practices related to protection of environment and maintaining ecological balance. Green HRM encompasses all activities aimed at helping an organization carry out its agenda for environment management to reduce its carbon footprint in areas concerns on boarding and acquisition of human resources, their induction, performance management, learning and development and compensation and reward management.

5.3 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (3Rs) in RABL

Rahimafrooz HR department strictly follows the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) in their company. In every three months they arrange a meeting about the use and utilization of 3Rs. Based on the use of 3Rs, RABL evaluates the performance of employees. A committee has been formed with the senior employees whose responsibility is to carry out the massage and communicate with employees about the application of 3Rs.

Reduce Practice in RABL

Source reduction is the most effective step of the 3Rs because it encourages people to think about their consumption. For this purpose, the employees of RABL always bear one principle: the easiest waste to manage is waste that is not generated in the first place. Reducing consumption automatically creates less waste, and reduces use of natural resources and energy to produce new goods and products. According to the policy of RABL, an effective strategy for achieving this goal involves setting clear and measurable targets, implementing appropriate measures and periodically assessing progress. This approach makes it easier for the employees of RABL to target efforts and measure the outcomes. The common reduce practice in RABL is to reduce paper use by programming automatic double-sided printing or setting up a dedicated printer using paper already printed on one side

Reuse Practice in RABL

Reusing means finding a second life for a product or using it repeatedly without necessarily transforming its appearance or properties. Repairing an item, using used goods or finding other uses for an item are various examples of reuse. The very common reuse practice in RABL is open envelopes carefully, cover the old address and reuse them if possible

Recycle Practice in RABL

Recycling means transforming waste in order to create new products rather than using virgin material. RABL started the practice of recycle by giving their used paper to a paper mill and recycle them for producing new papers.

5.4 Developing new corporate culture through GHR practices in RABL

The nature of corporate culture that exists in Rahimafroz Bangladesh Ltd is going to convert to green culture through green HR practice by deciding the degree to which the desired results from the employees are obtained. There is a growing need for organizations to be more “greener”. Therefore, the integration of environmental management into corporate culture to be more “greener” is a must. The adoption of these practices has been presented with a number of different advantages which would ultimately benefit the firm which has led to the emergence of “green and competitive” mantra.

HR function will become the driver of green culture within the organization by aligning its practices and policies with sustainability goals reflecting an eco-focus. Green HR policies focus on collective and individual capabilities to bring about green behavior and such policies aimed at developing an environmental corporate culture. The HR strategy of RABL reflects and inspires the ambitions of the HR team and other employees, aligning with the company’s strategy, values and culture, deliver sustainable returns to investors, address customer needs, identify and respond to emerging societal trends.

5.5 Impact of Green HRM practices in RABL

5.5.1 Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment refers to process of finding right people for the right job or function, usually undertake by Human Resource Department. So, suitability for a job is typically assessed by looking for skills. Therefore, RABL integrated the green environment issues into the recruitment process.

This involves monitoring the long-term competency requirements for the company, providing new employees with information about sustainable development policies and commitments, using recruitment procedures which support the equitable representation of applicants and recruits in terms of gender, age, racial and ethnic groups, sexual orientation, disabled people and other relevant groups.

- General job descriptions in RABL are used to specify a number of environmental aspects. These include environmental reporting roles and health and safety tasks. In the interview session of RABL, questions are also tailored to flesh out potential compatibility with the company’s green goals.

- In the recruitment of employees who are 'Green aware' becomes the part of the interview schedule. The employee perception about Green is vital as employees are willing to work in RABL only when they feel it adds to their value profile.
- RABL believes that when a firm presents a proactive stand towards protection of the environment then it would help to attract the Green applicants to the firm.
- RABL also believes that intention to pursue employment with the pro environmental company will be higher along with acceptance of a job offer. In terms of selection they prefer the employees who are ethically and environmentally responsible.
- The HR Department of RABL applies Green/EM (Environmental Management) job descriptions for employees. As higher level executives have to take greater responsibility for green initiatives, green goals are included in managerial job descriptions.
- While developing the competency model for talent, RABL includes environmental consciousness as one of the core competencies required of employees. Green job candidates, who comprise a large section of talented and knowledge, use green criteria when applying for jobs, and, therefore, companies like RABL having green practices can attract good talent.
- Preference in selection given to candidates who are 'Green aware', which becomes a part of the HR acquisition policy. Employers, having strong green brand are more likely to attract talent than those who do not have green philosophy.

5.5.2 Induction

Employee orientation programs in RABL are designed in such a way as to facilitate the integration of new employees into a culture of green consciousness. Induction programs should highlight an organization's concern for green issues of employees like their health, safety and green working conditions.

5.5.3 Learning and Development

Training, development and learning plans in RABL include programs, workshops and sessions to enable employees to develop and acquire knowledge in environment management, green skills and attitude. RABL pursues the following green management criteria for the learning and development of employees.

- Job rotation in green assignments is an essential part of career development plans of talented green managers of the future in RABL.
- Training contents in RABL are developed to increase employee competencies and knowledge in Environment Management. Extensive use is made of online and web-based training modules and interactive media as training tools for not only for environment management training but for other functional areas as well.
- For producing less carbon footprints RABL uses OLT (Online Learning Tool). It is a web base training where there is no need for paper pen documents.
- The trainer also provides training via online by using the skill soft software. RABL examined importance of environmental training in promoting business value.
- In order to manage effective green HR practices it is vital to promote environmental training in an organization as it presents essential knowledge for promoting green teams in an organization and presents them with the ability to deal with the different issues which emerge as a result of problems related to environment and the associated opportunities.
- In the process of employee training and development programs, RABL includes social and environmental issues at all levels. Still, focus of the training should be on developing competencies for different business functions. Environment- related aspects of safety, energy

efficiency, waste management and recycling become the focal points of green training in RABL. For the training, managers rely more on online course material and case studies rather than on printed handouts, thus further reducing use of paper.

- Green orientation programs for the newly hired employees are an integral part of the training and development process in RABL. The training itself has informed the employees about the green procedures and policies including the vision/mission statement of RABL, the sustainability oriented benefits, company-wide initiatives like reducing greenhouse gases, creating green products etc

- For RABL environmental awareness as a part of induction/orientation training especially for new employees. Moreover, green teams are trying to be established in each department, producing general awareness and specific training in environmental management, and to assess the training required in environmental management, a training needs analysis are done in terms of assessing what environmental knowledge and skills staff.

5.5.4 Performance Management System

Using performance management in green HR presents the challenges of how to measure environmental performance standards and indicators in performance management at all department levels and gaining useful data on the environmental performance of managers.

- Performance management systems of RABL are developed to include 'green' targets in the key performance areas (KPA). This can be translated into Green performance standards and Green behavior indicators which serve as yardsticks in performance appraisal of employees at all levels. They are successfully initiated by tying the performance evaluations to the job descriptions mentioning the specific green goals and tasks in RABL.

- Green targets, goals and responsibilities are established for managers and achievement of managers in accomplishing Green results is also included in appraisals of RABL.

- The roles of managers in achieving green outcomes included in appraisals such as familiarization, and encourage green HR learning. Managers of RABL ask employees to bring specific green ideas in department levels. These ideas are brainstormed together to include them into the goals for the upcoming year. Attaining these goals would be the basis of performance evaluation and link with payment and reward.

- Recently RABL has started a new indicator for evaluating performance named as Total Waste Minimization (TWM). Another reward is given on those exceeding the standards maybe be identified as 'Green Super Keepers' (exceptionally talented employees) and allocated rewards based on their green contributions.

5.5.5 Employee Involvement & participation

Employee involvement is creating an environment in which people have an impact on decisions and actions that affect their jobs. By encouraging employee involvement and participation will create entrepreneurs within the organization who are socially or ecologically oriented. Therefore, Employee involvement teams can not only bring about a change in how work processes are performed, but also improve worker health and safety too. The use of employee participation in green HR has been noted to help prevent pollution from workplaces.

There are two ways in which the workers of RABL participate on environmental projects:

- A suggestion programmed and problem solving circles takes place in RABL wherein the specialist staff is more involved in project initiation while line level workers are more likely to participate in project implementation.

- Other ways in which employees are encouraged to pursue green commuting habits like allowing flexible work weeks, establishing a car pool program, offering free or discounted free transportation passes, adding car sharing as a employee benefit and setting up transportation savings account. There are also changes in HR policy of RABL regarding the implementation of green HR in the company.

5.5.6 Compensation and Reward management

Compensation and reward management is recognizing contributions in green management. Compensation packages are customized to reward green skills acquisition and achievements by employees. The achievements that are used for green achievements of employees are basically-

1. Monetary- based,
2. Nonmonetary based and
3. Recognition- based rewards.

Compensation is linked to motivate the changing behaviors of employee in green performance. A benefit package and variable pay element is added to the compensation system of RABL. For reward management, packages are related to acquiring designated skills and competencies in performance over the long-term. In general, RABL develops reward systems to produce desirable behaviors in green performance, and doing so requires effective employment of both incentives and disincentives.

Disincentives include negative reinforcements like suspensions, criticisms and warnings and needed to get employees to make environmental improvements. On the other hand, if employees are engaged in the handling of hazardous waste RABL has a policy to give them positive rewards such as appreciation from supervisors and top level management, certificates, appreciation letter etc. which help to motivate employees towards environmental improvements. HRD in RABL plays a central role in creating awareness about environment management besides taking the lead in implementing Green HR practices as part of the bigger role to save planet earth.

5.6. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The HR Department of RBL successfully applies Green HRM for job descriptions of the employees. As higher level executives have to take greater responsibility for green initiatives, green goals are included in their managerial job descriptions in RABL. Though green HR is applied for reducing cost in RBL, still the authority of the company is working to get the highest result from it. For this purpose, RABL may form a special team consisting of HR personnel who will responsible only for implementing and controlling the Green HR practices in the company. It may reduce both cost and time of the company. The Green HR initiatives of RBL needs to provide more time for pilot testing, research and implementation of the Green HR process. The Green Hr process of RBL is not fully successful as all level of employees is not aware, involved and interested in this process. Special training program may be arranged by RABL for the existing employees of all levels to make them understand the importance of GHR. RABL puts a great effort for maintaining a positive public image by undertaking environmental initiatives. They provide financial rewards for green conscious employees of the company. In order to motivate employee for self participation in Green HR practice, RABL may take an initiative to give reward as a Green Employer brand along with monetary support. Rahimafrooz Bangladesh Ltd. may also involve the employees in formulating environmental strategy, so that they can create and expand the knowledge needed to apply green management. The company may make a

virtue of their environmental awareness, building advertising campaigns around it in the belief that customers prefer dealing with socially responsible businesses.

5.7. SCOPE OF FUTURE RESEARCH

Green human resource management is an emerging concept throughout the world of HR practice. The concept of green firms is new to Bangladesh. But within a short time, many green firms have been established throughout the country. It involves undertaking environment-friendly HR initiatives resulting in greater efficiencies, lower costs and better employee engagement and retention which in turn, help organizations. RABL's green initiatives are very appreciating. But still it can take some more measures to maintain and preserve its sustainable initiatives. This study will assist to understand the current scenario, reduce the fallacies regarding GHR practices and create a scope of further research on these issues. This study will also help to redefine the concept regarding green human resource practices in a developing country like Bangladesh. Green HRM is a very desirous issue to all the stakeholders of HRM. The practitioners and employers can have a profound impact on linking green HRM with the environmentally sustainable programs like waste management, reducing CFC, recycling and reuse. They can encourage the participation of employees and unions to implement those combined organizational and environmental strategy to safeguard employees' health and well being. Further research can be conducted by the academicians in this area covering additional data on the knowledge base and practical implications of green HRM practices for environmental sustainability.

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