



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

(Volume 4, Issue 1)

Available online at: www.ijarnd.com

Green Human Resource Management– A leap towards sustainability

Reshma Dingra¹, Dr. G. Padmavathy²

¹Student, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh

²Assistant Professor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh

ABSTRACT

'Green' today has become a buzz word only due to the corporates and the individuals understanding that the consumption levels of resources made by them are higher than what is available. This justifies the fact that there is enough for the world's need but not enough for the world's greed. From this emerged the concept of sustainability and greening. Green earlier was important only to the non-governmental organisations because their work style was focused on societal welfare which included the optimal utilisation of the available resources. But, slowly the same responsibility of optimally utilising resources was taken up by various industries. Here, at an industrial level, measures were taken to control pollution and thus, the entire industry worked towards it. However, it was never imagined that the same zeal of going green would percolate to all the management functions of the organisations. The human resource function is one of them has largely adopted this greening factor that leads to the rise of the term or the method of 'Green Human Resource Management' also known as GHRM. Today the same is not just a method adopted to reduce the carbon footprint or to optimally utilise resources, but, is also a factor of competitive advantage. It has proved not just sustainability but has also lead to an increase in the profits of the firms along with increased goodwill. The study done on the same lines wishes to fulfil four main objectives, First of them was to identify & explore the awareness levels of Green HRM among the employees in an organisation. A sample size of 146 respondents was taken into consideration in order to fulfil this objective. The second one is to analyse the views of employees on Green HRM and its effectiveness in organisational growth and environmental sustainability. The third was to identify a few Green HRM practices incorporated in various corporates across cities in India. The fourth was to understand whether (if yes, how) Green HRM practices impact employees and the environment. The second, third and fourth objectives were fulfilled by conducting this study on a mixture of both public and private sector companies located in Bangalore and Chennai. The study then concludes with suggestions to corporates regarding the implementation of green human resource practices leading to increased profitability.

Keywords— Green, Green Human Resource Management, Sustainability

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at introducing the reader to a series of cases in which there is an implementation of 'green human resource management' in various companies with significant success in its results and outcomes. Some of these companies will include HCL Technologies, Wipro, Suzlon Energy, IT firms at Pune (India), Tata Motors, automobile organizations, Maruti Suzuki, Mahindra, Menengai Oil Refinery Limited Nakuru, Kenya and the present scenario of other industries with respect of Green Human Resource Management implementation. Some of these organizations also have a history of being indicted for dumping large volumes of hazardous electronic waste in illegal recycling units in Bangalore. But today the very same companies are willing to work towards 'greening' their image and initiating activities that would enable them to work to achieving green goals or sustainable goals. Also implementing green or sustainable practices in companies is a need of the hour to ensure that the company remains in the market with an ability to compete with a wide range of other firms in existence.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To state and compare the green practices incorporated by multinational companies.
- To analyse the various factors that affect the incorporation of green human resource practices in various organisations through a Kano Model.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Green on a day-to-day basis is spoken off in referral to nature. It is, in general, used as an adjective or a noun. However, the dictionaries speak of it with different meanings. For example, the "Collins Birmingham University English Language Dictionary" defines 'green' as "an area of land covered with grass, plants and trees and not houses or factories". It is also referred to as a colour of grass or leaves. The Oxford Paperback dictionary defines 'green' as "the colour between blue and yellow". Green may mean different things to different people but for an environmentalist or nature lover, green refers to something related to the nature of the natural environment. However, in the context of managing people, it has four different meanings: natural environment preservation, natural environment conservation, environmental pollution avoidance and minimization, generation of gardens and more natural looking like places.

In the context of green practices, an individual would either have to play the role of a preservationist, or a conservationist, a non-polluter or maker. This implies that a green employee would have to be a nature lover or an eco-activist. The meaning of green also differs from person to person and from organization to organization. (Arulrajah, 2014) A green workplace is that which environmentally sensitive, resource efficient and socially responsible is. Employees in many organizations are stimulated to achieve environmental sustainability goals using the most suitable human resource practices. (Tiwari, 2017). There are also three major definitions that are to be understood in order to understand the purpose of this paper.

3.1 Green

The term green refers to something relevant to nature or natural environment. In the context of this research, the term green is used with reference to the sustainable practices that are to be implemented with the general human resource functions.

3.2 Human Resource Management

The term ‘Human Resource Management’ here refers to the way the activities of recruitment, selection, training, and performance appraisal carried out in an organization, a firm or a company.

3.3 Green Human Resource Management

The term ‘Green Human Resource Management’ refers to the incorporation of human resource practices that are environmentally friendly for the sustainable use of resources that would result in more efficiency, less wastage, improved job-related attitude, lower costs, improved employee performance and greater retention rates of employees.

4. ORGANIZATIONS UNDERSTUDY



4.1 Case 1: Tata Motors

Tata Motors is the largest company in India with a renowned global existence. Also, it is one of the most outstanding players in the passenger vehicle market. Tata Tiago (3.5-star rating), Tata Nexon (3.5-star rating), Tata Tiago JTP (4-star rating) are some of Tata’s well known and well-sold brand of cars. It is one of the most outstanding players in the passenger vehicle market and also the leader in the commercial vehicle segment. According to the Annual Sustainability Report from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, one of the values which Tata Motors is standing by till today is its concern for the environment.

Therefore, as a part of its sustainability activities, the organization sees “sustainable mobility” as the future. In order to cope with this future, the organization is looking, rather has already started the

- Manufacturing of eco-friendly CNG vehicles and electric vehicles.
- Tata Motors has also supplied CNG buses in Delhi to support their idea of commitment towards a greener tomorrow.
- Another milestone in the environment sustainable journey of Tata Motors is the Water foot-printing exercise which was completed by the prestigious Water Footprint Network (WFN) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC).
- This initiative helped to institute a platform to launch intensive water conservation measures. Tata Motors has the label by the Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development.

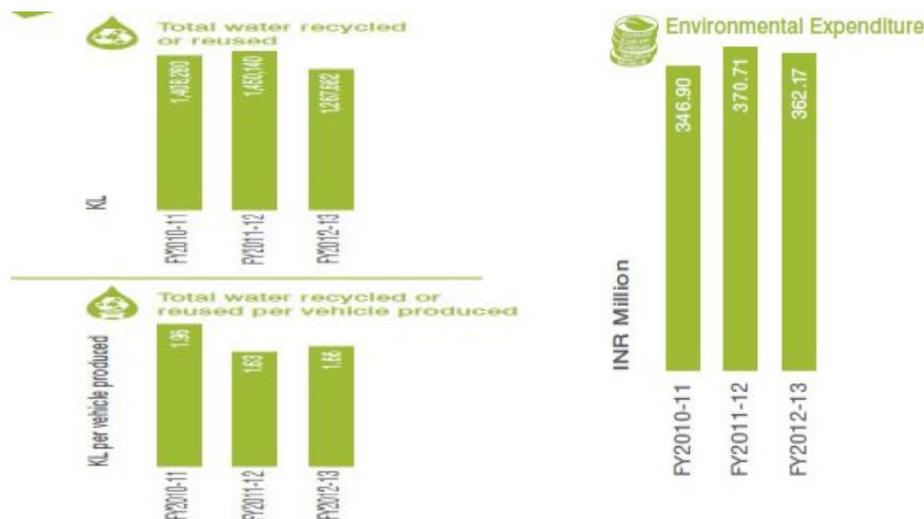


Fig. 1: Corporate Sustainability Report, Tata Motors, 2012-13

Source: *Green HRM – Engaging Human Resource in reducing carbon footprint and enhancing environmental sustainability: A case study approach.* (Kapil, 2015)

The statistical data as per the report states that the company leaves no stone unturned in order to ensure that there is either no or the least damage that they cause to the environment through the sustainable initiatives taken by them. It also shows that there is a contribution made towards the same goal from the employees’ perspective (employee involvement) indicating that the organization is serious in its attempt to be more environmentally friendly.

4.2 Case 2: Maruti Suzuki



Maruti Suzuki is the foremost manufacturer of passenger cars in India. The company came into being in 1981 as a joint venture between the Government of India and Suzuki Motor Corporation, Japan. A point to be noted about the company is that it has a separate department in its engineering division called the ‘Fuels and Frontier Technologies’. The company also believes in the philosophy of, ‘fewer, lighter, shorter and neater’ in its manufacturing units which ensures the best possible utilization of energy, water and other resources.

Green Initiatives:

- The usage of natural gas at its plants which is environment pleasant. The street lights at Gurgaon and Manesar plants function on solar energy.
- Nearly half of the water needed at the manufacturing units is met through recycled water.
- Like most car manufacturers, hazardous waste is sent to the cement industry for further processing.
- A consistent effort is made at every level to improve the designs to include better technological facilities which are in accordance with the environmental regulatory and governing bodies.
- Maruti Suzuki was the foremost company to put forward factory fitted CNG vehicles and offers six vehicles with CNG option.

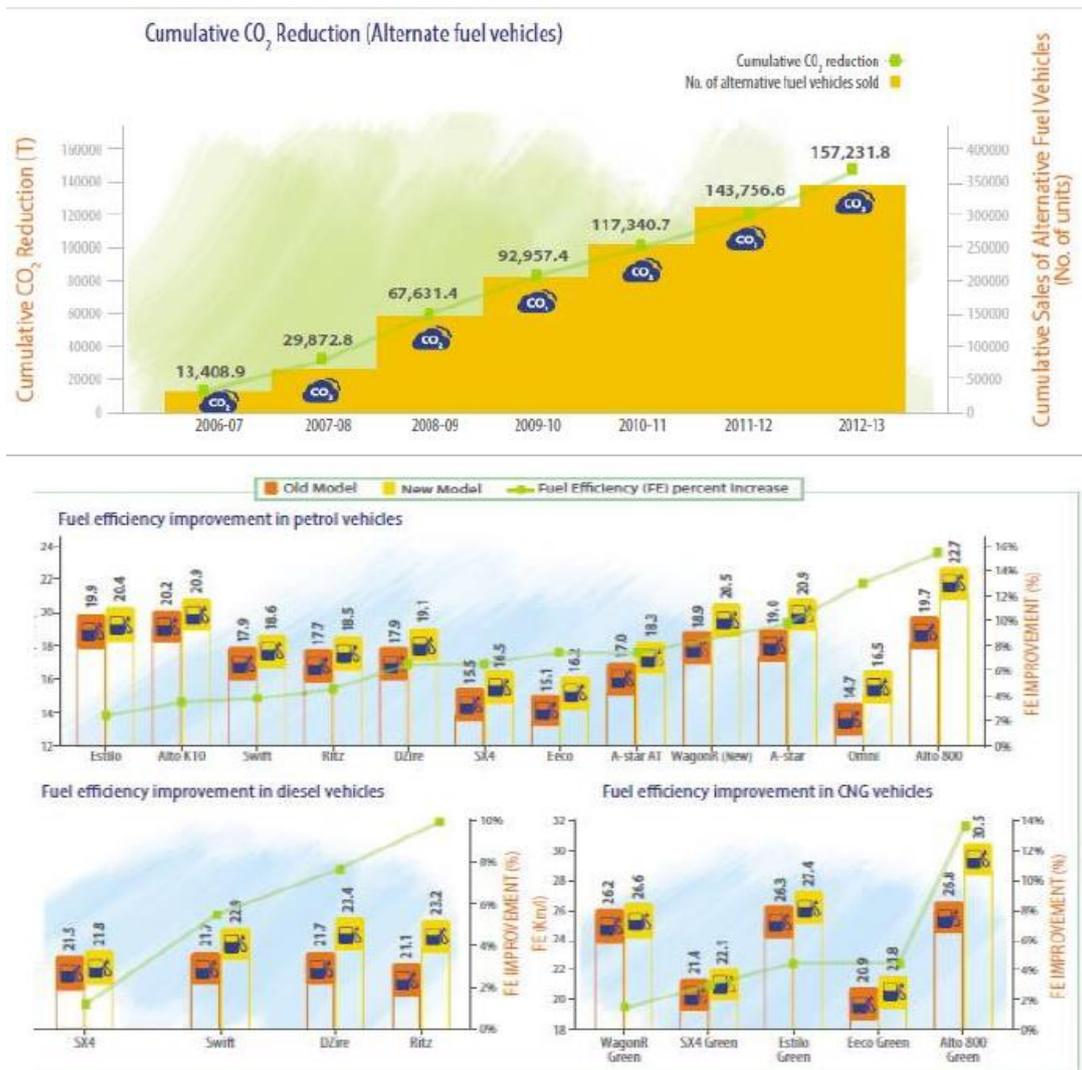


Fig. 2: Sustainability report 2012-2013, Maruti Suzuki

Source: (Kapil, 2015)

The data suggest that Maruti Suzuki:

- Is one of the first car manufacturers in India who has invested in getting their employees trained for energy efficient materials.
- Over the years, it has come out with fuel-efficient vehicles and the fuel efficiency percentage is rising every year.
- It has also made sure that variants are available in the market which is CNG driven hence, more environment-friendly.
- Because of the emergence of alternative fuel technologies, the company was able to reduce the CO₂ emissions over the years.

All in all, the organization is trying to implement its vision of being eco-sustainable through all its employees and other stakeholders.

4.3 Case 3: Mahindra



Mahindra’s approach to sustainability is its new way of thinking. The company has clearly stated that sustainability is important and strategic to its business. It ensures that all its stakeholders are actively involved in being ecologically sensitive to the needs of the environment. The company has adopted the approach of ‘responsible product development’. This approach involves customer safety and also ensures a reduction in the environmental footprint. To improve its eco-efficiency, goals and objectives were set around water conservation, optimum utilization of energy, biodiversity preservation, reduction in the amount of waste generated and greenhouse emissions. Employees are continuously trained in those areas which enhance their knowledge on the issues of sustainability. It has been observed that over the years, employees volunteering for large scale developmental sustainable projects have been on the rise.

Green Initiatives:

- Zero emission racing car – CHALLENGER
This was Mahindra’s first E-car that set higher standards for the level of sustainability required in organizations today. It is an all-electric, zero emission racing car that speeds up to 225 kmph. Apart from this, Mahindra’s other brand of cars like Verito Vibe, Xylo, XUV 500 and Bolero Pickup are also fuel efficient without any compromise on power.
- Substituting diesel with solar power
The company substitutes the use of power with that of solar energy by setting up solar power plants. This also enabled Mahindra’s EPC division, the solar team, became the largest solar EPC player in India.
- Water Management
An important part of sustainability is the optimum utilization of water so as to avoid wastage through steps like rainwater harvesting. The company understanding the need for water management has installed water-saving taps at the Nasik plant to reduce water wastage apart from rainwater harvesting that saved 360KL of water after its implementation.

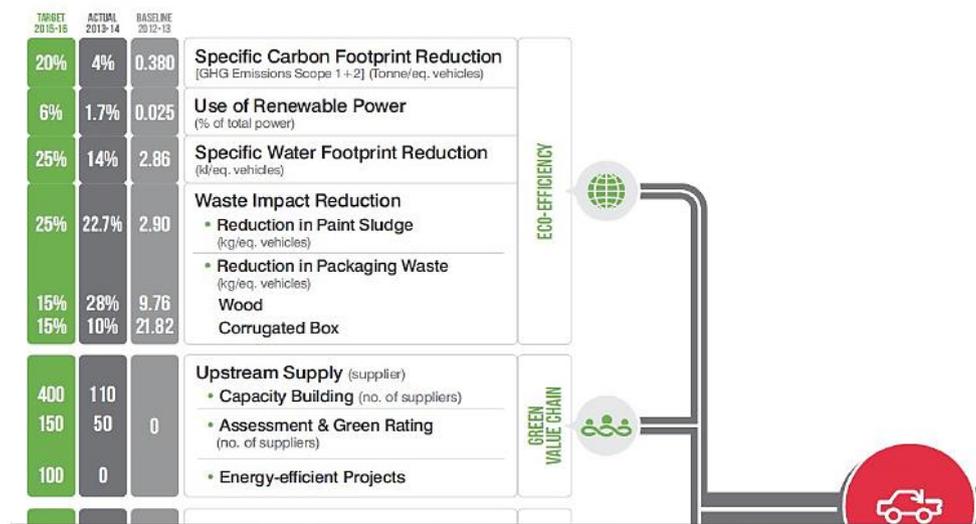


Fig. 3: Sustainability review, Mahindra, 2013-2014

Source: (Kapil, 2015)

Mahindra has started manufacturing electric cars, with superb mileage, to reduce the carbon footprint. It has inculcated the concept of the Green value chain, thereby adding green value at every step of the model. The projects taken up are more energy efficient and the carbon and water footprint is also decreasing. The company encourages the use of renewable resources and effective water management. Reduction of waste through any source, whether hazardous or other packaging material and paint sludge etc. is handled with utmost care. Mahindra, through its way of thinking, is making efforts towards environmentally sustainable methods and adding greener value to the ecology.

4.4 Case 4: Walmart

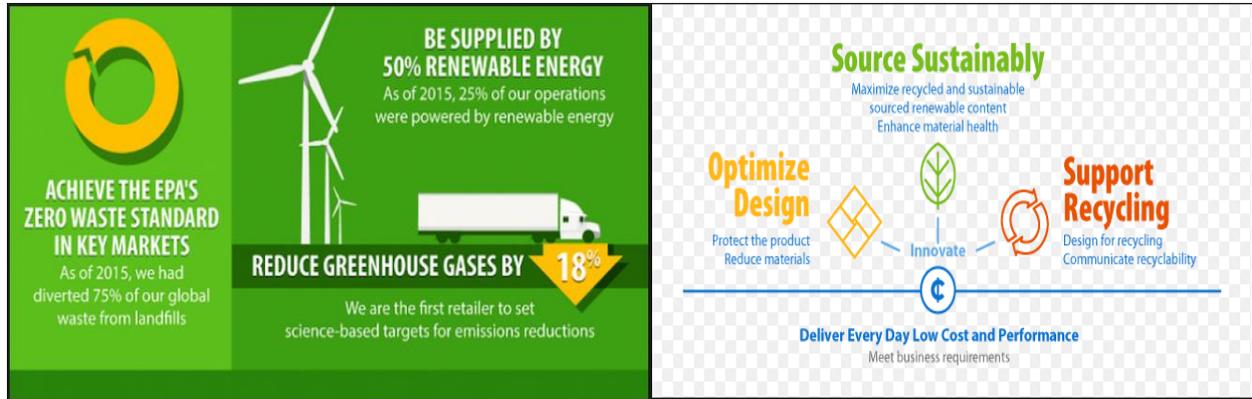


Walmart Inc. is an American multinational retail corporation that operates a chain of hypermarkets, discount department stores, and grocery stores. Headquartered in Bentonville, Arkansas, the company was founded by Sam Walton in 1962 and incorporated on October 31, 1969. “Always low prices” is Walmart’s logo and this is what has made it most popular in many countries across the world. With a single discount store and the simple idea of selling more for less, the company has grown over the last 50 years into the largest retailer in the world. Each week, nearly 265 million customers and members visit their stores. Today the company has more than 11,200 stores under 55 banners in 27 countries and e-commerce websites in 10 countries.

Today Walmart lives up to “supply 100 percent by renewable energy, create zero waste and sell products that sustain people and the environment.” Also, the company has a ‘volunteer associate sustainability program’ that asks their associates just a simple question that helps them understand if they would want to really make a difference in terms of individual health, the community

or the natural environment. Through this initiative, Walmart has successfully been able to engage approximately half of its U.S associates in other markets such as Brazil and Canada to take some kind of action. That’s at least 500,000 people around the world focusing on wellness, their community and the environment.

As per the CEO of Walmart, this kind of an initiative taken is now leading to a rise in affinity groups that emerge around issues like recycling or water conservation which includes the participation of the associates and management. Also as a part of the individual contribution that a significant number of employees decided to quit smoking and also decided for a vigorous weight loss program. This indicates that the company not only starts off with the management level initiatives but also enables and encourages individuals to significantly contribute to the same.



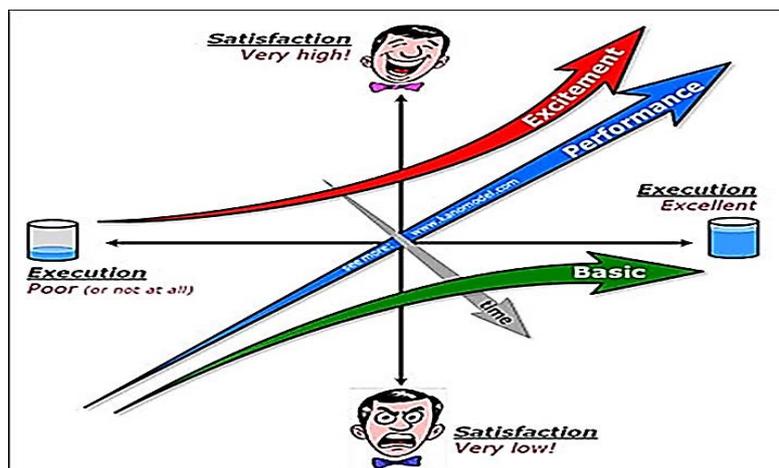
The above eight cases speak about how the companies have adopted green practices towards sustainability leading to an overall benefit for the organization and its employees. Also, most of these companies have involved employees in these practices which has not just increased employee participation but also increased employee satisfaction and employee retention rates over the past few years. A comparative analysis will facilitate a better understanding.

5. COMMON PRACTICES USED BY THE COMPANIES ABOVE

Tata Motors	Maruti Suzuki
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturing of CNG and eco-friendly vehicles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maruti Suzuki was the foremost company to put forward factory fitted CNG vehicles and offers six vehicles with CNG option.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tata Motors is the Water foot-printing exercise which was completed by the prestigious Water Footprint Network (WFN) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). Launched intensive water conservation measures and does the majority of the operations done with the recycled water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly half of the water needed at the manufacturing units is met through recycled water.

6. THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN ORGANISATIONS (using the Kano Model)

The Kano model is a theory for product development and customer satisfaction. It is a model that was developed by Noriaki Kano in the 1980s. It allows a company to classify its product’s features depending on the value they provide to their users. Apart from this, it also allows the development teams to understand which of the product’s features are unnecessary or superfluous, thus avoiding wastage of valuable time, money and energy that are certain in order to create and maintain them. The main purpose of this model is to:



- Communicate five universal categories of customer requirements that all product and service developers need to be aware of in order to remain competitive
- Show how each of these can influence satisfaction and dissatisfaction (in this case effectiveness and ineffectiveness)
- Show how value is created by one of the categories, the value is added by two categories and how two other categories detract from value.
- Help the organisations understand their own customers’ needs (in this case the environmental and the employee needs) better than they understand their own needs.
- Help organisations understand and classify the customer needs into the appropriate categories so that the development efforts on one of these can be prioritized.

The Kano model also consists of three basic attributes that it assigns to products and services. They include the threshold attributes, performance attributes and excitement attributes.

- **Threshold Attributes**– These attributes comprise the basic features that a customer or customers would require from a product.
- **Performance Attributes**– These attributes may not be essential in a product but may increase a customer’s enjoyment.
- **Excitement Attributes**– These attributes consist of a surprise element or elements of a product or a service that may delight a customer or customers.

Hence in order to develop effective Kano model customers, key preferences and expectations are to be taken into consideration. In this case, the green practices that increase the effectiveness of the employees and the practices have to be understood for an effective Kano analysis.

Findings from the Kano Model

The Kano model, in this case, talks about the level of effectiveness of implementing GHRM in organisations today. There are two major aspects that it talks about which refers to an excellent execution, high effectiveness, poor execution and low effectiveness. The scatter plot generated using the stated importance and derived importance and the classification using the Kano Model is given as:

- **The Basic Factors:** The elementary or the basic factors are the ones that enable a company to adopt GHRM practices. These factors do not create delight in the employees about its adoption, but its absence may lead to dissatisfaction. Thus these are must be factors.
- **The Performance Factors:** These factors lead to enhanced levels of effectiveness of a particular strategy implemented in an organization. With an increase or an improvement in the strategy the level of effectiveness also increases. Green Values and employee wellbeing are the performance factors.
- **The Excellent Factors/Delighters:** These are the factors that encourage an organisation to adopt GHRM. As the name itself suggests that they have an element of surprise in them. In this case, the excellent factors involve the inclusion of the green practices in performance metrics, performance appraisal, provides training before green practices are implemented, include green human resource practices in recruitment, enhance GHRM knowledge of employees and also provide green initiatives to employees who come up with green ideas.
- **Indifferent Factors:** Some of the factors though present do not really to a great extent influence the implementation or the adoption of a particular strategy, such factors are called indifferent factors. Few of these indifferent factors identified from this study are wastage is unacceptable, wasting energy, EHRM implementation and management participation. In this case management participation though necessary is falling under the indifferent factor, this implies that it is not just enough if the top management practices green human resource management, but it also necessary for them to ensure that the same is followed down the lane to the lower management levels.

Kano Model comprising factors

Excellent factors	Performance factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Metrics • KPI • Performance Appraisal • Pre Training • Recruitment • Green Initiatives • GHRM Knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Values • Employee Well being • Green Values considered
Indifferent factors	Basic factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wastage unacceptable • Wasting Energy • Management Participation • EHRM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obligation towards environmental degradation • E payslips • Obligation towards waste reduction • Appraisal letters

Source: Based on the Kano Model output of SPSS editor

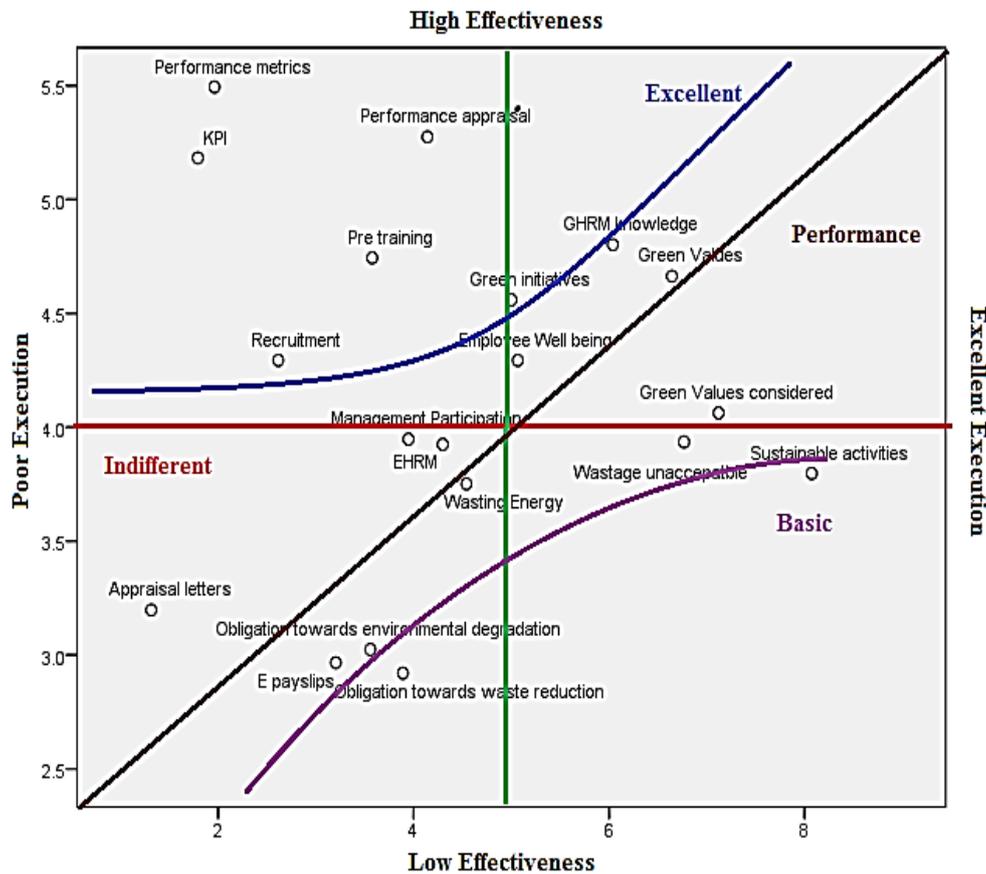


Fig. 4: Kano Model as generated by SPSS editor

The factors using the Kano Model suggest various basic, excellent, performance and indifferent factors that drive an organisation to adopt green human resource management practices. These findings pertain to the variables that are included in each factor that can enhance the understanding of the organizations and its level of need to implement GHRM.

7. SUGGESTIONS FOR BETTER GREEN PRACTICES TO BE FOLLOWED

- *Increased use of renewable and sustainable fuels for electric power generation:* This could reduce carbon emissions and other greenhouse gas emissions that will reduce the current reliance on coal-burning central station power plants. Also, such fuels offer an alternate for nuclear power.
- *Carbon regulations and policies:* this refers to limiting the carbon emissions by establishing certain regulations on vehicle carbon emissions leading to the development and adoption of cleaner and advanced energy systems.
- *From an employee viewpoint:*
 1. Employees can be a major part of deciding the various green initiatives that the company can take.
 2. Managerial level employees can be adequately trained to implement green Human Resource practices to train the employees.
 3. Financial initiatives can be given to employees encouraging green behaviour.
 4. Also, employees can be given the freedom to create or modify processes so as to ensure that they are eco-friendly within the organizational framework and policy.
- *General initiatives:*
 1. Conducting an annual “Going Green” or “Sustainable Organization” surveys.
 2. Go Paperless and find an alternative instead.
 3. Reduce commuting and encourage carpooling.
 4. Reduce business travel and encourage teleconferencing instead.
 5. Explore opportunities for implementing alternative energy sources. (Jain, 2016)

The other most beneficial initiative that a company could take to dispose of the waste generated will be to give it to the cement industries and have them process it for their further operations. This is because the cement industry is observed to have a waste treating plant that treats waste at a very high temperature. This enables the waste to decompose and the same is then used for other purposes without causing any harm to the environment. For example, Maruti Suzuki like most car manufactures transports its waste to the cement industries for further processing.

8. CONCLUSION

“Green” today as a world is important today in order to ensure that the resources consumed by individuals in organizations (employees) are done in an optimal manner. This would not only enable companies to increase their sustainability indexes but will also enable them to lower costs in terms of procuring material that gets consumed faster otherwise.

The companies apart from having a competitive advantage over the others because of the implementation of green practices can also have a positive effect on the environment leading to a reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles (by encouraging their employees to use the public transport and providing them with bus and train passes), reduction of emissions from the companies and also reusing, or recycling the waste generated so as to cause a least possible damage to the environment even if released.

Greening, the environment can also be done more effectively only when the same innovative practices are implemented in every function of the organization such that the world becomes a much better and a happier place to live in.

9. REFERENCES

- [1] Arulrajah, H. (2014). Green Human Resource Management: Simplified general reflections. *Internal Business Research*, 101-112.
- [2] Greenpeace Magazine. (2012, November). *Guide to greener electronics*.
- [3] Jain, M. A. (2016). Green Human Resource Management Concept in Indian Industries - Present Scenario. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Allied Research Review and Practices*, 171 - 181.
- [4] Kapil, P. (2015). Green HRM - Engaging Human Resource in reducing carbon footprint and enhancing environment sustainability: A case study based approach. *International Journal of Engineering Technology Science and Research*, 5-14.
- [5] Ridhi Sharma, N. G. (2013). Green HRM: An innovative approach to environmental sustainability. *Twelfth AIMS International Conference on Management*, (pp. 825-830).
- [6] Tiwari, D. (2017). Green HRM - A way to greening the environment. *IOSR - Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 45-53.