GREEN RECRUITMENT: A NEW-FANGLED APPROACH TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT

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ABSTRACT

This review article recaps the basic concepts of Green Recruitment practices practiced in Indian Organizations and gives a summing up of prior researchers to offer an effective and efficient understanding of the same for this global competitive business environment. Green recruitment is the process of hiring candidates with knowledge, skills, approaches, and behaviors that identify with environmental management systems within an organization. It is a system where more accent is provided to the environmental aspects and making it a major element of the organization, as the society is nowadays more worried towards the existing environmental issues. Moreover, today the business environment has been forced to undergo swift changes and the organizations which do not realize and acclimate those changes on time find very hard chances to survive. In this regard, organizations have started realizing and understanding the importance of green recruitment, since it has also been proved as an effective strategy to brand themselves for attracting and retaining the talent.

KEYWORDS: *Environmental Management, Environmental Protection, Green Policies, Talent Management, Employer Branding, Green Employer & Job Portals*

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INTRODUCTION

It is well known that the environment has undergone drastic changes and most of the countries have started realizing the importance of safeguarding our environment. In the same way, the corporate world today have started adopting green practices in all their functional areas as an initiative to protect the environment. Especially, the human resource departments have a great role to play in transforming the organizations into green, since they have the responsibility of acquiring and maintaining the workforce with a sense of awareness of the most serious and current issues including political, social and environmental. Hence, there exists a powerful competition among the organizations to become green thereby boosting their recruiting leverage to attract and retain most talented, innovative workforce possessing more environmentally conscious. It is also obvious that the job aspirants today are very much concerned about the most common environmental issues. The employee perception is vital as employees are willing to work in a firm only when they feel it adds to their value profile (Dechant and Altman, 1994). Nowadays the job aspirants have started realizing the need for environmental protection and they strongly perceive that the environmental initiatives taken by the organizations considerably advance their brand image. Hence the recruiters are required to make their firm's green initiative a critical element to brand themselves and attract the potential aspirants. The concept of Green Recruitment was evolved in this way.

However, there is no universal definition of Green Recruitment process. According to John Sullivan, "Green Recruitment is an innovative idea through which companies leverage their environmental stance, using it as an important strategy for recruitment". It is the process of hiring individuals with knowledge, skills, approaches, and

behaviors that identify with environmental management systems within an organization. It focuses on paperless recruitment process to ensure minimum impact in the environment where the environmental protection focus is given more importance within the organization. Hence, many organizations have started adapting green recruitment as an innovation to leverage their environmental protection attitude, thereby appealing it as a significant strategy for their effective recruitment processes. Wehrmeyer (1996) found that recruitment practices can support effective environmental management by making sure that new entrants are familiar with an organization environmental culture and are capable of maintaining its environmental values. Further today, the majority of the recruitment professionals are also eager and passionate to work for an environment friendly organization. Organizations when recruiting candidates with strategy of green bend, find it more comfortable to induct professionals who are already familiar with the basics like recycling, conservation and creating more logical world.

The green strategy of recruitment makes the employee to follow green practices in achieving the environmental goals and other parameters of sustainability as claimed. Hence nowadays, in many organizations, the recruitment is followed as paperless interviews in eco-friendly locations. There cruiterers carry out the green policies as a part of their corporate policies to achieve the goals of their organizations. Most important benefit dimensions of human resource and sustainability are retention and satisfaction (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee &Eberly, 2008). Attracting high-quality staff is a key HR challenge in the “war for talent” (Renwick et al., 2013). Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, &Eberly (2008) in their study on turnover and retention of employees argue that the most important benefit dimensions of HR and sustainability are retention/recruitment and satisfaction. 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. Firms have started to recognize the fact that gaining a reputation as a green employer is an effective way to attract new talent (Phillips, 2007; Stringer, 2009). Organizations such as TCS, WIPRO, Siemens, BASF, Bayer, ITC and Mannesmann use environmental activities and a green image to attract high-quality staff. The Rover Group carmaker, in Britain, makes environmental responsibilities and qualifications part of every job profile (Wehrmeyer, 1996). Many organizations today have even started including green job descriptions with environmental aspects in the recruitment agenda. With this information, we can conclude that green recruitment process definitely makes the employers be different from others and further escalate their chances of attracting and retaining the talented candidates after induction.

Reasons for Green Recruiting

Nowadays, many job seekers and employees are very much concerned about the environmental issues. They apply for jobs and accept offers only based on the environmental credentials of a company and its position concerning profit, environment and treatment. Tandberg (2007) studied that 80% of the existing employees want to work for a company with a good reputation for environmental responsibility. A survey by the British Carbon Trust shows over 75% of 1,018 employees considering working for a firm sees it as important that they have an active policy to reduce carbon emissions (Clarke, 2006). In a survey conducted by SHRM during 2007, 43% of the HR professionals reported that the HR departments are involved in their organizations’ environmental responsibility policy. The study by Grolleau et al., (2012) identified the impact of environmental standards of a company on the recruitment of an employee. The study results indicated that environmental commitment of the company adds to profile of a company. They were able to differentiate and identify those professionals more than non-professionals were concerned with respect to the environmental stance of a company. It is clearly evident that from previous research that the recruiting leverages of the organizations can be boosted

only when they are environment- friendly.

Expectations of Generation Y

It was observed that the generation Y today is more concerned about the environmental issues as they started realizing the importance of environmental protection to safeguard the earth for their future life. They are very much interested towards green practices as they are taught about the importance of the environment and recycling resources since elementary school levels. They appraise everything in their daily life from their daily utilities to job selection with a green outlook. Such candidates are even ready to push down their salaries when considering the factor “greenness” while assessing their potential employers. Many job aspirants and employees are demanding greenness across the premises of their organizations and integrating business and the environment. They are very much interested to work in the organizations only where environment–friendliness is ensured as they perceive that firms care for their well being. This is very clear from the study that Job seekers of age group 26 – 37 years are highly making use of job portals and it is also clear that 40% of the job seekers do sourcing only through job portals to know the job vacancies (K. Kiruthigaa& Mini Viswanathan, 2014). Already countries like Germany, Australia, Finland and a few others are awfully passionate about the environment. Many global and Indian organizations are prepared to meet a growing set of eco-expectations as an employer.

Society Going Green

Today, society prefers green in all aspects, as people are more interested towards environmental protection. Many consumers prefer to buy the products produced and sold only by socially responsible companies. Policies, practices, and systems that make employees of the organization green for the benefit of the individual, society, natural environment, and the business (Opatha&Arulrajah,2014). Even suppliers prefer to supply funds, machines, materials and other resources only to those organizations who promise a strong commitment towards reducing pollution to safeguard the environment. Hence the job aspirants prefer to join those companies who are eco-friendly. Also, the partnerships between firms in the form of joint ventures, strategic alliances, etc. can be formed if both have a common understanding of maintaining a green environment.

Daily and Huang(2001) proposed that organizations essentially need to balance the industrial growth as well as the preservation of the environment because it has been confirmed that by supporting the green practices, companies may realize profit more than before (Murari&Bhandari,2011).

Purpose

This qualitative research article aims to provide a basic understanding of Green Recruitment process in a structured way in organizations as well to elaborate on various green recruitment practices that can be incorporated to improve the brand of organizations for acquiring and retaining talent.

Method and Material

The study is primarily based upon the secondary data. The literature related to the topic from different databases, websites and other available sources were collected. A systematic review of the collected literature was done in detail. The researcher made use of the systematic search methodology by identifying articles related to green recruitment practices in Google Scholar, Science Direct and Emerald databases belonging to past 10 years by using the following keywords: Green Human Resource Management and Green Recruitment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the current scenario, organizations have started using high technology for steering the recruitment process such as computers with networking, company websites, job portals, telephonic interviews, video conferencing methodologies, processing soft copies of testimonials, etc. They also provide an opportunity for the candidates to search job online using their websites and job portals. The resumes are invited online and correspondences are made through emails and phones which help organizations to reduce the waste created from printing and mailing hard copies of resumes.

Advantages of Green Recruitment

Green recruitment has been emerging only during recent years as an alarm towards environmental issues after realizing the impact of those. Thereby the high sense of awareness among employees and employers has elicited the importance of green recruitment practices. Green recruitment process results in greater efficiencies, lower costs and better employee retention. It also has the advantages such as the benefits out of online registrations, emails, e-file transfers, car-sharing, job-sharing, teleconferencing, virtual interviews, recycling, telecommuting, online training, energy-efficient office spaces etc.

Green recruitment ensures company's minimum carbon footprint by cutting down on the usage of papers and unwanted travels. Green recruitment is about the complete application of the concept of 'sustainability' to the organization and its workforce. It has been found out in some researchers that HR departments in many companies are increasingly greening their processes to gain a competitive advantage over others (Aravamudhan, 2012). Today, Firms started recognizing the fact that gaining a reputation as a green employee is one of the effective ways to attract and retain fresh talent.

Promoting Green Recruitment

As some research suggests that Organizations should reflect their environmental sustainability agenda on the organization's website and other public-facing channels available so that candidates can clearly view the organization's greening focus (Kapil, 2015a; Arulrajah et al., 2015). This was asserted by the work of Guerri et al. (2016) who found that environmental sustainability-related intents can play a major role in attracting prospective applicants, many firms have started disseminating their environmentally friendly credentials and promote their 'go green' and pro-environment practices during their recruitment process.

Those companies have started branding their 'green initiatives' in cover print and electronic media as well. They also have started propagating 'greenness' in their websites by adding a link on their home page about their green efforts and community outreach. Further, organizations have started sharing their efforts towards green approaches using social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc. to attract potential candidates, by publishing their current job requirements. Many organizations have started using E-mail as the ideal technology for them to ensure candidates, their eco-friendly aspects using slogans like "Think Green", "Save world", "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." etc. Moreover, many organizations have started creating positive public relations by spreading their green efforts through articles and blogs to promote the brand image and goodwill among the society. Also, they have started reducing printed copies of documents except for the handouts including this information not available on the company's website.

Green recruitment ensures that new recruits understand the organization's green culture and shares its

environmental values (Jackson and Seo, 2010) through drawing out the candidate's environmental knowledge, values, and beliefs (Renwick et al., 2013). The recruitment messages should include environmental criteria (Arulrajah et al., 2015). In the job analysis phase, job description, and person specifications should clarify and emphasize on environmental aspects, green accomplishments and explain what is expected out of the future green employee (Mandip, 2012; Renwick et al., 2013). Hence, green intentions have started emphasizing the company's environmental successes in job descriptions, recruiting advertisements, during interviews with applicants wherever possible. The Rover Group car maker, in Britain, makes environmental responsibilities and qualifications part of every job profile. Increasingly, green job descriptions with environmental aspects are now being included for employees within the recruitment agenda.

This design of the interviewing process was supported by AbdullRazab et al. (2015) who stated that when interviewing potential candidates environmental related questions should constitute a major part of the evaluation process. In addition, Arulrajah et al. (2015) explained that organizations can improve their efforts to protect the environment through integrating environmental tasks into the duties and responsibilities of each employee's job, or design environmentally concerned new jobs or positions in order to focus exclusively on EM aspects of the organizations (Opatha, 2013). During shortlisting of candidates; employees' selection process should ensure selecting environmentally committed candidates who were involved in previous related green initiatives (Jabbour, 2011).

Branding through Green Recruitment

Green recruiting is a system where the high focus is set on the importance of the environmental protection and making it a major element of the organization. Complementing this, many recruiters are also highly enthusiastic, and to some extent, passionate about working for an environment-friendly "green" company. It is evident from the research that HR professionals also appear to believe that environmental reputation is important, especially for younger employees since organizations believe that a policy on environmental management is important in recruiting and retaining younger workers (Philpott & Davies, 2007). Majority of the job seekers are aware of green recruitment and it has been implemented in the corporate to improve their corporate image and profile (K. Kiruthigaa & Mini Viswanathan, 2014). Recruiting candidates with "green" attitude rope the firms to induct professionals who are aware of sustainable processes and are already familiar with the basics like recycling and conservation of resources for creating a more logical world. Considering these statements, we can conclude that green recruitment would provide the employer with an opportunity to stand ahead of the crowd and further increase their chance of attracting and retaining the prospective candidates. Substantiating the recent green trend, it could be proposed that the recruitment process shall be aligned with environmental friendly issues to brand the organizations.

Green Recruitment Strategies for Talent Management

Organizations need to focus on selecting and hiring an employee who supports, and show interest in the environment (Renwick et al., 2013). Therefore, to increase their selection attractiveness from an increasingly environmentally aware younger generation (Ehnert, 2009), organizations should build an environmental reputation and images inspired by the thought that these organizations are environmentally responsive (Kapil, 2015a; Guerci et al., 2016). Okonkwo et al, 2015, established that effective talent management is the key to organizational success and sustainable growth. This would help the organizations recruit and retain its top talent, while increasing their productivity. They further recommended that talent management system could be integrated across all subfunctions of HRM. Therefore, talent management system can be integrated into the green recruitment process, since it will help in recruiting and retaining

talented work force who will strive towards achieving organizational goals and environmental sustainability. Hence, green goals are nowadays included even in managerial job descriptions to identify the prospective workforce as a part of talent acquisition. Some of the organizations also include environmental consciousness as one of the core competencies required for employees while developing the competency model for talent. It was evident from several studies that many firms recently have started realizing that the Green job candidates, who encompass a large segment of the talented and knowledgeable workforce, employ green principles when applying for jobs. Therefore, those firms have started adopting green practices to attract the talent. Hence organizations have started adopting 'green' in order to figure a Green Employer brand. Such organizations have started providing preference to candidates who are 'Green Concise', during their recruitment process, which forms a part of the HR acquisition policy. It is very clearly evident that today's employers, having a strong green brand possess more chances to attract talent than those without green philosophy.

CONCLUSIONS

Green recruitment is an emerging trend in this modern era which is more effective for the organizations in terms of brand building to attract and retain talent, but it costs nothing. Hence corporate today has started linking their mission, objectives, strategies, and tactics to the function of green recruitment and it has been proved with considerable research evidence in this article. The green recruitment process can be integrated with other processes in the firms to define the talent, skills, knowledge and abilities of top performers and ensure overall productivity across the all levels.

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