

SEMINAR REPORT

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“SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR NET-ZERO ECONOMY”

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Certificate

This is to certify that **VAISHNAVI SINGH** (2023081071) of B.B.A 3rd Semester, Session 2024-25 has completed her Seminar Project entitled “**SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE FOR NET-ZERO ECONOMY**”. The report is the result of her efforts & endeavors. The report is found worthy of acceptance as Seminar Project Report for the B.B.A. She has completed the Seminar Project under my guidance.

Dr. Sonia Bhatt
Assistant Professor
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DECLARATION

I, Vaishnavi Singh, Student of B.B.A. 2nd year, Madan Mohan Malaviya University of Technology, Gorakhpur hereby declare that the Seminar Report work entitled **“SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR NET ZERO ECONOMY”** has been result of my own work.

I declare that this submitted work is done solely by me and to the best of my knowledge; no such work has been submitted by any other person for the award of post-graduation degree or diploma. I also declare that all the information collected from various secondary sources has been duly acknowledged in this seminar report.

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PREFACE

This work explores HR's critical role in advancing corporate sustainability by implementing eco-friendly policies, aligning employee values with sustainability goals, and providing training programs to enhance knowledge of sustainable practices. The primary aim of this work is to clarify HRM practices that support net-zero targets through evaluating carbon footprints, setting reduction goals, and developing a sustainability strategy.

Key actions include encouraging sustainable behavior, reducing waste by minimizing paper use, using energy-efficient equipment and supporting remote or hybrid working.

I hope this work will contribute to a broader understanding of the role of HRM in sustainability.

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1. Introduction

The world's plastic production is 430 million tonnes per year on average. The largest, most harmful, and most persistent part of marine litter belongs to plastics, which make up at least 85 percent of total marine waste. Landfilling takes up 46 percent of plastic waste, litter takes up 22 percent, incineration takes up 17 percent, and recycling takes up 15 percent, less than 9% of the recycled items were actually recycled after losses.

India is responsible for a fifth of global plastic pollution. India releases 3.5 million tonnes of plastic to the environment (land, air, and water) as a result of burning roughly 5.8 million tonnes of plastic as remains each year.

This 'Unmanaged waste' which simply means plastics that are burnt openly, it produces fine particles and all the toxins (Greenhouse gases) coming in direct contact of air like Carbon monoxide that is directly linked to many deadly diseases, disorders even cancer and neurological problems. It does not only affect humans but also all living beings, environment and climate.

A new emerging concept – **Net-Zero Emission**, Net zero means a company reduces all greenhouse gas emissions throughout its entire supply chain. "Net Zero is looked at as the gold standard for corporate climate action".

According to the IPCC report, to limit warming to 1.5°C, CO₂ emissions need to reach zero between 2020 and 2060. Reaching net zero earlier within this range (closer to 2050) would temporarily avoid the risk of going over or exceeding 1.5°C.

In 2021, a meeting held in Glasgow for 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) an announcement was made specifically stating the declaration of India for net-zero emission by 2070, also in 2020, China's announcement for Carbon neutrality by 2060 which also includes some other major developing countries like Nigeria, South Africa and Brazil, it implies that almost 90% of the world economy is currently aiming for net-zero emission lies between 2050 to 2070 (Allen, M. R., et al., 2022). According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), presently Global energy investments uplift around \$2 trillion per year or 2.5% of global GDP. To achieve the net-zero emission plan they have newly developed, they need to rise to \$5 trillion or 4.5% of global GDP by 2030 and remain there no less than 2050 to achieve net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2050 (Lenaerts, K., et al., 2021). Organisations must adopt formal eco-friendly practices because of the advancement of global natural concerns and the enhancement of global natural models (Ali, C., et al., 2020).

In the context of a net-zero economy, big data analytics has the potential to enhance resource management by optimizing resource utilization and decreasing waste (Bag, S., 2024).

The entire context of HRM is now seen from a sustainability perspective. Extending this statement, we argue that green human resource management is the most important element of sustainability (Ahmad, S., 2015). As the awareness of incorporating "green" into business strategies permeates companies, sustainability issues are rapidly emerging on the priority list of business leaders, yet the subject remains uncomfortable for most practitioners in HR environments (Wirtenberg, J., et al., 2007). Some describe green HRM as the use of HRM policies, philosophies and practices to promote the sustainable use of corporate resources and prevent unwanted harm arising from environmental issues in organizations (Zoogah, D., 2011).

To implement a successful corporate green management system, it is important to develop as many technical and managerial skills as possible among all employees in the organization (Daily, B. F., et al., 2007). An earlier study indicated that if organizations want to achieve sustainable performance, they should seek help from the HR department to recruit qualified employees with sufficient knowledge (Yong, J. Y., Mohd-Yusoff, Y., 2016). Empirical results on the description and analysis of green jobs are reported. They claim that this is the most useful approach to achieve environmental objectives in management and its activities (Yong, J. Y., et al., 2019).

The organization increasingly recognizes the social impact of human resources techniques and realizes that stability is greater than that of the benefits of its workers, such as social and well responsibilities. Since they embrace net-zero practices and stable economic HRM practices, firms are attempting to balance their environmental objectives through equitable, holistic, and stable.

2. Literature Review

Though the term "net zero" is ostensibly advocated for straightforward input–output balance of GHG emissions, its practical implementation has many economic, social, and ethical implications (Fankhauser et al., 2022). Use of fossil fuels by humans has led to the emission of large amounts of carbon dioxide, which is warming the world. To stop global warming, we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Mishra, R., et al., 2022). However, industries such as manufacturing find it challenging to monitor emission (Bonsu, N. O., 2020).

Net zero involves balancing the removal of GHGs from the atmosphere with the emission of GHGs to the atmosphere so that the total sum is zero. However, in reality, these net zero targets are difficult to achieve (Virmani et al., 2022).

To get to net zero, two actions need to be taken. The first is more obvious and involves reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The second is eliminating emissions from the atmosphere. The final step is the most difficult. To achieve carbon neutrality, the world must shift from a global economy that emits about 40 billion tons of carbon dioxide per year to one that removes billions of tons (Bag, S., 2023). New innovations are needed to make net-zero emissions a reality. Universal policies to reduce emissions do not yet exist. However, the US and the EU are working towards achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 (Jenkins, J. D., 2021).

According to Nyangchak (2022), human capital is the main factor that contributes to the green industry. In addition, human capital can help improve the effectiveness of green occupations, environmental awareness, green innovation, and sustainability (Nyangchak, N., 2022).

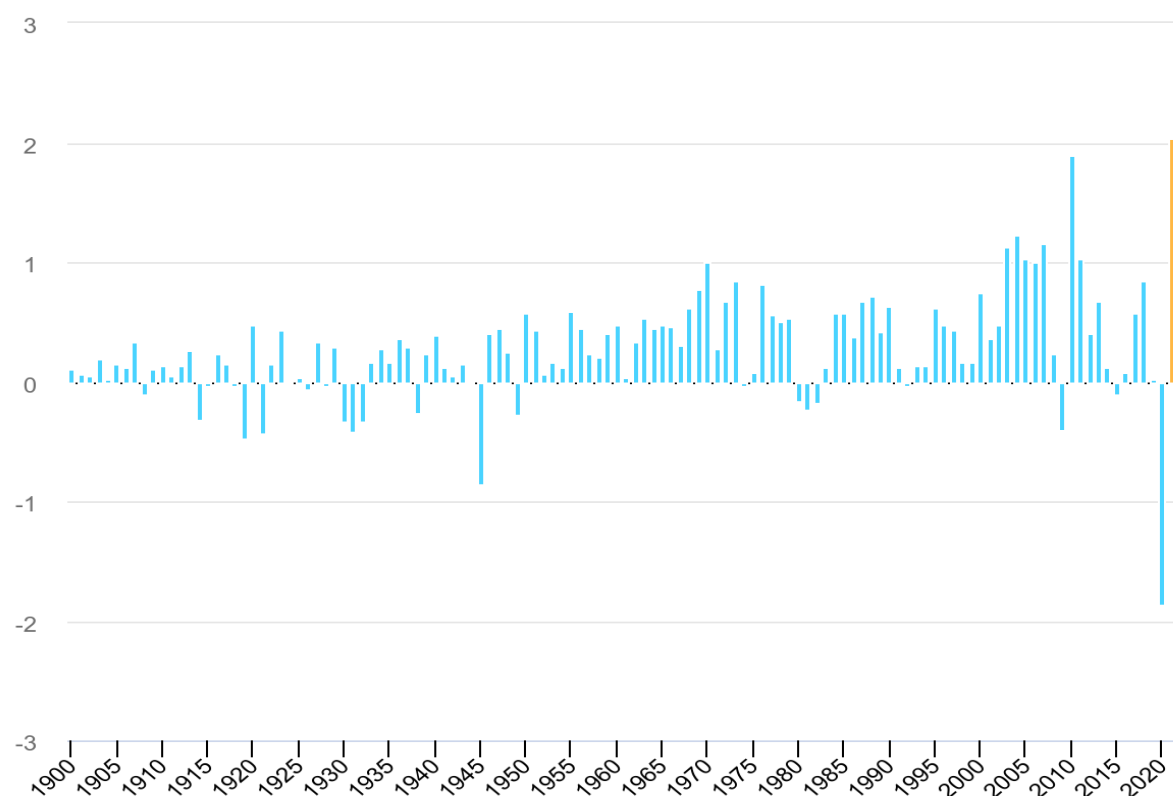


Fig no. – 1 Source: International Energy Agency, IEA

The aim of firms is to reduce their negative environmental impacts by managing their strategies and designing their business models with environmental policies (Essid, M., Berland, N.,

2018). The Kyoto Protocol aims to cut down or prevent greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Kyoto Protocol and the European Union Emissions Trade Scheme have led to carbon accounting. The Paris Agreement, which replaces the Kyoto Protocol, encourages firms to reduce their routine activities, which ultimately leads to a sustainability transition (He, R., 2021).

The shift towards net zero and a healthy planet requires a range of changes, including changes in energy production, consumer behaviour, and organizational behaviour (Lim, W. M., 2022). Specific dimensions of the green industry have been the focus of systematic reviews, such as green manufacturing, recycling industries, green finance and green buildings (Kannan, D., et al., 2021). A sustainable net zero economy cannot be implemented without the necessary managerial skills. It is necessary to manage operations that utilize clean technology and have an understanding of analytics (Mishra, R., 2022).

To adopt Green Human Resource Management practices, a framework is proposed that includes the highly significant challenges and barriers (C&B).

- (i) A lack of understanding, direction, and awareness.
- (ii) Corporate social responsibility as an important part of the organization policy.
- (iii) Internal environmental concerns need a strategy that includes both a top-down and bottom-up approach.
- (iv) Top management is still grappling with budget and cost issues.
- (v) Building competencies for their entire team is the responsibility of the HR department.

These are challenges that can be seen as examples (Tanveer, M. I., 2023).

Hmeedat and Albdareen highlighted the impact of GHRM practices on corporate social responsibility and sustainability commitments and examined whether environmentally conscious HRM practices have a moderating effect on the relationship between a company's social responsibility commitments and its ability to remain sustainable (Hmeedat, O., Albdareen, R., 2022). Green Human Resource Management involves the integration of a company's environmental sustainability goals with recruitment and selection strategies, training and development, talent management and compensation. In order to implement corporate environmental management efforts, it is necessary to have new roles and skill sets

and use the green HRM strategies. Still, surveys of related industries and businesses may reveal specific green HR practices (Renwick, D., et al., 2008).

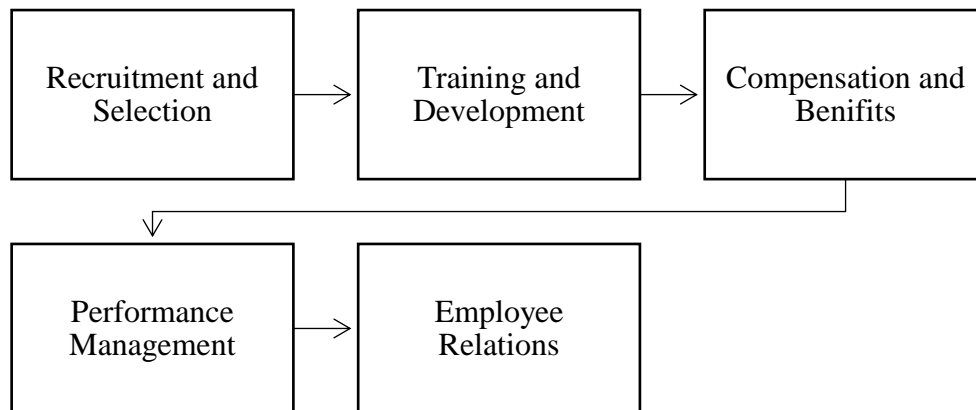


Fig no. - 2

Some companies use candidates' environmental concerns as a factor in their hiring process. These companies often ask questions about candidates' environmental awareness during the interview and selection process. The main goal of GHRM is to illustrate how well employees execute on green job (Revill, C., 2000). To implement their environmental policies, companies require employees to be more environmentally conscious. Companies can take two approaches to train employees to be more environmentally conscious. The first is to start with green hiring. Second, there is a need to improve the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the current workforce towards environmental issues (Khan, S., Faisal, S., 2023).

Employee training at organizational level to increase workers' awareness on environmental issues is also important to improving environmental indicators. Organizations as well need an environmental education. HRM is gradually incorporating sustainability and the term “sustainable HRM” is one aspect through which growing organizations publicly disclose their sustainability efforts (Ehnert, I., et al., 2016).

In the most complex industries, such as manufacturing and construction, strategic human resource management (SHRM) is essential to help direct employee efforts toward achieving the company's long-term goals. SHRM is a planned model of staffing and activities designed to help an organization achieve its goals. Strategies to more effectively align the triple bottom line of such large and complex organizations with current strategic human resource management competencies and sustainable programs pose a major challenge to human resource management theory and practice. (Gerhart, B., 2000).

3. Research Objectives

3.1- Analyse the Role of HRM in Meeting Net-Zero Goals:

From this perspective, research how human resource management practices such as green recruitment, employee training, and performance evaluation contribute to carbon footprint reduction and net-zero operations.

3.2- Critically Examine Challenges in the Implementation of Sustainable HRM:

Investigate barriers such as a lack of awareness, financial constraints, and organizational resistance that may prevent adoption of sustainable Human Resource Management practices while proposing strategies to overcome these.

3.3- Evaluate the implications of hybrid and remote work models:

Assess how remote and hybrid work configurations can affect the energy use and emissions of an organization and contribute to furthering the transition toward a more sustainable work environment.

3.4- Develop best practices for sustainable Human Resource Management:

Analyse successful examples of green Human Resource Management practices in various industries to show ways that can be used for replication and scale up support to more companies using sustainability in HR.

3.5- Provide a holistic roadmap for Sustainable Human Resource Management:

Develop a business plan that integrates green policies, Corporate Social Responsibility, and sustainability measures to link the HRM activities with the company's environmental goals.

These objectives form a systematic approach in understanding and promoting Sustainable Human Resource Management contribution toward achieving a net-zero economy.

4. Methodology

The methodology of the research here follows an exploratory qualitative design, utilizing secondary data to assess the role of sustainable HRM practices in achieving a net-zero economy. The study offers an opportunity to identify through thematic analysis of academic journals, corporate reports, and global frameworks the key HRM practices, challenges, and opportunities supporting net-zero aspirations. In so doing, analysis on existing literature will be used to develop a conceptual framework on HRM's role in sustainability.

I. Research Design

The study takes an exploratory approach, using secondary data to consider sustainable HRM practices and their role in the pursuit of a net-zero economy. The basis on existing information used here is designed to explore patterns and frameworks without the need for direct participant engagement.

II. Data Collection

- Sources of Secondary Data:
 - i. Scholarly articles, sustainability reports, and case studies.
 - ii. International frameworks and standards (for example, UN SDGs, IPCC, IEA reports).
 - iii. Articles and research related to green HRM and net-zero economies.
 - iv. Government and corporate policies on sustainability and HRM.
- Examples from the Report:
 - i. Findings from frameworks like the Paris Agreement and Kyoto Protocol.
 - ii. Research of experts such as Ahmad and Ehnert.

III. Sampling Strategy

- Method:
 - i. Purposive Sampling is used to choose documents that explicitly discuss sustainable HRM and net-zero objectives.
 - ii. Inclusion Criteria:
 - Published in the last decade for relevance.
 - Emphasize HR's contribution to environmental sustainability and achievement of a net-zero goal.
 - Credibility of sources (peer-reviewed, institutional reports, or reputable publishers).

- **Sample Size:** An estimate of about 30-50 documents to use in the report, since that appears necessary for depth and relevance.

IV. Data Analysis

The secondary data will be analysed through thematic analysis:

- Familiarization:** The report summary of the key points to be found within each document.
- Coding:** Identify recurring themes: "green recruitment" or "sustainability training."
- Theme Development:** Develop broader themes like "Challenges in Implementing Green HRM" or "HR's Role in Carbon Neutrality."
- Synthesis:** Draw themes together in conceptual framework; towards a net-zero contribution from HRM.
 - For instance, this framework can associate "employee engagement" with "environmental awareness training".

V. Ethical Considerations

- **Correct Credits:** All secondary data sources should be acknowledged for academic integrity.
- **Precision:** Provide accurate representations of results of documents analysed.
- **Avoiding Bias:** Balance your stand by using sources of different opinions and standpoints.

VI. Limitations

- Dependence on Secondary Data:** It is limited to the scope and quality of literature available.
- Contextual Gaps:** Absence of first-hand data tends to omit subtle real-world insights from professionals.
- Generalizability:** The results could be limited across industries or regions because of the lack of specific contextual data.
- Time Constraints:** A comprehensive review of much broader literature may not be possible within the time frame.

This methodology will assure full scrutiny of sustainable HRM practices using credible secondary sources. In this regard, this methodology will offer a solid understanding of HRs' key role in reaching net-zero goals.

5. Results & Discussions

This section reflects the findings and analysis based on the objectives drawn out from the research report of the role of HRM toward net-zero goals, concerning the challenges to be addressed in implementation, assessing and evaluating the hybrid work model, finding best practices, and implementing a framework for sustainable HRM.

5.1- The Role of HRM in Achieving Net-Zero Goals:

HRM has a very significant role in achieving net-zero emissions for organizations. Green recruitment practices ensure that employees assist the organization in accomplishing goals on sustainability. Eco-friendly recruitment that focuses on finding skills and values develops ready workforce support for environmental goals. For example, selecting individuals who are aware of sustainability will encourage them to actively participate in green initiatives (Zoogah, D., 2011).

Training conducted focusing on sustainability can help employees learn better about such eco-friendly practices. Curriculum including practices such as energy saving, waste reduction, and green technologies helps employees in working projects that contribute to sustainability. Being added in performance reviews, it ensures the employee is responsible and encourages them to pursue new and ecological approaches (Daily, B.F., et al., 2007).

5.2- Challenges in Implementing Sustainable HRM:

Though it has the potential, it is even tough to use sustainable HRM practices because of many obstacles. The biggest problem is that organizational leaders know too little about long-term benefits of green HRM. A lack of clear plans and not enough attention to sustainability prevents HR practices from being a part of bigger environmental goals (Wirtenberg, J., et al., 2007).

Money issues also do not make it easier to implement green HRM. This is tough for small and medium-sized businesses due to limited finances in terms of the resources required to invest in training, facilities, and green technologies. Furthermore, the resistance to change, grounded in tradition, makes it difficult to implement new sustainable practices in HRM. But mixing strong leadership support with active employee involvement would overcome these problems (Ahmad, S., 2015).

5.3- Impact of Hybrid and Remote Work Models:

Hybrid and remote work models have worked really well in terms of improving carbon footprint. They help organizations meet their sustainability goals through reducing daily travel and waste in office buildings through energy management. Hybrid work setups have proven to enhance productivity while lowering environmental costs (Bag, S., 2024).

Such models flourish because of proper HR policies. Digital tools and digital platforms for online collaboration keep the employees engaged and productive at work from home. The efficient use of these technologies through learning yields more transformatory results. Therefore, organizations can fully leverage their environmental as well as operational benefits of hybrid work arrangements (Hmeedat, O., Albdareen, R., 2022).

5.4- Best Practices in Sustainable HRM:

Successful companies in sustainability have incorporated CSR to their HR policies. The alignment of the employee's reward structures with sustainability objectives encourages joining green projects. For example, either more rewards or recognition such as the achievement of energy-saving targets motivates the employees to contribute actively towards the achieving of the organization's environmental objectives (Renwick, D., et al., 2008).

Finally, including sustainability goals at the job description and performance review ensures that at every level of staff, the workforce is liable to contribute towards the environmental goals of the company. Work in tandem between the HR and sustainability team makes green strategies much stronger in a kind of united and effective quest towards net-zero targets (Ehnert, I., et al., 2016).

5.5- Proposed Framework for Sustainable HRM:

An effective framework for Sustainable HRM consists of:

- i. **Green Recruitment:** Incorporates sustainability in the recruitment process for embedding values of employees with organizational objectives.
- ii. **Training for Sustainability:** Periodic seminars that sensitize and arm employees with environmentally responsible skills.
- iii. **Performance Measurement:** Incorporating sustainability measures into measurements to increase accountability.

- iv. **Hybrid Work Policies:** Increase remote and hybrid working to reduce emissions and cut operational costs.
- v. **Application of Technology:** The adoption of tools that monitor and optimize resource utilization and emissions reductions.

This framework offers a thorough method for implementing sustainable human resource management, all while tackling both organizational and operational challenges (Nyangchak, N., 2022).

6. Suggestions

Training Program: Organizations should have a chain of programs centred on the education of their employees and leaders in the sustainable HRM process. Resources such as workshops and e-module learning can create a culture of sustainability (Zoogah, D., 2011).

Integrate CSR into HR Policies: This approach ensures integrated practices that can help an organization meet its environmental goals alongside achieving organisational objectives. Integration ensures employee accountability and aligns efforts with sustainability goals at the organisational level (Renwick, D., et al., 2008).

Innovation Adoption in Resource Optimizations: Organizations should use technologies that monitor carbon footprint, energy usage, and progress towards sustainability and performance. Digital platforms may allow for frictionless collaboration within a hybrid work environment (Bag, S., 2024).

Extend Hybrid Work Models: Telecommuting reduces the pollution of commuting and saves energy in offices. Organizations should provide tools and training to enhance remote work technology and methods (Hmeedat, O., Albdareen, R., 2022).

Motivate Green Practice: Reward employees achieving a green goal, hence keeping them engaged in environmentally friendly practices. Recognition programs-bonus or award given for the good cause of environmental support can enhance the culture of care for nature (Ehnert, I., et al., 2016).

The following suggestions provide constructive processes through which such an organization may successfully integrate sustainability into its HRM: current challenges and long-term environmental goals.

7. Conclusion

The research stresses adopting sustainable HRM practices in order to achieve net-zero emissions, and it keeps the organization more sustainable. HRM functions like a method for aligning the workforce toward environmental objectives by instilling such practices as hiring for environmental skills, hybrid work options, and conducting performance reviews sustainably. Such sustainable HRM practices ensure that the organization achieves all the global sustainability objectives while, at the same time, instilling care and newness in the employer-employee relationship.

It is always a challenge. The biggest time wastes are not knowing enough and not wanting to change. Definitely not having enough money is one of the biggest problems. Companies can do much better with good leadership, involvement of employees, and incorporation of CSR elements in its HR policies. When these problems are eliminated, an organization can build a path to sustainable, important, and long-lasting successes.

Hybrid and remote work models also indicate a way for change-the usual aspect of hybrid and remote work: reduction in emissions improves energy usage, and with this, digital tools, and better HR policies, could easily reach net-zero levels without harming productivity.

The proposed plan for sustainable HRM clearly shows how to add sustainability to HR practices. It covers green hiring, green training, performance reviews, and the application of technology in improving resources to enable organizations to meet both its environmental and operational goals.

By this definition, sustainable HRM practices are a necessity for organizations-not an option with regards to a net-zero economy. Organisms which rely on any of the strategies that have thus far been discussed in this research will be more important in setting up an environment that is just greener in nature.

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