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Exploring the Awareness on Green Human Resource Development Practices among Hotel Industry Employees in Lagos State, Nigeria: A Preliminary Study

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore awareness on green human resource development practices among employees of the hotel industry in Lagos State, Nigeria. Over the past decade, the impact from climate change and global warming has led to environmental degradation. This is because of the harmful activities conducted on the natural environment by employees and various organizations, of which the hotel industry is part of. The overconsumption of energy and water, and the use of products and materials which are considered harmful to the environment. Lack of effective waste disposal mechanisms, and the inability to recycle, are all harmful to the environment. Globally, the hotel industry is a major employer of labour, therefore, to help mitigate these harmful practices, there is the need for the hotel industry in Nigeria to adopt green human resource development (Green HRD) practices. This is to help transform the natural environment back to its original state. The method of data collection for the study is structured interview, which is a qualitative study. Two employees working in the same hotel participated in the study. The outcome from the preliminary investigation revealed that, although employees had awareness on what green practices means, but lacked knowledge on green training and development, which is a Green HRD practice. Participants also lack knowledge on the meaning of Green HRD. Additionally, employees' investigated lacked green skills, competencies, and abilities, which are outcomes of green training and development and green human capital. Employees' awareness on green practices were through printed handbills distributed by the manager of the hotel to each employee. To strengthen employees green skills, knowledge, behaviours, and abilities in the investigated hotel, and for the successful implementation of Green HRD

practices, there is the need to invest on green training and development. Green training and development will help to strengthen the green human capital of the explored hotel, so as to be able to achieve environmental performance. Due to the number of few participants which took part in the study, subsequent researches can focus on a larger number of participants among employees in Nigeria's hotel industry, as this may lead to a broader outcome and perspective.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Development, Hotel Industry Employees, Environmental Management and Performance, Green Human Capital, Nigeria.

Introduction

The increasing devastation caused by climate change and global warming, has made several organizations begin to adopt green practices (Maniu et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021). The hotel industry globally, has also started to implement green practices as a way of curtailing the effects from climate change, global warming, and environmental degradation (Moise et al., 2021). Green human resource development (Green HRD) practices involves using the subsystems, theories, models, research, and practices of human resource development (HRD) for environmental management purposes (Haddock et al., 2010; Scully-Russ, 2015a; McGuire & Germain, 2015; Piwowar-Sulej, 2022). The practice of Green HRD is associated with reduce, reuse, recycle, redesign, renew, and re-educate (McGuire, 2010). These are primarily for individuals and organizations to engage in practices that are not harmful to the natural environment and its ecosystem, and towards strengthening green practices. By engaging in activities which leads towards the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and an effective method for recycling of used products and materials for environmental management and performance. Environmental management is the process of managing the effect and activities of humans and organizations on the natural environment and its habitats.

For change to occur in organizations, there is the need to invest in human capital, as employees are the most valued assets through which organizations achieve their goals (Ameyaw et al., 2019). Training and development is a subsystem of HRD which help organizations to provide the required skills, competencies, knowledge, and abilities for employee and organizational productivity (Kareem, 2019; Kareem & Hussein, 2019). Hence, green training and development is the process of providing pro-environmental skills, competencies, knowledge, and abilities for employees to help their organizations achieve environmental performance (Ahmad, 2015; Yafi et al., 2021). Green training and development help employees and their various organizations to become responsible to the natural environment, through the green skills and abilities acquired. Green human capital (GHC) is defined as the entire pro-environmental skills, competencies, behaviours, attitudes, knowledge, education, innovativeness, commitments, ethics, and abilities possessed by employees (Chen, 2008). It is needed for employees to become green in their attitude and behaviours, and also help their organizations achieve its environmental performance through waste reduction, energy and water conservation, and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Through a qualitative research methodology, the purpose of this study is to investigate awareness on green human resource development (Green HRD) practices among hotel industry employees in Lagos State, Nigeria. The explored Green HRD practice among two employees working in the same hotel, is green training and development. This study therefore contributes to the emerging Green HRD literature. The research question developed and answered for the study is (i) what is the awareness on green training and development among hotel industry employees in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to explore awareness on green human resource development practices among hotel industry employees in Nigeria. The specific purpose of study is:

- (i) To investigate the awareness on green training and development among hotel industry employees in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Problem Statement

Previous empirical studies on green human resource development (Green HRD) practices, have focused only in the context of developed nations. These are McGuire and Germain (2015) on green commitment between customers and organizations, among one hundred and two retail customers in Scotland. Scully-Russ (2015b) on the importance of the field of HRD providing green training towards developing green jobs in the United States. The study was conducted among two Energy Training Partnerships (ETPs). Lastly, Piwowar-Sulej (2022) which focused on two hundred and ninety-nine manufacturing firms in Poland. It focused on the necessity on utilizing human resource development strategies to create employees and organizations that are environmentally friendly in their activities. There is currently no Green HRD literature in the context of a developing nation like Nigeria. Therefore, to strengthen Green HRD practices among hotel industry employees in Nigeria, it is important to provide the required green training, competencies, knowledge, education, and skills (Nwokorie & Obiora, 2018; Idoko & Kasim, 2019; Babagbale, 2020).

Despite the several contributions of the field of HRD towards employee and organizational development through training and development (Kareem, 2019; Kareem & Hussein, 2019), it is yet to showcase its potentials towards green training and development for employee and organizational environmental management and performance (Scully-Russ, 2015b; Williams & Turnbull, 2015; Scully-Russ, 2015a; Piwowar-Sulej, 2022). In the context of achieving environmental friendly employees and hotel industry in Nigeria, a conceptual framework is developed. It shows the significant impact of green training and development on green human capital, for environmental management and performance in the hotel industry in Nigeria.

Research Methodology

Through a qualitative research, the exploratory study interviewed two employees who works in the same hotel in Lagos State, Nigeria. Because of distance barrier, the structured interviews were conducted using Zoom online platform. All researchers currently reside in Malaysia, and therefore were unable to engage in a face-to-face interview. A structured interview is explained as a process whereby participants are asked the same predetermined questions, following the same protocol (Mathers et al., 1998; Adhabi & Alozie, 2017). The interviews were conducted differently for both employees. The objective and focus of the study was clearly explained to the participants. As they were taught the meaning of green human resource development (GHRD) practices, with a focus on green training and development. Both employees were interviewed for about forty-five minutes each. Table 1 shows the profile of each of the employees interviewed.

No	Hotel	Rank of Employee
A	Hotel A	Human resources assistant
B	Hotel A	Customer service representative

Table 1: Showing the profile of employees interviewed.

At the end of the interview process, there was the transcribing of the primary data from the interview, so as to be able to have it analyzed. The researchers were also able to familiarize with the coding of the primary data. The technique of adding annotations was also utilized. This was done to add explanations to the primary codes from the data, and to highlight the main elements. Additionally, there was also the process of code analyzation and identification of various themes. Lastly, there was the evaluation of themes and subthemes by the researchers.

Both employees who participated in the study, were asked their awareness on Green HRD practices and green training and development. Although they had awareness on the existence of green practices, but they lacked the knowledge on green training and development, which is a Green HRD practice. They also lacked knowledge on the existence of Green HRD practices. There was also the lack of green skills, competencies, behaviours, attitudes, ethics, and abilities. This is because of the unavailability of green training and development for employees in the investigated hotel. Their awareness on green practices were through the various printed handbills distributed by the manager of the hotel to every employee. The researchers were able to successfully explain the meaning of green training and development and Green HRD practices to the participants in an understandable way. Green HRD practices and green training and development as utilizing the subsystems, models, concepts, theories, research, and practice of human resource development (HRD) for environmental performance, through recycling and effective waste disposal procedures. To implement Green HRD practices for environmental management and performance, there is the need to create green awareness through green training and development for employees (Williams & Turnbull, 2015; McGuire & Germain, 2015; Yafi et al., 2021). This helps to develop pro-environmental skills, competencies, knowledge, behaviours, commitment, ethics, attitudes, and abilities among employees. This will help the hotel industry in Nigeria achieve its environmental management objectives, and also reduce the effect of climate change and global warming. Leading the hotel industry to thrive in a healthy and natural environment.

Outcome of the Study

The outcome from the study data revealed two themes. These are green awareness and green training and development. Participants interviewed in the investigated hotel knew that green practices were meant to help reduce the impact from climate change and global warming on the environment. However, they lacked knowledge on the meaning of green training and development and Green HRD practices. They had no green skills, competencies, abilities, ethics, behaviours, attitudes, and education, which is categorized as green human capital; an outcome from green training and development.

Theme 1: Green Awareness

Both participants (A and B) revealed that they had awareness on green practices. That green practices was basically about to mitigate against the impact from climate change and global warming on the natural environment. They further revealed that their awareness on green practices was through the printed handbills distributed to every employee by the manager of the hotel. However, their awareness on green practices existed only on paper, as it did not go beyond reading it from the distributed handbills

"I am aware of what green practices means. It is about climate change and global warming. It also relates to recycling. Each of us (employees) were given a handbill by the manager of the hotel. He (the manager) did not care to explain further to us how to practically apply what is written on the handbill in our daily work. So, personally for me, all I know is just what is written on the handbill. Majority of us (employees) are really interested in knowing further on how to apply what we read to our daily roles on the job." (Participant A)

"When I was employed, the manager gave me a handbill which was written green practices for climate change and global warming. I read it, but I have no knowledge on what recycling means, and how it is connected to my daily work in the hotel. Not just I alone, other employees in the hotel have also asked that we be taught on how we can move the knowledge on green practices away from paper to practice. The manager has promised to teach us, but he has not done so. We hope he does so soon." (Participant B)

Both participants agreed that from what they have read so far on the various handbills distributed by the manager, they believe green practices will help to reduce the effect from climate change and global warming on the environment.

Theme 2: Green Training and Development

Participants A and B knew nothing about what green training and development means. They lack green skills, behaviours, attitudes, competencies, and ethics, which are by-products from green training and development.

"I have not heard of it before. You can see me laughing when you asked. I am sorry I had to laugh, because it looks funny. The only word I know among green training and development is green. And that is because of the handbills distributed to us (employees), which is written green practices. I wish I knew what green training and development means, I would have been very happy. As employees and stakeholders in this hotel, we are going to have a meeting with the hotel manager, so he can organize this type of green training and development for us. We really need to learn all of these things, as the world is moving faster on knowledge assimilation. We cannot be left behind in this hotel." (Participant A)

"I only know what green practices means, like I provided an answer earlier. I have no idea of what green training and development means, as we do not engage in that in this hotel. But majority of us working here really hope that we can have the opportunity to participate in this type of training, since the manager already promised to teach us what green practices means in the real world." (Participant B)

From the explanations given to the participants by the researchers on what Green HRD practices and green training and development means, and the processes involved in recycling, both agreed that green training and development and Green HRD practices is what the hotel industry needs to contribute towards reducing the impact from climate change and global warming on the environment.

Discussion

The focus of this research paper was to investigate the awareness on green human resource development (Green HRD) practices among hotel industry employees in Lagos State, Nigeria. The outcome from the study revealed that there is awareness of green practices among employees interviewed. Awareness which however only exists on paper from the handbills distributed by the manager to employees. This means that there is no application of Green HRD practices of green training and development in the hotel investigated. Employees lacked knowledge on green training and development, which is an enabler for green human capital (GHC) for green skills, competencies, behaviours, attitudes, ethics, and abilities. To achieve a hotel industry which is eco-friendly, there is the need to invest in green training and development for green human capital. As revealed by participants A and B in the Theme 2 category, *“that they are willing to participate in green training and development whenever the opportunities are presented to them by the manager.”*

Employees are the most vital assets possessed by an organization. Therefore, an investment in the development of human capital, leads to employee and organizational efficiency, thereby helping an organization to achieve its strategic objectives and long-term plans (Ameyaw et al., 2019). Green training and development is the process of providing the required practical skills, competencies, and abilities for employees to become pro-environmental in their activities (Ahmad, 2015; Yafi et al., 2021). It is focused on engaging employees and the total workforce of an organization in on-the-job green training and learning, to acquire green skills, competencies, and abilities. These skills and abilities help employees to become aware of resource efficiency by waste reduction, conservation of energy and water, and problem-solving skills to tackle the various environmental challenges. Employee green training and development help organizations to achieve environmental performance. When employees are provided with the appropriate green skills, competencies, behaviours, attitudes, knowledge, education, and abilities through green training and development, organizations are able to achieve their strategic environmental objectives. It is through green training and development that the green human capital of an organization is developed. Green human capital is explained as the totality of green skills, competencies, behaviours, knowledge, education, attitudes, ethics, commitment, motivation, experiences, and abilities possessed by employees in an organization (Chen, 2008; Ma et al., 2021). Therefore, green training and development can help to positively influence the green human capital of the hotel industry in Nigeria.

Various researchers have affirmed in their studies, the role of green training and development towards developing the green human capital of an organization, for employee and organizational environmental management and performance. Renwick et. al (2013) confirmed the impact of green training and development, towards improving employees green skills, competencies, knowledge, commitment, experiences, and abilities for environmental performance. Other scholars in this category are Yafi et. al (2021) in an investigation among employees in private and public sector universities in Malaysia, and Wu et. al (2021) among employees in the public sector in China. Additionally, Nisar et. al (2021) among employees in Malaysia hotel industry, Shoaib et. al (2021) among employees in Pakistan's dairy companies, Usman and Mat (2021) on the impact of green training and development towards achieving environmental performance among organizations in developing countries. Some other researchers have contributed to the literature on green training and development, and its significant influence for green skills, competencies, behaviours, attitudes, ethics, and abilities, which is green human capital. These are, Obaid

and Alias (2015) showing the impact of green training and development on employee and organizational environmental performance through green skills, knowledge, competencies, and abilities acquisition. In addition to these is Khammadee and Ninaroon (2021) among hotel industry employees in Thailand. Green training and development significantly impacts employees green behaviours, skills, attitudes, commitments, and competencies, leading to an improvement in green human capital, and high environmental scorecard for the hotel industry. Green training and development is the change instrument, in which green awareness is transformed from theory or abstract ideas into practice.

Following the outcome from this study, on how green training and development can help to improve the green skills, competencies, knowledge, education, and abilities for green human capital in the investigated hotel in Lagos State, Nigeria, a conceptual framework is designed and proposed in Figure 1. A conceptual framework is defined as a logical instrument, which comprises of various parts and form (Imenda, 2014; Adom et al., 2018). It is primarily used for the organization of thoughts, ideas, designs, conceptualizations, and propositions. The focus of a conceptual framework is also to help make the outcome from a study significant, relevant, reasonable, and satisfactory, from the viewpoint of the researcher (s). It is the end product towards a wider understanding of the focus of study been explored.

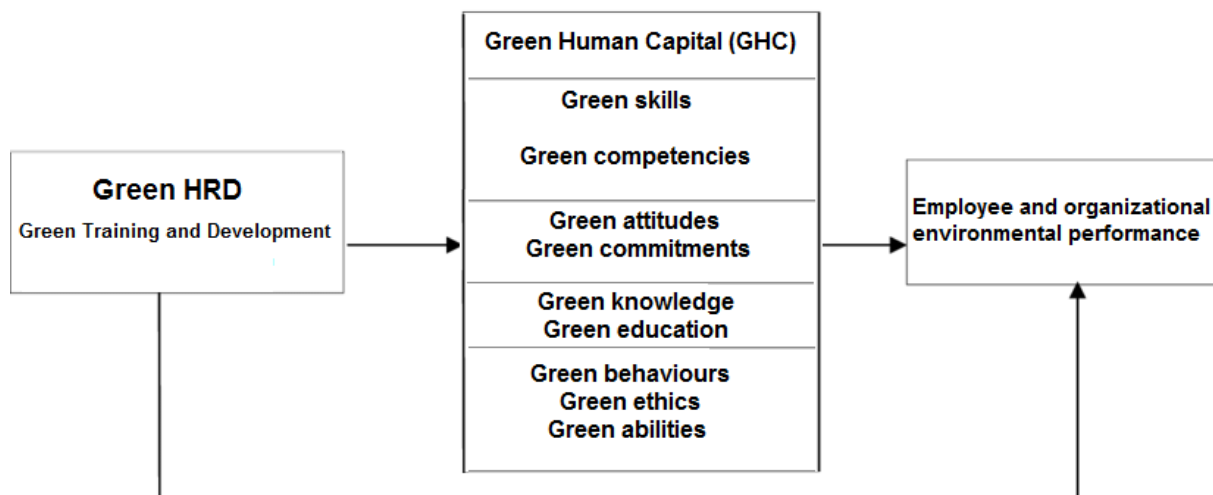


Figure 1: Showing the significant influence of green training and development on green human capital, for employee and hotel industry environmental performance.

Implications for HRD Practice and Research

Through an empirical proof, the outcome from the study affirmed the role of human resource development (HRD) for employee and organizational change and development. Through training and development of employees, HRD has over the past decades been known to implement innovative changes among organizations (Sheehan et al., 2014; Kareem, 2019; Kareem & Hussein, 2019). The role of HRD in the development of human capital for employee and organizational effectiveness, has also been affirmed in several studies (Garavan et al., 2001; Richman, 2015; Otoo et al., 2019). Therefore, the field of HRD can help to design the components of a larger whole for green training and development of employees. This will help to improve the green human capital of organizations, leading to employee and organizational environmental performance. Several HRD scholars in their studies, confirmed the role of HRD in utilizing its strategy of training and development for environmental management and performance of employees and organizations (Williams & Turnbull, 2015;

McGuire & Germain, 2015; Scully-Russ, 2015b). This will help in providing the required green skills, knowledge, competencies, commitments, experiences, behaviours, attitudes, ethics, and abilities for employees and hotel industry to become pro-environmental in all of their activities.

Limitations and Recommendation for Future Research

The outcome from the study is limited, and therefore unable to be generalized to the entire employees in Nigeria's hotel industry. This is because the number of participants interviewed during data collection for the study in the hotel industry in Lagos State are two, and therefore small. As a result, the outcome from the study is unable to be generalized when compared to the whole employees in Nigeria hotel industry. Additionally, findings from a qualitative research cannot be generalized to an entire population, as the process does not involve random sampling and the inability to control statistics (Niaz, 2007). Consequently, future research can focus on larger participants among hotel industry employees in Nigeria, as this can lead to a broader outcome and perspective.

Conclusion

The focus of this study was to explore the awareness on green human resource development (GHRD) practices among hotel industry employees in Lagos State, Nigeria. The outcome from the research revealed that although employees had green awareness from handbills distributed by the manager of the hotel, however, they lacked the required green skills, competencies, behaviours, attitudes, ethics, knowledge, education, and abilities to put into practice what is written on the handbills. These attributes are by-products of green training and development, and help to improve green human capital, which are lacking among employees in the investigated hotel. To implement Green HRD practices among employees in Nigeria hotel industry, green training and development is required to possess green human capital. It will enable employees to become knowledgeable on how to practically get involved in the implementation of GHRD practices, and not just merely reading it on paper. Therefore, to support the outcome from the study, on the significant influence of green training and development on green human capital, a conceptual framework was designed and proposed. The study outcome can therefore provide assistance for human resource executives, managers, practitioners, and organizational leaders in the hotel industry, on the approach to take towards the greening of its employees. Green training and development will help to improve its green human capital scorecard.

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