

Human Capital Management in the Wandering Context of Events – Challenges for the Managerial Staff

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Chapter 12

BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS IN THE USE OF GREEN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN AN AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY COMPANY – A CASE STUDY

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12.1. Introduction

Green initiatives in management are becoming an important factor determining the development and success of an organization. Concern for the environment has also become a new topic in the human resources management strategy of an organization, especially in terms of improving the environmental behavior of employees at work. In the previous chapter, green human resources management (Green HRM) was one of the issues discussed in the context of the social activity of an organization, whereas in this chapter it is the main topic of concern.

Green HRM is discussed in the context of the current environmental megatrends, including the European Green Deal, related to the energy transformation in order to achieve zero emissions by 2050, adopted by the European Commission. Moreover, documents regarding the transition period, the so-called “Fit for 55”, have important implications also for the automotive sector. In order to fulfill the guidelines of the Green Deal, automotive companies are investing up to 10% of their own income in new technologies (Warner, 2020). In order to meet such stringent requirements, more and more organizations are implementing strategies based on the ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) approach, taking into account all aspects related to environmental, social and corporate governance. Enterprise non-financial factor ratings are carried out based on these aspects. The transport sector is responsible for 27% of total CO₂ emissions in the European Union. In order to achieve the goal of the Paris Agreement on not exceeding the global temperature increase by 1.5°C, individual countries and enterprises of industrial sectors are forced to formulate

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interventionist policies and the resulting legal regulations, going beyond the current consumer choices, which are transforming entire sectors towards new technological solutions, creating infrastructure (e.g. electric car charging stations) and generating demand. Road transport accounts for 21.1% of total CO₂ emissions; passenger cars account for 12.8% of emissions in Europe, vans for 2.5%, and trucks and buses for 5.6%. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce cleaner, cheaper and healthier forms of private and public transport, as well as new technological solutions (Pichler, Krenmayr, Schneider, and Brand, 2021, pp. 140-152).

Green HRM practices mean activities in enterprises that relate to all HR processes, as well as human resources management as a whole personnel function, and are associated with the increase in the company's value over time due to these activities. When considering the goals and tasks of Green HRM, it should be assumed that for the automotive sector, which faces enormous challenges, green people management practices will be one of the fundamental factors determining the chances of sector entities success in achieving compliance with current megatrends. The implementation of Green HRM practices can be the basis for building motivation, and hence the awareness of employees and other stakeholders of the automotive sector, which results in various benefits.

This is why the goal of this chapter is to discuss the concept of Green HRM and show what its implementation can look like in a specific type of organization, in this case an automotive industry company. The structure of this chapter has therefore been designed to attain this goal. Firstly, the concept of Green HRM was addressed, hence the author outlines the basic theoretical assumptions determining this concept from an organizational point of view. The next section describes the research methodics applied in her own empirical research. The research was conducted using the case study method. In a further part, the main research findings covering the benefits and limitations of Green HRM implementation in a selected company are presented. In the final section the author summarizes the research results and formulates final conclusions.

12.2. Theoretical foundations for the concept of Green HRM

Based on the available literature on the subject, it can be said that the concept of green human resource management (Green HRM) is part of the sustainable human resource management concept. It refers to long-term activities aimed at attaining the pillars of sustainable management, namely: management by values, care for the environment and social commitment (Piwowar-Sulej, 2021, p. 79). At this point, it is worth explaining what Green HRM means – in brief, it covers these human resource management practices that are developed and implemented to promote behavior among employees which increases the ecological efficiency of the entire company. Its theoretical basis is the assumption that Green HRM consists of intermediary

variables located between the independent variables (stimulators) and dependent variables (ecological efficiency) (Ackermann, 2017, pp. 21-39).

Green HRM is a response to the deepening ecological and social problems in the modern world. The implementation of Green HRM practices is aimed at shaping the pro-ecological attitudes of employees, and thus increasing environmental efficiency. In the subject literature, Green HRM has been defined as the policies, practices and systems that make employees of an organization show pro-environmental behavior which implies individual, social and environmental benefits (Opatha and Arulrajah, 2014, p. 104). In other words, these practices and systems are included in the basic functions of human resources management, such as recruitment and selection, staff appraisal, remuneration system, training and so on.

Authors exploring the issues of Green HRM indicate a number of activities that can be implemented within the so-called green recruitment and selection (Masri and Jaaron, 2017, pp. 474-489; Tang, Chen, Jiang, Paill_e, P., and Jia, 2017, pp. 1-25), green training (Pham, Tuckova, and Chiappetta Jabbour, 2019, pp. 386-390; Pham, Vo Thanh, Tuckova, and Thuy, 2019, pp. 3-4), initiatives aimed at motivating and rewarding employees (Masri and Jaaron, 2017, pp. 474-489; Pham, Tuckova, and Phan, 2019, pp. 446-465; Tang et al., 2017, pp. 1-25). For example, green recruitment and selection emphasize the preference of candidates with professional experience in environmental projects, or communicating the employer's commitment to ecology during recruitment. Moreover, with regard to the appraisal process, the analyzed approach highlights the setting of goals and responsibilities of employees (individual, team) related to the implementation of an ecological initiative, or the inclusion of pro-ecological attitude and behavior in the code of ethical conduct. From the point of view of implementing the Green HRM concept in the enterprise, it is also very important to develop a system of employee rewards for implementing ecological projects (awards, bonuses to remuneration), or incentives for employees to develop green competencies. Activities aimed at promoting green employee behavior in the organization are complemented by environmental training courses in order to develop environmental skills and knowledge (education for environmental activities) (Piwowar-Sulej, 2021, p. 79). Many authors also point to those related to engaging employees in green projects carried out by the organization, and activities aimed at creating a pro-ecological culture in the company (Pham, Tuckova, and Chiappetta Jabbour, 2019a, pp. 386-390).

In light of the above considerations, it can therefore be assumed that sustainable human resource management and Green HRM are based on the same reasons and assumptions. In addition to the undoubted advantages and benefits brought by the practices of Green HRM, there are also barriers that may effectively limit the implementation of this concept in the organization. These limitations include (Bugdol and Stańczyk, 2020, p. 44):

- lack of adequate awareness and training among managerial staff on the types, role and importance of Green HRM practices in environmental management of the organization,
- lack of support for operational staff in this regard,
- cost-intensity of these practices, especially when other competitors do not use them (it should be remembered that Green HRM practices are not commonly distinguished from environmental management).

The conducted literature review showed that Green HRM can generate a number of benefits for the organization in which it is applied. First of all, the implementation of its practices plays an important role in the process of building awareness among employees in the organization. This applies primarily to environmental and ecological awareness, which is extremely important from the point of view of operations context, as well as the results of economic entities in particular industries and sectors (Upadhyay and Dangarwala, 2018, pp. 5-9). In (Muisyo and Qin, 2021, pp. 46-71), it is stressed that Green HRM practices can significantly affect environmental performance. Such effects apply, in particular, to those organizations that undergo voluntary certification of environmental management systems, conduct environmental audits, etc., whereas Green HRM, supports these activities, and also initiates them. In the same context, some authors emphasize that Green HRM is a way to provide the organization with a competitive advantage on the labor market, because care for green, friendly work environment attracts employees and consists a distinguishing factor (cf. Muisyo and Qin, 2021, pp. 46-71). Additionally, as emphasized in the literature, thanks to the implementation of Green HRM activities, an organization can create a new model of pro-ecological organizational culture that promotes achieving environmental goals, thus supporting the idea of sustainable development (Piwowar-Sulej, 2021, p. 78).

Some studies also draw attention to the relation between implementing Green HRM practices and employee behavior. Sardana points out that Green HRM can influence the pro-environmental behavior of employees in such a way that while carrying out tasks at their workplaces, they take into account the obligations and needs resulting from caring for the natural environment and take voluntary, unforced actions to comply with them (Sardana, 2018, pp. 63-73). Moreover, the use of the Green HRM concept in an organization may favor civic behavior in the workplace (Shen, Dumont, and Deng, 2018, pp. 594-622). This applies, in particular, to such behavioral aspects as: commitment, loyalty to the organization, taking initiatives (including pro-environmental), compliance with formalism and regulations whose task is, among others, to counteract the negative impact on the environment, self-development, unforced motivation to develop personal competencies and skills (Organ, Podsakoff, and MacKenzie, 2006, pp. 85-97). Additionally, encouraging employees to behave in a green way in the workplace may influence their behavior outside the work environment, as the patterns of behavior and attitudes in the

organization are transferred to everyday life (Shen, Dumont, and Deng, 2018, pp. 594-622).

It should be noted that there are reasons for which implementing Green HRM results in the following benefits (Suharti and Sugiarto, 2020, pp. 200-211):

- creating an environmentally friendly organizational culture that inspires and motivates to undertake such activities,
- increasing the efficiency of various resources by not wasting them, preventing excessive and unjustified use,
- shaping a positive image of the company and increasing economic and ecological efficiency.

The bibliometric analysis carried out by Piwowar-Sulej shows that the authors dealing with this issue defined the future directions of research on Green HRM as follows (Piwowar-Sulej, 2021, p. 81):

- the impact of the HRM function on environmental performance,
- non-green effects of Green HRM practices,
- Green HRM and other areas of the organization, e.g. logistics, investments, marketing,
- extension of the territorial (various countries) and subjective (industries) research context.

Considering the above, it should be pointed out that most of these directions focus both on the benefits that are supposed to be brought by green people management in terms of environment, working (social) conditions and, ultimately, economic benefits in the long term.

Based on the literature review, Bugdol and Stańczyk stated that future research, which could develop the issue of green people management, should focus on the impact of Green HRM on the following phenomena (Bugdol and Stańczyk, 2020, p. 139):

- professional and organizational loyalty,
- benefits for organizations from using Green HRM,
- employee satisfaction with working in specific industries,
- may also focus on the way gender and age may influence the implementation of Green HRM practices in the work environment,
- employees' attitude and behavior in the work environment.

The literature review has also led to the conclusion that the issue of Green HRM has not been sufficiently explored in companies of the automotive sector. There are singular available publications relating to the GHRM issue in this sector (Raut, Gardas, Luthra, Narkhede, and Mangla, 2020, pp. 925-944). However, in the studied cases, the authors indicated that the degree of implementing Green HRM practices was far from sufficient (Chaudhary, 2019, pp. 630-641). In this context, it can be considered that the automotive sector is not recognized in terms of research. Considering the above, it was concluded that addressing the problem of benefits for

the organization as well as the employees themselves, which result from the use of green practices in human resource management, constitutes a niche research area.

12.3. The empirical research methodics

The main goal of the empirical research was to identify the benefits and limitations to the implementation of Green HRM practices in a particular organizational context of an automotive industry company.

To reach this goal the following research questions were formulated:

1. What practices related to the concept of Green HRM are implemented in the researched company?
2. What are the barriers (limitations) to the application of Green HRM practices in the organizational reality?
3. Does the application of green practices have a positive impact on the current operations of the studied company, and if it does, in what aspects? Can these benefits be measured?

The author used a case study as the research method. Taking into account the situation regarding a niche research area, as well as one economic entity being a subject of research, the decision was taken that this qualitative research method would be the most appropriate, especially as it is a method that can also be used in everyday management practice (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, and Morales, 2007, pp. 236-264; Yin, 2003, pp. 1-15). Its purpose is not to describe but to stimulate reflection on the situations and phenomena described. In a larger number of studies conducted to the same extent in similar organizations, it is possible to draw conclusions on a general level (Obłój and Wąsowska, 2015, pp. 51-60). The case study is also suitable as a research tool for the subject of this chapter due to the fact that the number of variables exceeds the number of possible observations. Therefore, it is used to answer the questions why and how certain phenomena that are the subject of a study take place (Yin, 2003, pp. 109-116). The description of the case allows for a detailed understanding of the issues related to the analyzed phenomenon from the perspective of various aspects and approaches. This method allows to (see Strumińska-Kutra and Koładkiewicz, 2012, pp. 1-40):

- refer to certain criteria, contexts or similar phenomena,
- make changes or support putting forward new theories to explain phenomena,
- explain certain described phenomena, enabling the creation of general concepts.

Due to the fact that in qualitative research in management, which includes the case study method, no hypotheses are formulated, the author formulated only the research questions presented above.

As part of the case study, the interview method was used by asking the selected respondents the same set of questions, the content of which, together with the answers, is included in the next section describing the results of the research. The selection of the sample was purposive. Interviews were conducted with N-1 level

senior management representatives, who are directors with the knowledge of how to obtain information on the analyzed issues.

The survey was conducted in February 2022 at the headquarters of the automotive industry company located in Opolskie Voivodeship. Due to the small number of interviews (conducted, however, with key people in the organization), no codification was done, and mostly full statements were presented. The author's correction was made in cases of repeated answers. Formal consent for the survey was obtained in order to maintain ethical principles, and moreover, only the numbering of respondents was introduced to ensure comfort and trust during the interviews without specifying positions.

12.4. The empirical research findings

Due to the fact that a case study was used in the research, at the beginning the results be presented of the context examination for the main problem, which is Green HRM, hence this section begins with the most important findings regarding the general characteristics of the studied organization.

LELLEK, the company where the research was carried out, sells and maintains cars, mainly from the Volkswagen Group. It is a family business managed by two brothers and the son of one of them. It has been operating continuously since 1994, when it received its first authorization from the Volkswagen brand in Opole. A brief profile of the LELLEK Group is presented in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1. A brief profile of the company under study in numbers

Characteristics	Description
Number of employees	• on 31.12.2021 – 806 people employed under employment contracts
Position in car sales	• eighth place in Poland in 2020 in new car sales
Authorization by car brands	• authorizations for seven car brands: Porsche (3 showrooms), Audi (3 showrooms), Volkswagen Passenger Cars (2 showrooms), Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles (2 showrooms), SKODA (4 showrooms), SEAT (2 showrooms), CUPRA (1 showrooms)
Authorization for used cars	• authorization for approved used cars, i.e. Porsche Approved, Audi Select Plus, Das Welt Auto
Unique authorization	• the only Porsche Classic authorization in Poland (specializes in the repair and restoration of classic Porsche models)
Repairs	• large and state-of-the art Accident Repair Centers
Authorization for services	• authorized services of all Volkswagen Group brands (sold in the Group)
Financial turnover	• over PLN 1 billion
Sold cars	• over 7,500 new cars sold in 2020 • over 1,800 used cars sold in 2020
Hours of repair	• over 130,000 completed service repair hours in 2020 • over 40,000 completed hours of body and paint repairs in 2020

Source: own research data.

The company has seven locations in Poland, namely Opole, Gliwice, Katowice, Kędzierzyn-Koźle, Wrocław, Sopot, and Tarnowskie Góry. A short description of them is provided in Table 12.2.

Table 12.2. A brief description of local units of the company under study

Local unit name	Description
LELLEK Opole	A large automotive complex including Volkswagen, Audi, SKODA and SEAT, a modern body and paint workshop and a used car yard
LELLEK Gliwice	Next to the SKODA, Volkswagen and SEAT showrooms, the largest Audi Center in Poland at that time, with a display of models on the roof of the facility, was established here. Today, the product offer in this location is complemented by the CUPRA brand and an authorized network of used vehicles
LELLEK Kędzierzyn-Koźle	A SKODA showroom which now also offers Volkswagen maintenance services and a wide range of used models
PORSCHE Center	A milestone in the history of the Lellek Group. The center was established with locations in Katowice, Sopot and Wrocław. On this occasion, the product offer is complemented by the unique Porsche SPA & Detailing and the only certified repair and renovation point for Porsche classics in Poland
LELLEK Wrocław	A result of the co-creation of a network of Audi, Volkswagen, SKODA, SEAT and CUPRA brand showrooms in Wrocław
LELLEK Katowice	An Audi showroom established a few years ago
LELLEK Tarnowskie Góry	The SKODA showroom which is the 'youngest' dealership of the Group

Source: own research data.

During the interviews, the respondents were asked questions aimed at identifying the practices of Green HRM implemented in the company. In their opinion, green practices are primarily activities related to environmental management. They said that:

- “(...)the most important: reminding about the obligatory segregation of all waste – from administrative employees, to mechanics and body and paint departments; respecting all environmental protection rules while creating and managing facilities, using e.g. varnishing machines, oil disposal, etc.; implementing the maximum amount of biodegradable materials, e.g. paper pens commonly used by employees and customers; eliminating plastic packing tape in favor of paper tape; eliminating all kinds of plastic bags in favor of paper bags, emphasizing at least 60% of recycled paper; using only paper packaging, preferably several times; using only recycled paper for printers, eliminating higher-quality paper in favor of kraft; reminding about segregation and need for double-sided printing (at least once a quarter)” (respondent #1);

- “(...) we pay most attention to waste management. We involve all employees in all departments in this process. Managers and foremen regularly control the behavior of staff and remind about the rules of waste segregation. The management ensures free access to appropriate containers for segregated waste. Another important activity is the departure from using plastic packaging in favor of packaging made of biodegradable materials, mainly paper” (respondent #2);
- “(...) these practices are: waste segregation; glassware at meetings (drinks served in glasses); water/drinks purchased in glass bottles; eco packaging; water saving; changing gift habits (overproduction) into charity events, e.g. online charity Christmas card; education: *Ekò LELLEK* in internal communication HrNews @ – on segregation, water saving, etc.” (respondent #3).

Bearing in mind the above opinions, it can be concluded that most of these tasks are obligatory activities (e.g. waste segregation) resulting from environmental regulations (e.g. abandoning plastic) as well as the environmental management system aimed at improving activities in this area, regardless of the implementation or application of HRM practices. Among the activities that go beyond compulsory activity, the respondents indicated the following:

- “Building environmental awareness among employees has many aspects: implementing a code of ethics which emphasizes the principles of economy and care for the environment; engaging in activities for electromobility, rewarding employees for active promotion of electric cars; external events with a strong emphasis on electromobility; employees encouraging customers to test electric cars e.g. over the weekend; in 2022, a large action of planting a forest (reconstruction) is planned together with the Opole Forest District, i.e. 1.48 ha in the Dąbrowa Forest District, where about 11.000 trees will be planted; during this campaign, additional education of customers to promote environmental friendliness; motto one car purchased = one tree planted; After purchasing the car, customers will receive a certificate with “sunken” seeds to be planted anywhere” (respondent #1);
- “The latest activity on the part of LELLEK is the active restoration of the natural environment by planting trees. When it comes to purchasing office supplies, we prefer products with a significant share of recycled materials” (respondent #2).

The respondents highlighted the broadly understood ecology. Taking advantage of the fact that they operate in the industry of modern technologies, they have a chance to promote electromobility among customers and restore green areas, thus building environmental awareness and contributing to the preservation of the natural environment.

The respondents were also asked about the limitations in the application of Green HRM practices. They had the biggest problem with this question. This results from the fact that since the very identification of green practices relates, in their opinion, to environmental management, the barriers also apply to the same. They said that:

- “(...) it will certainly be easier if society puts more and more emphasis on ecological values. Sometimes the company’s activities do not matter much to the recipient. There is still a belief that ecological means expensive. The obstacle in this action is low environmental awareness - information on environmental protection ends at the stage of early primary school - we must engage in increasing the knowledge of adult clients (...) Green HR and ecological activities, despite their growing popularity, are not very highly rated for direct contribution to business. Top management does not always recognize a cause-and-effect connection between pro-ecological activities and the sale of products or services. Due to this purely profit-oriented thinking, some actions do not appeal to conservative directorships” (respondent #1);
- “(...) unfortunately, not everyone is willing to make additional efforts to implement pro-ecological activities. Even among our staff, we notice cases of ignoring the recommendations in the field of waste segregation or saving raw materials (...) At LELLEK, I don’t see any difficulties in applying Green HRM practices. The company’s top management is committed to promoting environmental practices” (respondent #2);
- “(...) these difficulties include a mental difficulty – change of habits; appropriate infrastructure – e.g. easy availability of appropriate waste bins, appropriate segregation on a global level (internal state solutions)” (respondent #3).

It follows from the above that the respondents look for obstacles, above all, among customers and employees, in the lack of adequate awareness. However, they equate Green HRM practices with environmental management. What is significant here is the statement of respondent No. 2, who indicates that he/she does not notice any difficulties in applying green HRM practices, bearing in mind segregation of waste or saving raw materials.

The researcher was also interested whether the benefits of Green HRM practices are measurable, i.e. if they be counted somehow, and whether there are any non-measurable benefits. In response the respondents said:

- “(...) at the moment, the LELLEK group is adopting soft conversions as indicators of success related to ecological campaigns, e.g. the number of mailing/SMS openings with eco information; number of clicks on call to action buttons in mailing/SMS; using UTM tags to check whether people who received an eco-message within the next 30 days take action on the website www.lellek.pl, e.g. browsing car offers or a message via chat. In addition, the benefits are measurable, because all implemented activities have a tutor responsible for reporting the effects – at the moment we see a lot of positive moments in our actions, especially in the direct reactions of customers” (respondent #1);
- “(...) the costs of waste management are quantifiable. The analysis of the costs of waste management revealed that in 2021 the fees for waste disposal were reduced thanks to the sale of raw materials recovered in the segregation process. In addition to the monetary dimension, the marketing effect of publishing

information about our pro-ecological activities is also valuable. Actions promoting electromobility attract a lot of interest. Accurately tracking the readings of our actions on the Internet allows us to determine the conversion to purchases. In 2021, pro-ecological actions around the issues of electromobility generated additional sales” (respondent #2);

- “(...) it’s hard to say. Financial matters are beyond my competence. Non-financial benefits are primarily PR benefits related to the company’s image” (respondent #3);
- “(...) promoting saving brings not only tangible benefits in the workplace, but good habits created at work allow households to save” (respondent #2).

The research summary and final conclusions from the conducted empirical research are presented in the next section.

12.5. Final conclusions and research summary

The main goal of the empirical research was to identify the benefits and limitations to the implementation of Green HRM practices in a particular organizational context of an automotive industry company. Referring to the research findings presented in the previous section, it can be concluded that this goal has been reached, especially owing to the ability to answer the formulated research questions.

Firstly, it should be noted that the preliminary assessment of the studied organization shows it as pro-environmental – oriented and open to contemporary ecological and environmental challenges. Everyone can perceive it everywhere, i.e. in sales halls, service workshops, etc., most likely due to two reasons. First of all, the image-related needs, forcing industry entities to have environmentally friendly surroundings in which cars are purchased and services provided. Strong competition causes a sort of race for design, customer comfort, professionalism and quality of service. Secondly, these are regulations for the sector, which is forced to reduce emissions through the use of hybrid solutions, electromobility, etc. Hence, the natural consequence of this is care for the proper management of waste and resources, also during the provision and implementation of services.

In terms of the first research question related directly to the types of practices and the resulting benefits of using Green HRM, the following were indicated by the respondents, mainly connected with infrastructure, equipment and resources (waste segregation, waste disposal stations, recycling, promotion of electromobility, pro-environmental events, abandoning plastics in current operations), and less to the individual elements of the Green HRM processes.

In the case of the second research question, concerning limitations in the implementation of green HRM practices, the respondents indicated the following issues: legislation forcing selective waste collection, introduction of electric cars, etc. It was also emphasized that society (thus the customers who buy cars) has low environmental awareness. Similarly to the first research question, the respondents

referred to pro-ecological generalizations without any details that may compose Green HRM practices.

As for the third research question, the mentioned benefits include mainly the intangible, image-related ones, the evaluation of which in relation to Green HRM alone seems difficult. The effectiveness of an activity promoting an organization as ecological can be evaluated relatively easily, e.g. through the ratio of inputs to effects. In the case of the benefits of Green HRM, both internal and image-related, evaluating them is much more complicated. The topic associated with benefits did not appear in the interviews, but it can be presumed that the benefits related to employee behavior have not appeared yet, due to the fact that this is a relatively new approach. This behavior should be expected to emerge soon. It is worth pointing out that this is a long-term process.

It should be underlined that the current status of environmental activities in the studied organization, which is not surprising, mainly concerns the care for the environment as a whole at a general level, going beyond Green HRM, and even not taking it into account sometimes. It is suitable for concepts such as environmental management, sustainable management and the circular economy, without a partial breakdown into organizational areas such as green sales, green logistics and Green HRM.

Considering the above, it can be said that it was also possible to achieve the goal of the chapter. The author managed to discuss the concept of Green HRM and showed what its implementation can look like in a specific type of organization, which was an automotive industry company.

Finally, it can be said that the voice of the respondents regarding the level of pro-environmental awareness of both customers buying cars and using maintenance services is worth highlighting, as well as the management and employees of the studied organization. Without the systematic building of this awareness, Green HRM practices will be indistinguishable within the huge set of pro-environmental activities, and therefore can merely remain in the world of ideas.

SUMMARY

Thus, we have arrived to the end of this monograph. In accordance with its title, the subject of interest was human capital management in the wandering context of events, which the authors wanted to discuss from the perspective of challenges for the managerial staff.

Hence this journey began with the contextual effects on HCM practices in three types organization, i.e. multinational companies, the armed forces and universities. In the context of multinational companies, the authors identified the differences and similarities within the scope of employee development and competency management between local subsidiaries belonging to Central European MNCs located in Eastern and Western Europe. In the context of the armed forces, the study identified the differences and similarities in the approach to the training process in two scientific disciplines, namely management & quality sciences and military science. Additionally, the authors' own concept of the training process in the Polish Armed Forces was proposed. In terms of universities, a competency model of the research and administrative support staff was proposed, which can boost the process of transforming traditional Polish universities into entrepreneurial academic entities.

The next stop in this journey regarded HCM practices in the context of work virtualization and digitalization. Therefore, the authors presented the effects of virtual work on the formation of relations between people at their places of employment. Moreover, the study characterized and highlighted the role of selected digital technologies used in employee development processes in contemporary organizations. Furthermore, the benefits and threats of knowledge management supported with artificial intelligence algorithms from the end users' perspective were discussed. In addition, it was also determined whether the representatives of Generation Z which is referred to as the digital generation, are aware of the risks associated with the new technological developments.

Another stop centered on HCM practices in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Here the authors juxtaposed the results of the research on the job satisfaction level of teachers in Poland during the pandemic with the results of research conducted in this area in other countries. The study also juxtaposed the practices within the scope of employee development in businesses in Poland in two periods of time, i.e. before and during the pandemic. At the same time, the authors identified the competencies which are particularly desirable in the work environment so strongly affected by the pandemic. Similarly, the meaning of role and tasks of HR Business Partner in companies were compared in two periods of time, i.e. before and during the pandemic.

The final stop in this journey was the human side of business as a modern contextual factor for HCM practices. In this context the study provided the support for the thesis that that job security should be considered as an important interest of employees. The authors also proposed the conceptual model of the relations between the social activity of an organization, and employee satisfaction and commitment. Moreover, the concept of Green HRM was also discussed, showing what its implementation could look like in a specific type of organization, such as an automotive industry company.

To sum up, the authors believe that the goal set for this monograph has been achieved, also owing to the presentation of the empirical research findings and conceptual developments in the selected HRM problems in various contexts.

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