

Call for Papers in Human Resource Management Review

Publisher - Elsevier B.V. | ABDC Rank: A | SSCI 5-Year Impact Factor: 4.299 | ABS Level 3 | SCOPUS Abstracted

Special Issue Sustainable HRM: Perspectives, Practices, and Prognoses

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Manuscripts can be submitted for consideration between June 1 and June 30, 2018.¹

A paradigm shift is evolving in people management policies and practices that aim to integrate HRM with sustainability. Organizations are increasingly taking responsibility for individual and organizational behavioral outcomes for the creation of a sustainable eco-system.

The overarching goal of the Special Issue is to extend the theoretical understanding of human resource practices for sustainable HRM and link it to the sustainability of organizations and societies. In particular, the objectives of this issue are to theoretically ground the concept of sustainable HRM, understand the potential factors that affect sustainable HRM, identify the possible consequences of following sustainable HRM practices and envision the future of sustainable HRM.

Sustainable human resource management has been conceptualized primarily based on the extent to which a particular outcome (internal or external) has been emphasized (Kramar, 2013). Broadly, there exist three schools of thought. The first approach emphasizes on reproducing capability. Here, the focus is on creating such HR systems that can manage social, environmental, and demographic pressures to last long and achieve organizational goals (Ehnert, 2009a). The second approach emphasizes on the triple bottom line consisting of economic, environmental and social consequences. Scholars argue that HR practices that are oriented toward triple bottom line are sustainable in nature primarily because of their ability to create socio-, eco-, and economy-friendly image in the minds of the stakeholders (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006). The third approach emphasizes on coupling the earlier two approaches together by acknowledging and appreciating that HR systems and external economical, ecological, and social factors are interrelated (Renwick, Redman, & Maguire, 2011). This special issue seeks to ground, explore, and examine this third approach which focuses on understanding sustainable HRM by connecting the internal and external outcomes.

Increasing popularity of sustainable human resource management (HRM) among academics, practitioners and researchers is because of its positive consequences not only for the organizations but also for the society, economy, and environment. It makes the internal HR systems last long and links them effectively with external outcomes, the triple bottom line. It is relatively a

¹ *Authors planning to submit a paper are encouraged to submit a short abstract for consideration between October 1 and December 31, 2017*

new concept and requires considerable attention from scholars to understand the theoretical underpinnings and suggest practical implications of this concept.

De Prins *et al.* (2014) suggested the need for sustainable HRM and Kramar (2013) hypothesized that sustainable HRM may become the next leading HRM approach, beyond strategic HRM. But there is no consensus about a clear definition of sustainable HRM (Ehnert, 2014).

These contrasting theoretical views on sustainable HRM pose interesting challenges to our current HRM theories and practices. First of all, established findings on employee engagement, employee wellness, diversity management, work-life balance, autonomy and empowerment, self-leadership, strategic staffing, employee attrition, performance and reward systems, and greening the organization may barely be sufficient to advance an evolving theme like sustainable HRM. Further, although the Human Resource Department of a company is said to have the capability to play a significant role in the creation of their company's sustainability culture (Harmon, Fairfield, & Wirtenberg, 2010), the HR function itself is still uncomfortable with the way its role is regarded in organizations, and conflicted about its ability to impact (Cohen, 2010). Why, however, is sustainability relevant for the HR function and how can this concept be fruitfully defined and applied (Ehnert & Harry, 2012)? It is now well accepted that at a macro-level the organization has a relationship to its economic and social environments and is linked to the societal and ecological sustainability. But at a micro-level the HRM field can (or should) no longer neglect the societal discourse on sustainability and corporate sustainability because this is dealt with in practice and that HRM could make important contributions to corporate sustainable development (Cohen *et al.*, 2012; Jackson *et al.*, 2010). In the years to come sustainability is likely to take the center stage and management research is likely to focus on this theme.

This debate, both at the macro- and micro-level, is just not about profitability alone. It is now linked to the shortage of talented human resources, unfavorable demographic dynamics of workforce in certain societies, and increasing awareness on employee-welfare. Hence the argument is that fostering the sustainable HRM system itself becomes a 'survival strategy' for organizations dependent on high quality employees (Ehnert, 2009b).

As academics and human resource practitioners converge on the importance of sustainable HRM, there is a need to understand the divergent perspectives on the definitions and interpretations of sustainability in literature, the dimensions of the organization and HRM where sustainability is critical, the implementation process of sustainable HRM, policies and practices that foster sustainable HRM and the ethical or social responsibility aspects of sustainable HRM.

The target audience for the special issue is academics and research scholars. The primary implications should be for stimulating future theory development and empirical research but manuscripts should also have implications for policy/practice from an academic perspective. The special issue seeks manuscripts that will have an impact, particularly in terms of adding value and novel insights to the literature on sustainable HRM. Conceptual papers building on prior, or proposing future, research dealing with cross-country, cross-culture, inter-disciplinary, and comparative work among countries/ industries/companies on the theme are particularly encouraged. Submitted papers should not, however, be original qualitative or quantitative studies.

Manuscripts should focus on micro-, macro-, or multi-level phenomena relating to the function and processes of sustainable HRM, as well as topics in allied fields that influence, or are influenced by, HR activities. Papers introducing or helping to advance the understanding of sustainable HRM topics or issues are also strongly encouraged. Manuscripts be well written and must be readable in terms of clarity of thought, language and writing.

Submissions may introduce new concepts and/or new theories, models, or frameworks to help explain and understand sustainable HRM-related phenomena. Review articles and critical examinations of the existing concepts, theories, models, and frameworks are also welcome if they make a unique conceptual/theoretical contribution. Some specific topics of potential interest for authors/researchers include, but are not limited to:

1. Evolution of sustainable HRM.
2. Comparative development of sustainable HRM in multinational corporations.
3. Comparative development of sustainable HRM in different countries.
4. Workforce diversity and sustainable HRM.
5. Sustainable HRM across the workforce pyramid.
6. Interrelation of sustainable HRM with various stakeholders of the organizations.
7. Impact of sustainable HRM on organizational performance.
8. Impact of sustainable HRM on employee performance.
9. Interrelation between sustainable HRM and happiness index of society.
10. Value creation through sustainable HRM.
11. Role of HRM in creation of sustainable organizations.
12. Challenges in creating sustainable jobs in various sectors of the economy.
13. Workforce and work place: Factors that foster sustainable HRM practices.
14. Interrelationship between psychological capital and sustainable HRM.
15. Challenges in measuring sustainable HRM.
16. The future of sustainable HRM.

Submission process: Authors planning to submit a paper are **encouraged to submit a short** abstract for consideration between **October 1 and December 31, 2017**. **Abstracts should be e-mailed to Dr. M. Bhaskara Rao at dr.mbhaskararao@gmail.com**. **Authors with accepted abstracts, and those directly submitting full manuscripts for consideration**, can do so between **June 1 and 30, 2018**. Details on the manuscript submission process will be made available nearer to the submission window. Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the *Human Resource Management Review Guide for Authors* available on the journal web page (<http://www.journals.elsevier.com/human-resource-management-review>). All submitted manuscripts will be subject to the *Human Resource Management Review's* double-blind review process.

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