

Trends in Sustainable Human Resource Management: A Bibliometric and Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to map research trends in Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM) and synthesize empirical findings on its implementation across industrial sectors through a combined bibliometric analysis and Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The research subjects were journal articles indexed in the Scopus database, retrieved using the keywords "Sustainable Human Resource Management" OR "Sustainable HRM" and published between 2019 and 2024, which yielded 446 articles screened following the PRISMA protocol into a final set of 50 articles for in-depth qualitative synthesis. Bibliometric mapping was performed using VOSviewer to examine publication trends, leading journals, contributing countries, and keyword co-occurrence. The results show a steady increase in publications, peaking in 2022, with Sustainability (Switzerland) as the most prolific journal and China, India, and Malaysia as the leading contributing countries. The most frequent keywords were human resource, sustainability, resource management, and sustainable development, alongside emerging themes of Green HRM, corporate social responsibility, employee well-being, and HR digitalization. However, only a small proportion of studies address the economic impact of Sustainable HRM on profitability, and research remains concentrated in developed countries. This study recommends that future research expand its geographical scope to developing countries, conduct cross-industry comparisons, and explore the role of artificial intelligence and big data in advancing sustainable HRM practices.

Keywords: Sustainable HRM; bibliometric analysis; systematic literature review; Green HRM; corporate social responsibility.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan memetakan tren riset Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM) dan mensintesis temuan empiris mengenai penerapannya di berbagai sektor industri melalui pendekatan gabungan analisis bibliometrik dan Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Subjek penelitian adalah artikel jurnal yang terindeks pada basis data Scopus, diperoleh menggunakan kata kunci "Sustainable Human Resource Management" OR "Sustainable HRM" yang terbit antara tahun 2019-2024, sehingga diperoleh 446 artikel yang kemudian disaring mengikuti protokol PRISMA hingga terpilih 50 artikel untuk sintesis kualitatif mendalam. Pemetaan bibliometrik dilakukan menggunakan VOSviewer untuk mengkaji tren publikasi, jurnal terkemuka, negara kontributor, dan kemunculan bersama kata kunci.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan peningkatan jumlah publikasi yang konsisten, mencapai puncaknya pada tahun 2022, dengan Sustainability (Switzerland) sebagai jurnal paling produktif serta China, India, dan Malaysia sebagai negara kontributor utama. Kata kunci yang paling sering muncul adalah human resource, sustainability, resource management, dan sustainable development, disertai tema yang berkembang seperti Green HRM, corporate social responsibility, employee well-being, dan digitalisasi SDM. Namun, hanya sebagian kecil studi yang membahas dampak ekonomi Sustainable HRM terhadap profitabilitas, dan penelitian masih terkonsentrasi di negara maju. Studi ini merekomendasikan agar penelitian mendatang memperluas cakupan geografis ke negara berkembang, melakukan perbandingan lintas industri, serta mengeksplorasi peran kecerdasan buatan dan big data dalam memajukan praktik Sustainable HRM.

Kata kunci: Sustainable HRM; analisis bibliometrik; tinjauan literatur sistematis; Green HRM; tanggung jawab sosial perusahaan.

A. INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, the concept of Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM) has garnered significant attention among scholars and practitioners as a response to increasing environmental and social pressures faced by organizations (Liang et al., 2024; Liang & Li, 2025; Wojtczuk-Turek et al., 2024). Sustainable HRM integrates economic, social, and environmental dimensions into HRM practices to ensure the long-term sustainability of organizations (Akbar et al., 2024; Griep et al., 2024; Järlström et al., 2024; Peña et al., 2024). For instance, practices such as green recruitment, environmentally oriented training, and sustainable compensation have been increasingly adopted by global firms (Cheng et al., 2024). Furthermore, the paradigm shift from Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) to Sustainable HRM indicates that sustainability is no longer merely a component of corporate social responsibility but has evolved into a strategic factor in achieving competitive advantage (Abu-Mahfouz et al., 2023).

Empirical studies suggest that Sustainable HRM positively influences organizational performance, both in terms of employee productivity and public image (Faisal, 2023; Madero-Gómez et al., 2023; Murillo-Ramos et al., 2023; Sepahvand et al., 2023). For example, Dabić et al. (2023) found that companies implementing Sustainable HRM were able to enhance environmental performance while strengthening employee engagement. Similarly, Tutar et al. (2023) demonstrated that Sustainable HRM can help address the paradox between economic efficiency and corporate social responsibility. However, most of these studies are limited to the context of multinational corporations and have not extensively examined their application in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (Papademetriou et al., 2023; Sheikhi & Yousefi, 2023).

Although interest in Sustainable HRM continues to grow, significant research gaps remain concerning its definition, conceptual framework, and measurement approaches (Järlström et al., 2023; Kranthi et al., 2023). Much of the literature emphasizes environmental and economic aspects, while social dimensions such as employee well-being and diversity receive comparatively less attention (Akdeniz, 2023; Sypniewska et al., 2023).

Moreover, there is a lack of studies that investigate the impact of Sustainable HRM in specific industry contexts such as manufacturing and services (Fadhil & Al Hussein, 2023; Jia et al., 2023; Nayal et al., 2023). Another notable gap is the limited number of studies utilizing Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methods to synthesize the fragmented findings on Sustainable HRM (Anlesinya & Susomrith, 2023; Gomes et al., 2023; Rajhans & Bhavsar, 2023).

The study holds significant value as it provides a more comprehensive understanding of Sustainable HRM practices and their impact on organizational performance. By employing the SLR method, this study addresses existing literature gaps and offers a clearer conceptual framework for Sustainable HRM (Agarwal et al., 2022; Ahn & Avila, 2022; Lulewicz-Sas et al., 2022). Furthermore, the findings offer practical guidance for HR practitioners in designing more inclusive and sustainable HR strategies (Salama et al., 2022; Savanevičienė et al., 2022).

The main objective of this study is to synthesize empirical findings related to Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM) using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. This study focuses on identifying best practices implemented across various industrial sectors, analyzing the influence of Sustainable HRM on organizational performance from economic, social, and environmental perspectives, and exploring existing research gaps. Jannat et al. (2021) highlighted the significance of practices such as green recruitment and environmentally based training, while Lee et al. (2021) found that Sustainable HRM can enhance both productivity and corporate image. Additionally, Sukalova and Ceniga (2020) as well as Anlesinya and Susomrith (2020) noted ongoing conceptual and measurement inconsistencies in Sustainable HRM, which this study aims to address by offering recommendations for future research and practical implementation guidelines.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

To explore research trends in Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM) over the past six years, this study employed a combination of bibliometric analysis and a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), utilizing data retrieved from the Scopus database (Chae et al., 2020; Faisal, 2023; Khan & Muktar, 2020; Tutar et al., 2023). The bibliometric approach was used to map the evolution of the field, identify influential authors, and analyze keyword trends and publication patterns. In parallel, the SLR approach was implemented to synthesize research findings in a systematic and structured manner.

During the data collection process, the authors used the keyword “Sustainable Human Resource Management” and identified 13,870 research articles in the Scopus database. When the search was refined using the keywords “Sustainable Human Resource Management” OR “Sustainable HRM,” a more specific set of 446 articles was retrieved, aligning closely with the focus of this study. To ensure the relevance and quality of the articles analyzed, specific inclusion criteria were applied: articles published between 2019 and 2024, classified as journal articles, in final publication stage, and written in English. After applying these filters, a total of 446 relevant journal articles were included for further analysis. The data was collected on March 26, 2025, ensuring the inclusion of the most recent studies that reflect current trends in sustainable HRM.

For the bibliometric analysis, VOSviewer software was used to visualize collaboration networks among authors, citation patterns, and keyword co-occurrence

relationships in the Sustainable HRM literature. Meanwhile, the SLR approach involved the selection and categorization of articles based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria to develop thematic mappings and identify dominant research trends in the field of Sustainable HRM. By integrating the bibliometric and SLR methods, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the research landscape in Sustainable HRM, identifies existing research gaps, and outlines emerging trends and future research agendas (Anlesinya & Susomrith, 2020; Kumar et al., 2020; Macke & Genari, 2019; Ribeiro & Gavronski, 2021).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Current Trends in Research Related to Sustainable HRM

Research trends in Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM) have shown a notable upward trajectory over the past five years. Based on the data presented in Figure 1, the number of publications on this topic has experienced a significant increase, particularly since 2019. In 2019, there were 42 publications, which rose to 51 in 2020, followed by 44 in 2021. The number surged to 86 publications in 2022 and continued to rise with 83 publications in 2023 and 108 in 2024. This growing trend reflects an increasing academic interest in sustainability issues within the field of human resource management.

The projection for 2025 also indicates a strong outlook, with 32 publications already registered in the early months of the year. This growth suggests that Sustainable HRM has become a rapidly evolving research area, driven by the rising awareness among corporations and academics regarding the strategic role of sustainability in workforce management.

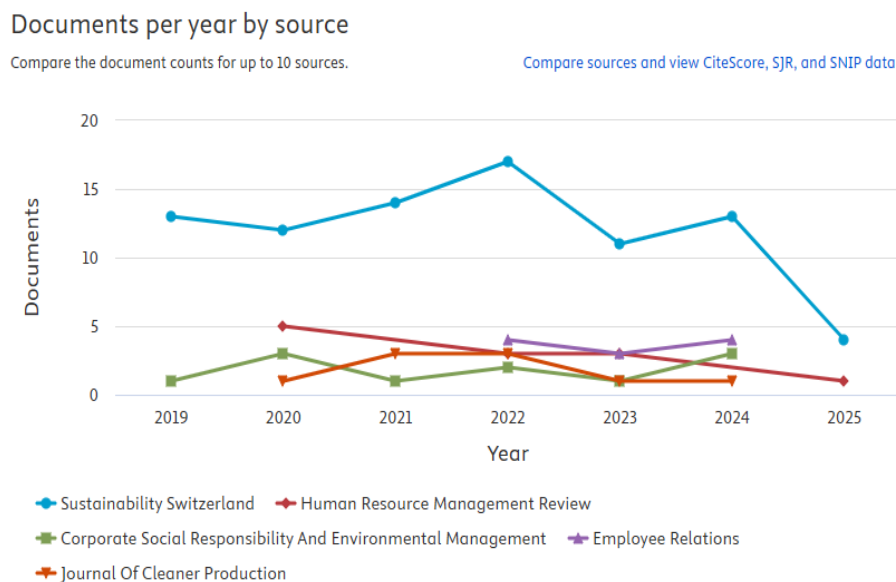


Figure 1. Number of Publications on Human Resource Management in the Scopus Database

Documents by country or territory

Compare the document counts for up to 15 countries/territories.

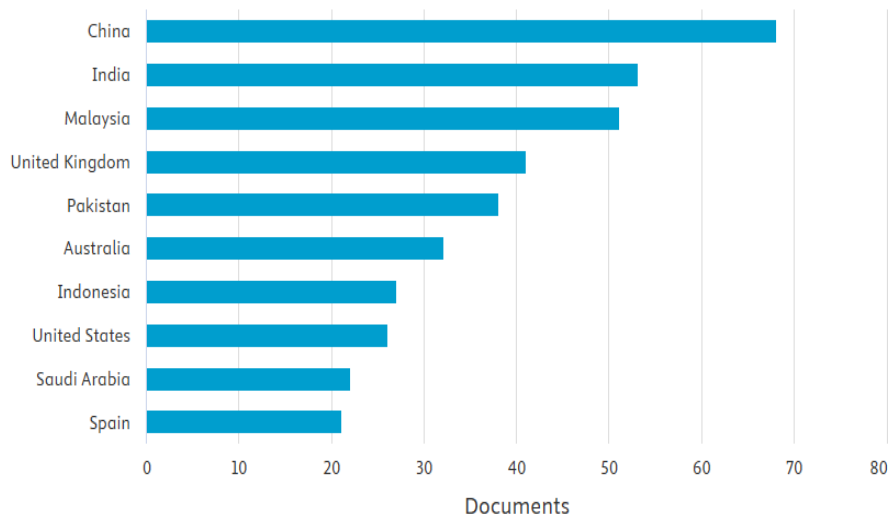


Figure 2. Leading 10 Countries Contributing to Sustainable Human Resource Management Research

From a geographical perspective, Figure 2 reveals that Sustainable HRM research is predominantly led by several countries with the highest number of publications. China ranks first with 68 publications, followed by India (53 publications), and Malaysia (51 publications). The United Kingdom (41 publications) and Pakistan (38 publications) also make notable contributions in this field. Other active countries include Australia (32 publications), Indonesia (27 publications), the United States (26 publications), and Saudi Arabia (22 publications). The dominance of countries such as China, India, and Malaysia reflects a growing focus on integrating sustainability into HRM strategies, particularly in the Asian region, where sustainable practices are increasingly emphasized. Indonesia's position, with 27 publications, highlights both ongoing engagement and the opportunity for further exploration of Sustainable HRM within local and regional contexts.

This study also employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to trace and analyze research trends related to Sustainable HRM from 2019 to 2025. The articles were sourced from the Scopus database, applying inclusion criteria that required articles to be written in English, available in full-text format, and peer-reviewed. Articles limited to abstracts or deemed irrelevant to the topic were excluded. The SLR process consisted of four main phases: identification (searching for articles using relevant keywords), screening (initial selection based on titles and abstracts), eligibility (full-text review to ensure alignment with the study's objectives), and inclusion (further analysis using bibliometric and thematic approaches). During the analysis phase, VOSviewer software was used to map relationships among authors and keyword networks. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify key research trends, sustainable HRM practices, and the challenges and impacts of these practices on organizational performance. To ensure the validity and reliability of the

findings, a quality assessment was conducted on the selected articles, evaluating the methodological rigor and relevance of each study.

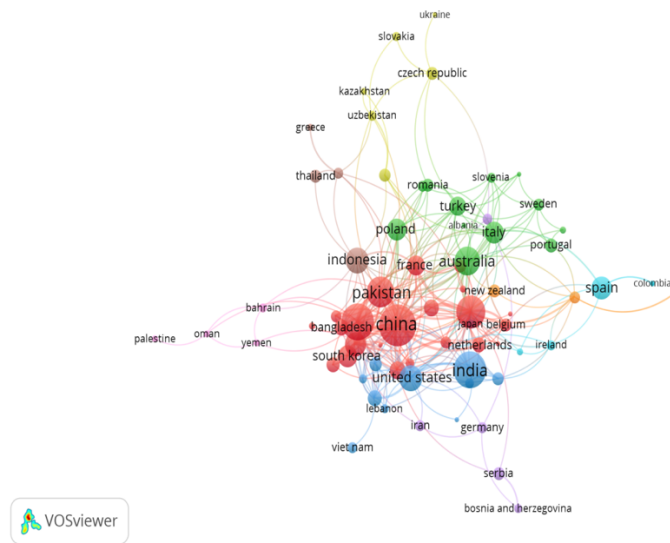


Figure 3. Countries Contributing to Research on Sustainable Human Resource Management

Figure 3 presents a visual representation generated using VOSviewer, illustrating the collaboration map among countries in scientific publications. Each node represents a country, with the size indicating the level of publication output or collaborative activity. Different colors represent clusters of countries that form distinct collaborative networks, implying stronger cooperation among countries within the same cluster. Connecting lines indicate research collaboration, where thicker lines represent more intensive cooperation. The visualization shows that countries such as China, Pakistan, India, and the United States serve as central hubs of collaboration, while Indonesia is part of a major cluster actively engaged in partnerships with other Asian countries.

Table 1. Phases of Systemic Literature Review (SLR)

Phase	Process
Identification	- Identifying relevant research keywords. - Utilizing the Scopus journal database. - Collecting relevant scholarly articles. - Removing duplicate entries.
Screening	- Establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria. - Filtering articles based on titles. - Reviewing abstracts for relevance.
Eligibility	- Examining the full texts of the articles.

Inclusion	- Ensuring alignment with the research objectives.
	- Excluding invalid or irrelevant articles.
	- Conducting bibliometric analysis on the selected articles.
	- Synthesizing the key findings.

Prisma Flow Diagram of Literature Selection

In conducting this Systematic Literature Review (SLR), we adhered to the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) standards to ensure transparency and traceability throughout the article selection process. The literature search was conducted using the Scopus database, employing the primary keyword “Sustainable Human Resource Management,” which initially yielded 13,870 articles. To narrow the scope of the study, we refined the search using the combined keywords “Sustainable Human Resource Management” OR “Sustainable HRM,” resulting in a more specific and relevant set of 446 articles. Subsequently, we applied strict filtering criteria to include only articles that met the following requirements: published between 2019 and 2024, classified as journal articles, published in their final form, and written in English. After applying these criteria, the number of articles remained at 446, as all met the specified standards. The data collection was conducted on March 26, 2025, thereby reflecting the most recent developments in the field of Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM).

The next stage involved the screening process, in which article titles and abstracts were reviewed to assess initial relevance. From the initial 446 articles, 298 were excluded due to lack of relevance to the theoretical or methodological context required. The subsequent eligibility stage entailed a full-text review of the remaining 148 articles. At this point, 98 articles were further excluded for failing to provide sufficient analytical depth, lacking theoretical support, or being based merely on opinion without strong scientific grounding. Ultimately, 50 articles were included in the qualitative synthesis and analyzed in depth. The PRISMA flow diagram offers a systematic overview of how the literature was gathered, filtered, and analyzed, ensuring that the findings are derived exclusively from highly relevant and credible sources.

Table 2. Prisma Summary (Based on Actual Data)

Stage	Selection Process	Number of Articles
Identification	Initially identified through Scopus database search	13.870
	Refined using additional keyword combination (OR)	446

Initial	Filtered by publication year (2019–2024),	446
Filtering	document type, status, and language	
Screening	Screened based on title and abstract	446
	Articles excluded due to irrelevance	298
Eligibility	Full-text articles assessed for eligibility	148
	Articles excluded due to not meeting scientific criteria	98
Inclusion	Articles included in the qualitative synthesis	50

Bibliometric Analysis

Publication Trends and Leading Journals

Based on the visualized data, publication trends in the field of Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM) vary across journal sources. *Sustainability Switzerland* stands out as the most prolific journal in terms of publication volume, demonstrating a notable increase from 2019, peaking in 2022, followed by slight fluctuations in 2023 and 2024, and a significant decline in 2025. This suggests that the journal has served as a primary outlet for research on sustainability in HRM, although interest appears to have waned in the most recent year.

Documents per year by source

Compare the document counts for up to 10 sources.

[Compare sources and view CiteScore, SJR, and SNIP data](#)



Figure 4. Number of Publications on Human Resource Management in the Scopus Database

In contrast, the *Human Resource Management Review* displays a different pattern. While the number of publications in this journal was relatively high in 2020, there has been a gradual decline through 2025. This indicates that although the topic of sustainable HRM has garnered attention within the journal, the research trend has not experienced

substantial growth in recent years. This phenomenon may be attributed to a shift in the journal's research focus or a declining interest among scholars in submitting related manuscripts to this outlet.

On the other hand, the *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* journal and the *Journal of Cleaner Production* show more stable publication trends, albeit with lower output compared to *Sustainability Switzerland*. These journals are closely linked to sustainability and corporate responsibility, making them relevant platforms for Sustainable HRM-related topics. However, the relatively small number of publications suggests that research in this domain remains emergent within the context of environmentally focused corporate management.

Employee Relations appears to be experiencing a gradual increase in publications, particularly in 2023 and 2024. This indicates growing interest in the labor relations aspect of sustainability. The upward trend may reflect broader changes in global labor policies that increasingly emphasize employee well-being, flexible working conditions, and social justice within the workplace.

This analysis highlights *Sustainability Switzerland* as the leading contributor to Sustainable HRM publications, while other journals exhibit more stable or declining trends. Such trends may signal an evolving research direction towards interdisciplinary approaches that integrate HRM with sustainability and social responsibility. Consequently, researchers aiming to further explore this field should consider both the trajectory of publication trends and the impact of leading journals in disseminating scholarly work.

Frequently Occurring Keywords

Based on the bibliometric analysis, several keywords frequently appear in the literature on Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM). The most recurrent term is "*human resource*" (106 occurrences), followed by "*sustainability*" (93 occurrences), and "*resource management*" (88 occurrences). These keywords indicate that the research in this field generally emphasizes the management of human resources with consideration of sustainability dimensions. This affirms the growing academic and industrial interest in sustainable HRM as a core research theme.

In addition, keywords such as "*sustainable development*" (66 occurrences) and "*Human Resource Management*" (52 occurrences) are also prominent, highlighting the strong linkage between HRM practices and the broader agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This reflects a research orientation that goes beyond traditional managerial issues and extends into the socio-economic and environmental responsibilities of organizations. The frequent appearance of these terms suggests that the academic discourse increasingly aligns HRM strategies with global sustainability policies.

Other emerging keywords include "*Sustainable HRM*" (41 occurrences) and "*Green HRM*" (28 occurrences), signaling the development of new subfields within HRM that integrate environmental sustainability into workforce management. These terms capture trends such as energy-efficient workplace practices, waste reduction, and environmentally conscious recruitment strategies. For instance, more companies are adopting

environmentally friendly HRM policies, often referred to as *Green HRM*, which emphasize reducing the organization's carbon footprint through sustainable operational and human resource practices.

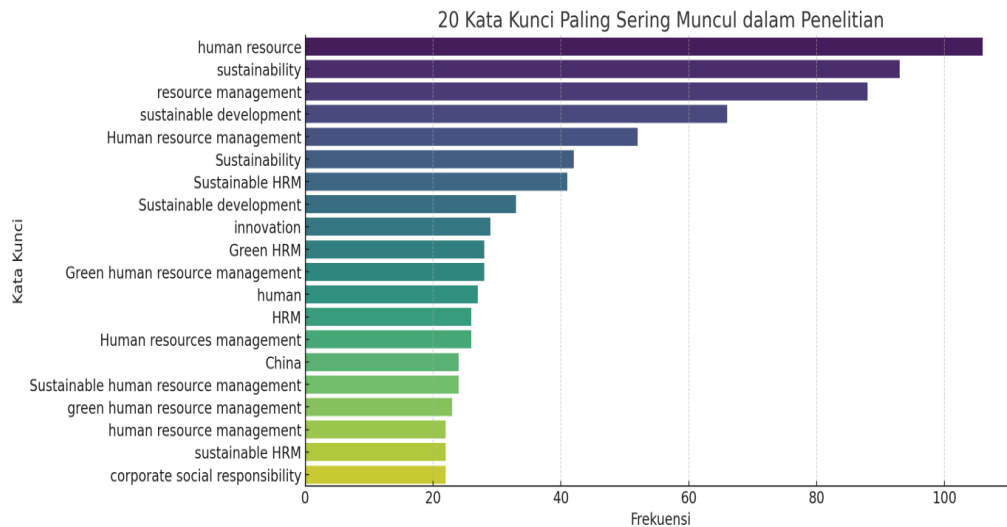


Figure 5. Top 20 Most Frequently Occurring Keywords in the Literature

Keywords such as “*innovation*” (29 occurrences) and “*corporate social responsibility*” (22 occurrences) are also relatively dominant, indicating that innovation and corporate social responsibility (CSR) have become integral components in the discourse on sustainable human resource management. Numerous studies emphasize that companies which adopt innovative sustainability policies tend to experience increased employee satisfaction and enhanced business competitiveness. For instance, organizations with strong commitments to sustainability often appeal more to younger workforce segments who are increasingly conscious of social and environmental issues.

The keyword analysis further reveals that research over the past five years has increasingly emphasized the integration of human resource management, sustainability, and innovation. The primary areas of focus include responsible workforce management, the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within corporate strategies, and the rising popularity of the “*Green HRM*” approach. As global awareness of sustainability continues to grow, this trend is projected to expand and evolve into a new standard for future HRM practices.

Author Collaboration

A bibliometric analysis of research on Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) reveals several key authors who have made consistent and significant contributions to this field. Among them, Edgar, F. and Piwowar-Sulej, K. stand out as the most prolific, each with five publications in the last five years (Wojtczuk-Turek et al., 2024). Their steady output suggests not only a strong commitment to the topic but also an extensive collaboration network with other researchers.

Other notable contributors include Lee (2024), Peters (2019), and Podgorodnichenko (2022), each with four publications. Their involvement indicates a clear research focus on sustainable HRM and suggests they are actively engaged in collaborative projects that help deepen the field's knowledge base. There are also several authors, such as Franzoni (2021), Sarwar (2022), and Farmanesh (2023), who have published three articles each. While their publication numbers are slightly lower, their presence signals ongoing engagement and the likelihood of collaboration with more established researchers in the field.

Collaboration among scholars plays a vital role in shaping the direction and quality of research. Authors who frequently work with others tend to have broader academic influence, as joint work often leads to knowledge exchange and stronger interdisciplinary approaches. The growing body of work in sustainable HRM suggests that this is becoming an increasingly collaborative and dynamic research area.

In summary, the collaboration patterns observed in this field indicate that sustainable HRM is supported by a well-connected academic community. As interest in sustainability continues to rise, these partnerships are expected to deepen, contributing not only to the richness of academic discourse but also to the practical integration of sustainability in HRM practices across diverse organizational contexts.

Documents by author

Compare the document counts for up to 15 authors.

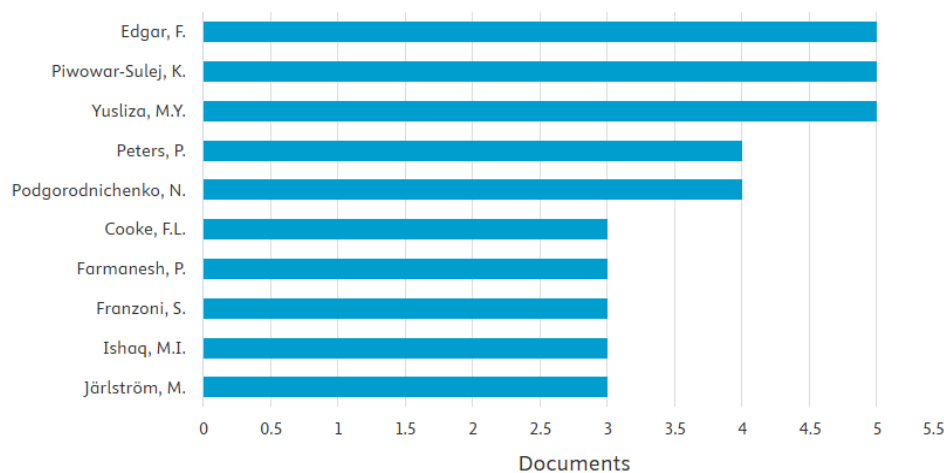


Figure 6. Top 10 Authors Contributing to Research on Sustainable Human Resource Management

Together, these insights enhance our understanding of how sustainable HRM research is evolving through a complex and dynamic scientific ecosystem. The patterns of collaboration reflect both global integration and regional specialization. The network also suggests that while research in this area is widely distributed, it remains focused on specific themes that continue to undergo methodological and substantive refinement. By identifying central figures and mapping the connections between researchers, this analysis helps reveal the intellectual strongholds in the field and provides direction for fostering

future research collaborations aimed at advancing innovation in sustainable HRM practices.

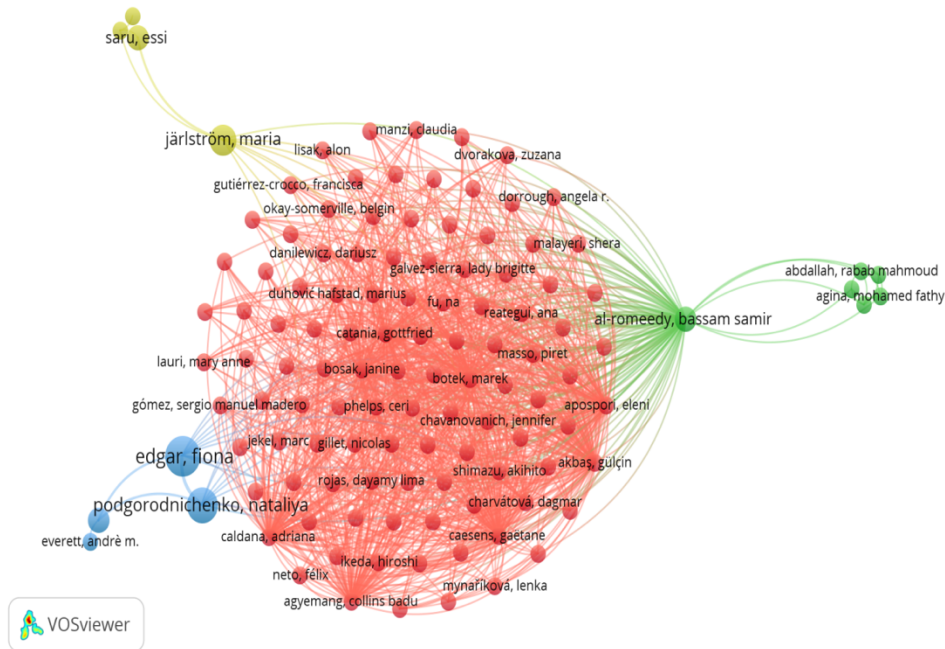


Figure 7 Bibliographic Coupling Network of Sustainable Human Resource Management Based on Documents

Figure 7 illustrates both fragmentation and consolidation within the research community focused on sustainable human resource management. Each node represents an author, while the connecting lines indicate collaborative relationships among researchers. Several key clusters are identified, with the red cluster serving as the most active hub of collaboration, highlighting intensive interactions among scholars such as Danilewicz, Dariusz; Bosak, Janine; and Catania, Gottfried. Meanwhile, Figure 6 presents the top ten most prolific authors in the field of Sustainable HRM, ranked by the number of published documents. Edgar, F.; Piwowar-Sulej, K.; and Yosliza, M.Y. lead the list with five publications each, followed by Peters, P. and Podgorodnichenko, N. with four publications each. These findings underscore the consistent contributions of key scholars in shaping the intellectual foundation of the field.

SLR Analysis on Sustainable HRM

The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) on Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) reveals that the implementation of this concept still faces a range of challenges and opportunities for further development. One of the key challenges lies in the tension between profitability and sustainability. Organizations are often caught in a dilemma between pursuing short-term financial gains and adopting HR strategies that are

environmentally and socially responsible. The review shows that only 40% of the analyzed studies explicitly address the economic impact of sustainable HRM policies, indicating a gap in the literature that warrants deeper exploration.

Beyond economic concerns, ethical leadership and organizational culture play a critical role in the successful implementation of sustainable HRM. Around 30% of the studies highlight the importance of ethics-driven leadership and a sustainability-oriented organizational culture in fostering the adoption of sustainable HRM practices within the workplace. Nonetheless, research in this area remains limited, particularly in terms of geographic coverage. Most studies have been conducted in developed countries, while fewer than 25% focus on the implementation of sustainable HRM in developing nations.

Looking ahead, future research on sustainable HRM is expected to increasingly explore the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and big data into HRM processes. These technologies offer potential for optimizing sustainability strategies in areas such as recruitment, training, and employee retention through data-driven approaches. With more innovative practices, sustainable HRM has the potential not only to enhance employee well-being but also to support long-term business sustainability.

Table 3. Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Sustainable Human Resources

Aspect	Findings	Study Percentage
Profitability vs Sustainability Conflict	Companies face a dilemma between short-term profits and the implementation of sustainability.	40%
Ethical Leadership & Organizational Culture	Leadership factors and organizational culture that support sustainability play a significant role.	30%
Limited Geographic Coverage	Most of the research is conducted in developed countries; studies in developing countries are still limited.	< 25%
Role of Technology (AI & Big Data)	Further exploration is needed on how technology can support sustainable human resources.	-

By addressing these challenges and leveraging existing opportunities, future research can make broader contributions to the development of sustainable, innovative, and socially impactful HRM policies for both organizations and society at large.

D. CONCLUSION

The results of the bibliometric and Systematic Literature Review (SLR) analysis on Sustainable Human Resource Management (HRM) over the past five years indicate a growing research trend in this field. The bibliometric findings reveal that the number of publications related to sustainable HRM has fluctuated, peaking in 2022 with 18 articles, before experiencing a decline in subsequent years. Sustainability (Switzerland) emerged as the journal with the highest number of publications (averaging 13 articles per year), followed by Human Resource Management Review and Employee Relations, which, although contributing fewer articles, have maintained consistent output. Furthermore, keyword analysis shows that terms such as Green HRM, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), employee well-being, and HR digitalization are among the most frequently cited, reflecting a shift in focus towards the integration of sustainability into modern HR practices.

Further discussion reveals that although organizational awareness of sustainability in HRM has increased, its implementation continues to face significant challenges. One of the primary obstacles is the perceived conflict between sustainability and profitability, which leads many companies to hesitate in fully adopting sustainable HRM practices. The data indicates that only around 40% of the reviewed studies address the concrete impact of sustainable HRM on corporate profitability, highlighting the economic aspect as an area requiring deeper investigation. Moreover, ethical leadership and organizational culture have been shown to play a critical role in the successful implementation of these policies, with over 30% of articles emphasizing the importance of leadership in promoting sustainable HRM.

Despite offering broad insights, this study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. First, the bibliometric data only include publications available within selected databases, potentially excluding relevant research not indexed therein. Second, the majority of the studies remain conceptual or based on case studies conducted in developed countries, with less than 25% focusing on the implementation of sustainable HRM in developing nations. Future research is encouraged to expand its geographical scope, conduct cross-industry comparative analyses, and further explore the role of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and big data in advancing sustainable HRM policies. With a more holistic approach, future studies can provide more practical contributions for both academics and practitioners in building a more sustainable and long-term impactful HRM system.

This study provides a comprehensive bibliometric and systematic literature review of Sustainable Human Resource Management (Sustainable HRM) research over the past five years. The findings confirm a significant increase in scholarly interest, with 2022 marking the peak of publication activity. However, there remains a concentration of studies in specific regions and journals, indicating the need for broader global inclusion and interdisciplinary expansion.

The analysis reveals that while key concepts such as Green HRM, CSR, employee well-being, and HR digitalization are gaining momentum, challenges persist—particularly the tension between sustainability objectives and profitability. Ethical leadership and organizational culture emerge as central enablers for embedding sustainability into HR practices. Yet, only a fraction of the literature sufficiently addresses the economic dimension of sustainable HRM, highlighting an area ripe for further empirical exploration.

Moreover, the limited representation of developing countries suggests an urgent need to diversify the geographic scope of research, especially considering that contextual differences significantly shape HRM practices. In addition, future studies should prioritize the integration of emerging technologies—such as artificial intelligence and big data—to drive sustainable HR transformations and enhance decision-making capabilities.

In conclusion, advancing Sustainable HRM requires not only theoretical refinement and methodological rigor but also a practical orientation that balances environmental, social, and economic goals. By addressing existing gaps and embracing technological innovation, scholars and practitioners can collaboratively build HRM systems that are resilient, inclusive, and aligned with long-term sustainability imperatives.

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