

# **Sustainability Adoption through Sustainable Human Resource Management: A Systematic Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**

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## **Abstract**

Sustainability is a key aspiration of most businesses as they face pressure from regulatory authorities as well as consumer demand for sustainable products. Sustainability discussion often revolves around the areas of raw materials, product and process design and innovation. However, the role of human resources is least discussed in this regard. This research utilises a systematic literature review approach to explore the concept of Sustainable Human Resource Management (SHRM) and identifies the indicators, drivers, barriers, and benefits of SHRM adoption. Based on the findings, an integrated conceptual framework that can be utilised by organisations for developing a long-lasting sustainability adoption through SHRM is proposed.

**Keywords-** Sustainable human resource management, Human resources and sustainability, Green human resource management, Environmental Human resource management.

## **1. Introduction**

Sustainable development is a very important concept in the business world today, especially with a focus to enable individuals and companies to meet their current needs without hampering the environment for future generations (Nadeem et al., 2017; Garza-Reyes et al., 2019). However, it

has been observed that traditional market models focus on the short-termed efficient and effective utilisation of natural, social, and human resources in organisations rather than focusing on a long-term multifaceted and dynamic knowledge-based economy. Over the last decades, Sustainability has been the subject of thought and reflection in the field of management. Ehnert et al. (2014) defined sustainability as a concept for providing new solutions and making economic systems and organisations more viable over the long term with less harm to society and the world’s well-being. While often the sustainability is assumed to be only related to the management of materials and production techniques, Human resource management (HRM) has a great role to play in its practical assimilation. Sustainability shifts the focus towards the capability of HRM to sustain the HR base from within and for organisational viability. Recently, studies related to sustainability and HRM seem to have captured the interest of researchers. Sustainable human resource management (SHRM) can be well-thought-out as a design for the employment relationship, and a contribution to sustainable development (Gollan, 2000; Zaugg et al., 2001; Ehnert, 2009a). Ehnert (2009b) highlights the need for more SHRM practices and regards sustainability as having a strategic potential for HRM. Ehnert (2009b) defines SHRM as *“the pattern of planned or emerging human resource deployments and activities intended to enable a balance of organisational goal achievement and reproduction of the human resource base over a long-lasting calendar time and to control for negative impact on the human resource base”*.

This study contributes to the existing literature on SHRM by providing a systematic review of the literature on the topic of SHRM and proposing a conceptual framework for sustainability adoption through SHRM. The paper examines the concept of SHRM through a systematic literature review and identifies the indicators, drivers, barriers, and benefits of SHRM adoption to benefit practitioners, academics, and researchers. The rest of the paper is structured in 6 sections. Section 2 presents the systematic literature review; Section 3 discusses the concept of SHRM while Section 4 presents the benefits and barriers to SHRM adoption. On the other hand, Section 5 introduces the developed conceptual framework developed; finally, Section 6 provides the conclusions, limitations and future research directions derived from the study

## 2. Systematic Literature Review Approach

To accomplish the aim of this study, the systematic literature review (SLR) approach followed by Garza-Reyes (2015) was adopted. Table 1 presents the 5 phases that the SLR went through.

Table 1. Systematic literature review phases

S. No.	SLR Phase	Objective and methods used	Article’s section
1.	Scope Formulation	Defining the scope of research to be in the bounds of Sustainable human resource management	1
2.	Locating Studies	To locate studies, the following criteria were defined: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duration: 1984-2018</li> <li>• Electronic databases such as Elsevier, Science Direct, Sage, JSTOR, Emerald, Taylor and Francis, Inderscience, IGI, EBSCO, John Willey, and Springer were explored.</li> <li>• Keywords: sustainable human resource management, Human Resources and Sustainability, Green Human resource management, and environmental Human resource management</li> </ul>	2
3.	Study Selection	Published research papers with sustainability aspect (environmental, social and economic) and its implementation in HRM, were selected.	2
4.	Analysis & Synthesis	Identifying the indicators, drivers, barriers, and benefits of SHRM adoption to benefit practitioners, academics, and researchers.	3 & 4
5	Drawing the conceptual framework	Developing a conceptual framework for sustainability adoption through SHRM.	5

The SLR included papers published in peer-reviewed journals from 1984 to 2018. The year 1984 was considered as the base year as no significant study on SHRM was found before that year. Nearly all research papers related to SHRM, green HRM, triple-bottom-line, Strategic HRM, HR & sustainability were acknowledged. Multiple databases such as Elsevier, Science Direct, Sage, JSTOR, Emerald, Taylor and Francis, Inderscience, IGI, EBSCO, John Willey, and Springer were used to search for the literature. Only those papers with sustainability aspect (environmental, social and economic) and its implementation in HRM were selected. The initial search was conducted using the following keywords: sustainable human resource management, Human Resources and Sustainability, Green Human resource management, and environmental Human resource management. Keywords related to sustainability and HRM were used through different combinations. This search yielded 1,105 papers. After removing duplications, the number of papers was reduced to 586. A careful reading of abstracts led to the further elimination of 320 papers. 266 papers were then thoroughly assessed to ensure their relevance to the focus of this research, from which 163 papers were finally selected.

### **3. Sustainable Human Resource Management**

SHRM is an impending subject. Nevertheless, very little research has been conducted on this subject due to its emerging stage (Sosik et al., 2002; Wehling et al., 2009). As per its definition, Jarlstrom et al. (2018) characterise that the basic concept underlying the discussion of SHRM is that firms seek different kinds of outcomes to satisfy their stakeholders' expectations. These outcomes may be economic, social, human, and ecological, and firms often seek them simultaneously even though one or two may be more important to an organisation than the others. Many organisations are willingly to report their economic, social and ecological sustainability performance (Schaltegger and Wagner, 2006; Sena and Shani, 2008).

#### **3.1 Models of Sustainable Human Resource Management**

SHRM is constantly developing and the literature proposes some useful models. A model by Zaugg et al. (2001) is academically and empirically validated. In this model, SHRM is related to employees acting in a self-responsible way and participating in the decision making of the organisation. The success of SHRM is measured from the organisational and employee perspectives. Economic value-added, organisational flexibility, and viability contribute to the organisation's perspective whereas employee employability, well-being, and self-responsibility contribute to the employee's perspective. Ehnert (2009c) focuses on sustainable resource management approach, which points out the dependence of organisations on the survival of their organisational environments. He adopts three theoretical perspectives – the stakeholder theory, resource-based view, and systems theory. Zaugg (2001) represents the Swiss approach which depends on empirical research on the understanding of sustainability and HRM in practice. It has been extended into a systematic conceptualisation of SHRM grounded in conceptual and qualitative case research. Cohen et al. (2012) recognise three characteristics of equity, well-being and employee development, and five prerequisites of compliance, governance, ethics, culture and leadership for SHRM. de Prins et al. (2014) proposed “*Respect, Openness and Continuity*” (ROC) model of SHRM. Respect for the internal stakeholders in the organisation i.e. employees, Openness focuses on environmental awareness in the perspective of HR and Continuity focus on long-term approach in both economic and societal sustainability terms.

Gollan and Xu (2014) identify external and internal drivers for SHRM. External drivers include market, technology, changes required by regulations, and internal drivers include culture and customers, leadership and management style. Likewise, Kramar (2014) focuses on human

resources sustainability and identifies external drivers such as market, technology, changes required by regulations and internal drivers, such as culture and customers, leadership and management style. Gollan and Xu (2014) explicitly identify outcomes of SHRM in terms of productivity and profit, employee satisfaction and commitment, employee development, equity and well-being whereas Kramar (2014) identify four types of outcomes such as organisational, social, individual, and ecological. He presents SHRM as the pattern of planned or emerging HR strategies/practices intended to enable the achievement of financial, social and ecological goals while simultaneously reproducing the HR base over the long term. It seeks to minimise the negative impacts on the natural environment, people and communities and acknowledges the critical enabling role of CEOs, middle and line managers, HRM professionals and employees in providing practices which are distinctive, consistent and reflect the consensus among decision-makers. With increasing pressure from stakeholders, concerns on the subject of environmental issues are highlighted and companies are driven to develop policies and programs to conduct environmentally sustainable business activities and act under the environmental regulations (Yadav et al., 2016). Table 2 shows the dimension of various SHRM models.

Table 2. Models of sustainable HRM

Author	Model	Dimensions
Tabatabaei et al. (2017)	Sustainable HRM Model based on BSC	Sustainable HRM within strategic management, Sustainable HRM strategies
Kramar (2014)	Sustainable HRM	Sustainable work systems negative externalities
de Prins et al. (2014)	Respect, Openness, and Continuity (ROC) model	Respect for the employees, Environmental awareness in perspective on HRM, Long-term approach (economic and societal sustainability and individual employability)
Mariappanadar and Kramar (2014)	Sustainable HRM	“Harm” of efficiency-oriented HRM on stakeholders and “externalities”
Ehnert et al. (2014)	Practice-Based Model for the Sustainability–HRM Link	Internal and external drivers, Sustainability objectives at the corporate level, HR-related sustainability objectives and HR-related activities
Ehnert (2009c)	Paradox framework for SHRM	Human capital, Normative interpretations of sustainability, Efficiency interpretations of sustainability
Martin-Alcazar et al. (2005)	Integrative model	Social responsibility, Efficiency, and substance-oriented understanding of sustainability. Relationship between HRM strategy and corporate strategy
Zaugg et al. (2001)	The Three Pillars of SHRM	Work-life balance, Personal autonomy in professional development, Employability of the workers

### 3.2 Indicators of Sustainable Human Resource Management

SHRM is defined as *“those long-term oriented conceptual approaches and activities aimed at a socially responsible and economically appropriate recruitment and selection, development, deployment, and release of employees”* (Thom and Zaugg, 2004). The Brundtland Commission asserts that sustainability can achieve objectives at three points including economic, environmental and social, without risking natural life conditions (Ehnert, 2009b). Several pieces of research have reported that Environmental, Social, and Economic Sustainability are main indicators and factors affecting human resource sustainability. Companies are increasingly connecting the dots between sustainability and its impact on their organisation. As a result, more and more organisations are seeking ways to transform themselves into a sustainable organisation by making a positive impact on economic, environmental and social. These impacts are also affecting HR sustainability.

### 3.2.1 Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability focuses on creating a safe environment and seeks to reduce the negative impact and focus on solving environmental issues. Organisations are concentrating on practising green management to improve their environmental performance (Jabbour and de-Sousa Jabbour, 2016; Udokporo et al., 2020). Several studies concentrating on green management and green HRM practices (Prasad, 2013; Sathyapriya et al., 2013; Mittal and Sangwan, 2014; Opatha and Arulrajah, 2014; Ahmad, 2015, Masri and Jaaron, 2017) have emphasised the association between green HR practices such as green recruitment and selection, green training and development, green performance management, green reward system, green cordial relations, and positive environmental performance. Guerci et al. (2016) found that green training and involvement, green performance and green compensation are significantly positive to environmental performance. Table 3 represents the environmental sustainability indicators for SHRM.

Table 3. Environmental sustainability indicators of SHRM

Indicators	References
Green job design	Revill (2000), Daily and Huang (2001), Govindarajulu and Daily (2004), Jabbour and Santos (2008b), Renwick et al. (2013), Opatha and Arulrajah (2014), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Green employment	Prasad (2013), Jackson et al. (2014), Ahmad (2015), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Green selection	Crosbie and Knight (1995), North (1997), Revill (2000), Jabbour and Santos (2008a), Renwick et al. (2013), Chan et al. (2014), Opatha and Arulrajah (2014), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Deepak and Prakash (2015), Jepsen and Grob (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017), Wehrmeyer (2017)
Green performance evaluation	Milliman and Clair (1996), Prasad (2013), Renwick et al. (2013), Jackson et al. (2014), Opatha and Arulrajah (2014), Ahmad (2015), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017), Wehrmeyer (2017)
Green training	Cook and Seith (1992), North (1997), Jabbour (2013), Prasad (2013), Renwick et al. (2013), Chan et al. (2014), Jackson et al. (2014), Opatha and Arulrajah (2014), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Guerci et al. (2016), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Green reward system management	Bhushan and Mackenzie (1992), Crosbie and Knight (1995), Berry and Randinelli (1998), Ramus (2001), Daily et al. (2003), Govindarajulu and Daily (2004), Prasad (2013), Renwick et al. (2013), Jackson et al. (2014), Opatha and Arulrajah (2014), Ahmad (2015), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Jabbour (2015), Guerci et al. (2016), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Green compensation system management	Ramus (2002), Fernández et al. (2003), Phillips (2007), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Green health and employees' safety management	Ditz et al. (1995), Beard and Hartmann (1997), Ahmad (2015), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Green management of employee discipline	Wright and McMahan (2011), Renwick et al. (2013), Jackson et al. (2014), Opatha and Arulrajah (2014), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Employee green relations	Renwick et al. (2013), Ahmad (2015), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Green recruitment	Clarke (2006), Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007), Phillips (2007), Stringer (2010), Jabbour (2013), Renwick et al. (2013), Jackson et al. (2014), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Jepsen and Grob (2015), Oates (2017), Wehrmeyer (2017)
Green induction	Crosbie and Knight (1995), North (1997), Revill (2000), Renwick et al. (2013), Opatha and Arulrajah (2014), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Wehrmeyer (2017)
Green HR planning	Arulrajah et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Green policy implementation	Ahmad (2015), Arulrajah et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017)

### 3.2.2 Social Sustainability

Social sustainability focuses on the welfare of current and future generations. To achieve these objectives, organisations focus on providing a good quality standard of life by reducing social inequality. Social sustainability occurs when the formal and informal processes, systems,

structures, and relationships actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities. Socially sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, connected, democratic, and provide a good quality of life. Table 4 represents the social sustainability indicators for SHRM.

Table 4. Social sustainability indicators of SHRM

Indicators	References
Social infrastructure	Ahmad and Schroeder (2002), Chan and Lee (2008), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
The availability of career opportunities	Stiglitz (2002), Chan and Lee (2008), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Accessibility	Smith (2000), Tooranloo et al. (2017), Yeh and Ng (2017)
Ability to fulfil the psychological needs	Ahmad and Schroeder (2002), Turkington and Sangster (2006), Chan and Lee (2008), Daily et al. (2012), Mampira (2013), Aragon-Correa et al. (2015), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Social justice	Dempsey et al. (2011), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Social sustainability design	Bramley et al. (2009), Dempsey et al. (2011), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Corporate social responsibility	Peneda Saraiva and Serrasqueiro (2007), Crane et al. (2008), Teck Hui (2008), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Social sustainability	Griessler and Littig (2005), Bramley et al. (2009), Dempsey et al. (2011), Tooranloo et al. (2017)

### 3.2.3 Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability is associated with cost reduction, saving valuable resources for future generations, and better management of resources (Munasinghe, 1993; Garza-Reyes et al., 2019; Nadeem et al., 2019). SHRM treats sustainability as a mutual benefit for all stakeholders' groups and as a contribution to long economic sustainability. According to Nadeem et al. (2018) sustainability is the modality of development that enables economic and social progress, without destroying their environmental resources while making ethically acceptable, morally fair, socially and economically sound developments. Table 5 represents the economic sustainability indicators for SHRM.

Table 5. Economic sustainability indicators of SHRM

Indicators	References
HR efficiency	Copus and Crabtree (1996), Youndt et al. (1996), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Re-engineering/ restructuring	Love and Gunasekaran (1997), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Cost reduction strategy	Hanegraaf and Biewinga (1998), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Senior management commitment	Tisdell (1996), Glaser and Diele (2004), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Development of facilities	Tisdell (1996), Vincent (1997), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Macroeconomic policies	Copus and Crabtree (1996), Vincent (1997), Hanegraaf and Biewinga (1998), Epstein (2008), Tooranloo et al. (2017)
Employment guarantee	Glaser and Diele (2004), Basu et al. (2009), Jha et al. (2013)

## 4. Benefits of Adopting Sustainable Human Resource Management

SHRM will enable organisations to balance conflicting expectations from different stakeholders such as employees, vendors, customers, shareholders, government, and communities by ensuring that they create a positive impact on organisational, environmental and financial performance. SHRM benefits can be measured by evaluating organisational, social, individual and ecological performance. Measures would need to evaluate outcomes such as quality of the employment

relationship, health, and wellbeing of the workforce, employee productivity, quality of relationships at work, potential employer, being recognised among a range of potential sources of labour (social), job satisfaction, employee motivation, work-life balance (individual), use of resources, such as energy, paper, water, production of green products and services and costs associated with work travel (ecological).

Business stakeholders such as employees, creditors, investors, shareholders, consumers, regulators, and the public are further aware and put pressure on companies' environmental performance (Ilinitch et al., 1998; Molina-Azorín et al., 2009). Several measurement systems were introduced by the companies namely, environmental rating matrices, the corporate environmental scorecard, and corporate environmental reports to evaluate environmental performance (Ilinitch et al., 1998), but relatively they ensure their financial growth (Molina-Azorín et al., 2009). Companies with good social/human and ecological/environmental practices have a positive impact on their financial performance (Orlitzky et al., 2003; Branco and Rodrigues, 2006). Further, companies involved in ethical investments are also shown to have better financial performance compared to other companies (Collinson et al., 2008). Several studies have found the positive effect of green HRM practices on organisational and environmental performance. Green HRM practices in the form of green recruitment, green training, and green rewards can improve and support organisations' environmental performance and create competitive advantage (Renwick et al., 2013; Paille et al., 2014; Ahmad, 2015; Roy and Khastagir, 2016; Masri and Jaaron, 2017). Table 6 represents the benefits of adopting SHRM.

Table 6. Benefits of adopting SHRM

Dimension	References
Organisational performance	Berry and Rondinelli (1998), Zaugg and Thom (2001), Gonzalez-Benito and Gonzalez-Benito (2005), Chen et al. (2006), Driessen et al. (2013), Sawang and Kivits (2014)
Environmental performance	Gill et al. (1986), Banerjee (2002), Erdogan and Baris (2007), Crane et al. (2008), Jabbour and Santos (2008a), Teixeira et al. (2012), Paille et al. (2013), Rawashdeh (2018), Yusoff and Nejati (2019)
Financial Performance	Bansal and Gao (2006), Yusoff and Nejati (2019)

#### 4.1 Drivers of Sustainable HRM Adoption

To satisfy stakeholders demand and meeting market pressures, companies have started to implement sustainable business practices (Carmona-Moreno et al., 2004; Laudal, 2011; Kesidou and Demirel, 2012; Aguilera-Caracuel and Ortiz-de-Mandojana, 2013). Managers are increasing pressure on environmental performance programmes due to the number of environmental laws (Jones and Felps, 2013). These concerns and pressures are very crucial for the successful implementation of Green HRM practices. Seidel et al. (2010) emphasise that information technology, strategy, organisational support, traceability through information systems and motivation are a critical enabler for SHRM adoption. The human aspect is also identified as a critical enabler for adopting SHRM (Jabbour, 2013; Govindan et al., 2014; Longoni et al., 2014; Paille et al., 2014). Undoubtedly, investment in sustainability and socially responsible practices can produce several benefits for businesses. Sustainability adoption help in improving the reputation of businesses, increase their visibility, establish public trust, and help in becoming a socially responsible organisation. Laudal (2011) revealed that welfare activities, organisational work environment, and employee's performance contribute to sustainable practices and play a critical role in driving SHRM. Strict environmental laws also encourage companies to participate in

sustainable practices (Laudal, 2011; Jones et al., 2014). Bansal and Gao (2006) highlighted that environmental performance programs are one of the most significant factors affecting quality of life, environmental sustainability, and the financial growth of the company. Table 7 represents drivers for SHRM adoption.

Table 7. Drivers for sustainable human resource management adoption

Dimension	References
Environmental performance programs	Ilinitch et al. (1998), Brockhoff et al. (1999), Mostafa (2006), Jabbour and Santos (2008a), Gadenne et al. (2009), Teixeira et al. (2012), Pail�e et al. (2013), Wagner (2013)
Stakeholders	Ilinitch et al. (1998), Carmona-Moreno et al. (2004), Williamson et al. (2006), Kesidou and Demirel (2012), Aguilera-Caracuelet and Ortiz-de-Mandojana (2013), Guerci and Shani (2013)
Green HRM practices	Russo and Fouts (1997), Mehta and Chugan (2015), Mahmood et al. (2016)
Human aspects	Ramus (2001), Ramus (2002), Jabbour and Santos (2008a), Ehnert (2009d), Jabbour et al. (2010), Boiral and Paille (2012), Graves et al. (2013), Jabbour (2013), Wolf (2013), Govindan et al. (2014), Longoni et al. (2014), Paille et al. (2014)
Environmental laws	Laudal (2011), Jones et al. (2014)
Welfare and employee satisfaction	Laudal (2011)
Meet market pressures	Laudal (2011)
Employee performance	Laudal (2011)
Working environment	Laudal (2011)

#### 4.2 Barriers in Adopting Sustainable Human Resource Management

While the importance of and awareness for a move toward sustainability is increasing, its adoption faces some barriers and challenges. Conflicts in decisions with boards and/or management teams and the lack of employees' acceptance are major barriers/challenges (Gollan, 2000; Jafri, 2012). Seidel et al. (2010) identified that a lack of organisational support and lack of transparency negatively impact the adoption of sustainable practices. Organisations are also constrained on time and resources as well as lack of employee acceptance for implementing SHRM (Sweeney, 2009; Seidel et al., 2010; Fayyazi et al., 2015). Depending on the size of the company, implementation expenses become another major concern (Sweeney, 2009). Due to the absence of technical support and zero understanding of green policies among the employees, the organisation finds it difficult to implement SHRM (Rompa, 2011; Jafri, 2012; Fayyazi et al., 2015). Table 8 presents the barriers to SHRM adoption.

Table 8. Barriers to SHRM adoption

Dimension	Reference
Lack of support from middle management	Seidel et al. (2010), Paille et al. (2013), Harvey et al. (2013)
Lack of time	Sweeney (2009), Seidel et al. (2010), Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Lack of resources	Sweeney (2009), Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Company size	Sweeney (2009)
Board management decision	Sweeney (2009), Paille et al. (2013), Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Manager decision	Sweeney (2009), Paille et al. (2013), Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Lack of employee acceptance	Harris and Ogbonna (1998), Hillary (2004), Murillo-Luna et al. (2007), Chan and Lee (2008), Sweeney (2009), Linnenluecke and Griffiths (2010), Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Lack of technical support	Rompa (2011), Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Lack of understanding of green policies	Rompa (2011), Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Implementation expenses	Rompa (2011), Jafri (2012), Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Lack of comprehensive planning	Fayyazi et al. (2015)
Staff pressure and resistance	Peng and Lin (2008)



## 5. Sustainable Human Resource Management Framework for Sustainability Adoption

With the identification of drivers, barriers, and benefits of SHRM, this section presents an integrated framework of SHRM. A conceptual model for SHRM framework for sustainability adoption is presented in Figure 1. This framework captures the Environmental, Social, and Economic Sustainability indicators of SHRM as well as the Organisational, Environmental, and Financial benefits of adopting SHRM. Since sustainability adoption is a continuous process, it needs continuous support from the drivers of SHRM. The identification of drivers (Environmental performance programmes, Stakeholders, Green HRM practices, Human aspects, Environmental laws, Welfare, and employee satisfaction, Market pressures, Employee performance, working environment) contributes to the easy adoption of SHRM practices in an organisation. The identification of barriers is vital so organisations can reduce the hurdles and benefits can be derived without much issue.

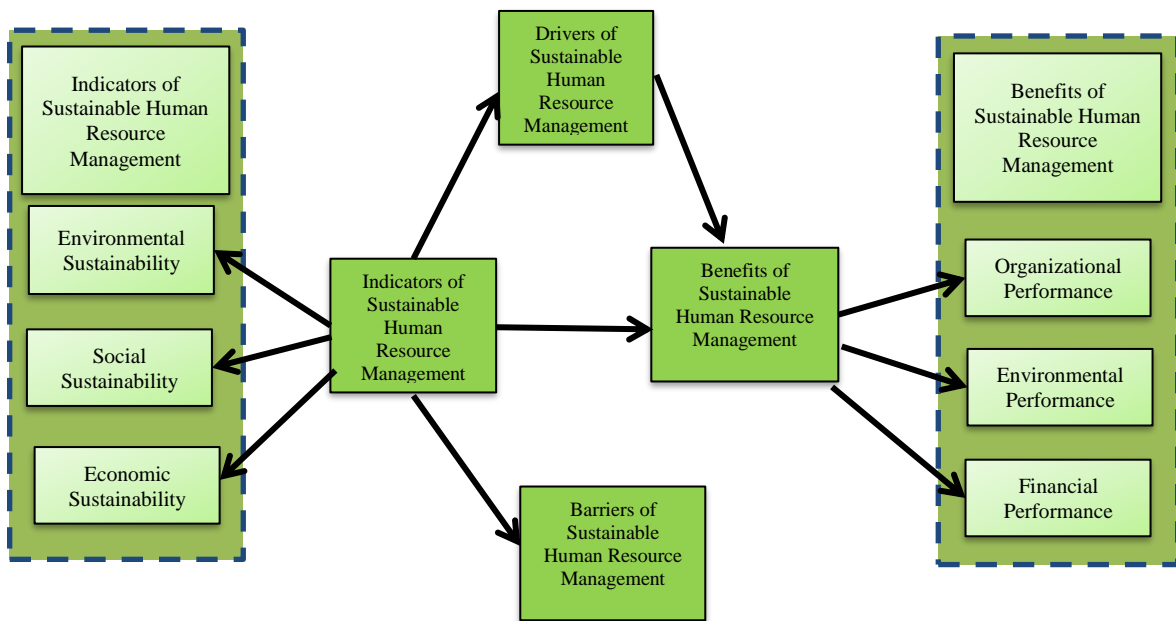


Figure 1. Proposal of SHRM framework for sustainability adoption

## 6. Conclusions

This study explored the concept of SHRM and its importance in sustainability adoption in an organisation. By adopting a systematic literature review approach, this study identifies the indicators, drivers, barriers and benefits of SHRM adoption. The process of sustainability adoption begins with the identification of indicators of SHRM and ends at deriving benefits. This research also provides an integrated conceptual framework that could be used for developing a long-lasting sustainability adoption through sustainable human resource management (SHRM). Like any other research, this research has certain limitations. At first, the research completely relies on secondary data. Further research can gather primary data for concurrent exploitation of the concept's value. Secondly, the research presents a conceptual framework which needs verification and validation.

Furthermore, future research can deploy different methodological angles, such as qualitative and quantitative approaches to validate the research findings and implications.

#### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest to declare for this publication.

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