



**UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA**

**DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE ECONOMICHE ED AZIENDALI  
"M. FANNO"**

**CORSO DI LAUREA MAGISTRALE IN  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**TESI DI LAUREA**

**"SUSTAINABLE HRM: ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES TO  
ATTRACT EMPLOYEES IN THE WAR FOR TALENT"**

**RELATORE:**

**CH.MA PROF.SSA GIANECCHINI MARTINA**

**LAUREANDA: GIACOBBO SILVIA**

**MATRICOLA N. 2041049**

**ANNO ACCADEMICO 2022 – 2023**

Dichiaro di aver preso visione del “Regolamento antiplagio” approvato dal Consiglio del Dipartimento di Scienze Economiche e Aziendali e, consapevole delle conseguenze derivanti da dichiarazioni mendaci, dichiaro che il presente lavoro non è già stato sottoposto, in tutto o in parte, per il conseguimento di un titolo accademico in altre Università italiane o straniere. Dichiaro inoltre che tutte le fonti utilizzate per la realizzazione del presente lavoro, inclusi i materiali digitali, sono state correttamente citate nel corpo del testo e nella sezione ‘Riferimenti bibliografici’.

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the “Anti-plagiarism rules and regulations” approved by the Council of the Department of Economics and Management and I am aware of the consequences of making false statements. I declare that this piece of work has not been previously submitted – either fully or partially – for fulfilling the requirements of an academic degree, whether in Italy or abroad. Furthermore, I declare that the references used for this work – including the digital materials – have been appropriately cited and acknowledged in the text and in the section ‘References’.

Firma (signature) .....  .....

**Index**

Abstract.....2

Introduction .....5

Chapter 1. The Relevance of Sustainability .....7

    1.1 An Introduction to Sustainability Relevance inside of Firms .....8

    1.2 Sustainability as a competitive advantage, spreading to HRM .....13

    1.3 The War For Talent – A Crucial Contributor to the Issue.....14

Chapter 2. Sustainable HRM Development in Literature.....18

    2.1 The Relevance of Human Resource Management for Entities.....18

    2.2 Mainstream Thinking and the Strategic Model to HRM.....21

    2.3 Evolving Towards a Sustainable Approach.....23

Chapter 3. Creating a Comprehensive Framework of Reference.....25

    3.1 Posed Issues of Existing Literature: Where to Depart From.....26

    3.2 An Initial Distinction: Attraction, Motivation and Development Practices .....29

    3.3 A Resulting Comprehensive Framework of Sustainable HRM Practices .....31

Chapter 4. Methodology .....38

    4. 1 Theoretical Backgrounds and Purpose of the Research .....38

    4.2 Research Design: Questionnaire Development .....44

    4.3 Data Analysis.....51

        4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics .....51

        4.3.2 Developing a Regression Model.....61

        4.3.3 Cluster Analysis.....66

Chapter 5. Discussion .....70

References .....80

## **Abstract**

In a changing and increasingly complex labor market, affected by growing expectations in terms of sustainability, an aging and fragmented workforce and a worrying scarcity of skilled employees, Sustainable HRM has emerged as an approach to managing people inside firms. Through the adoption of Sustainable HRM practices organizations are in fact able to not simply comply with stakeholders expectations, but possibly exploit them as a strategic tool to gain competitiveness in face of changing markets.

It therefore becomes relevant to analyze which practices in particular can influence attractiveness of employers and serve as a competitive advantage in talents' attraction, from a Sustainable HRM point of view. Accordingly, the scope of this thesis is to conduct a survey, with the guide of what literature indicates as the most relevant practices and activities that firms apply relating to a sustainable management of the workforce, to analyze what are the preferences of individuals pertaining to these matters. So as to identify which are the factors that characterize an employer as appealing for the labor market. The methodology consisted in creating a framework of reference of practices drawing these from literature, differentiating between three bundle of practices firms adopt and apply in managing human resources: attraction, retaining and maintaining and developing. Further selecting among these practices and developing a survey to study the preferences of individuals among different dimensions of sustainability, specifically comparing social and environmental practices, different bundles (the attraction, maintenance or development ones) and different characteristics and values of individuals. Developing a study on what may affect such preferences and inquire whether Sustainable HRM can ultimately represent a tool for talents' attraction by corporations.

## Introduction

Due to the importance of effectively managing people inside organizations becoming a central focus in the last decades, going more recently hand in hand with the growing relevance adopted by sustainability, a growing interest in Sustainable HRM has flourished (Zaugg et al., 2001). With an intensification of the debate regarding sustainability initiated by the Brundtland report (De Vos and Van der Heijden, 2017) and the forces affecting the war for talent acting as drivers towards a growing pressure for competitiveness among organizations in the attraction of a skilled workforce, different in fact were the factors that brought along a scrutiny in HR-related sustainability. Overall looking to inquire through this paper what are the elements that drive individual choices, relating to Sustainable HRM. In more detail, which are those factors that can make companies attractive in face of the labour market? What are the activities and standards relating to Sustainable Human Resource Management, that companies can apply? Not only to comply with the regulations which are being imposed upon them by the government and legislators, but more in general to analyze what are the elements a firm can leverage on to build a competitive advantage in attracting talent. This becomes particularly relevant in what can be defined as an aging and increasingly fragmented labor market, where skilled employees are scarce and difficult to attract and later retain.

The current analysis will thus focus on the recall of the role of sustainability and CSR not only as a reaction to external pressures, but rather as a strategic tool for firms to gain competitiveness in face of changing markets, through the recognition of the strategic value they can bring. Focusing then on the the role of HRM and its relevance in the pursuit of CSR goals inside of companies, with the emergence of Sustainable HRM as a crucial topic for companies. What we are although going to analyze is what can characterize those companies that can be considered appealing in face of the workforce, through a detailed analysis of which sustainable practices and activities attract workers. This will be done through the adoption of a Triple Bottom Line approach that takes into consideration different dimensions of sustainability, in the creation of a more-comprehensive framework literature has failed to investigate that also distinguishes, departing from literature's suggestions, activities adopted for the attraction, motivation and lastly the development of talent.

Chapter 1 will be focused on developing an understanding on Sustainable Development and the critical role played by firms in it. Together with exploring some of the numerous factors which contributed to the evolution of the issue, looking into the role played by sustainability

expanded to Human Resource Management. Especially focusing in the last part of the chapter on the ‘war for talent’ which is affecting organizations and the workforce, making it increasingly difficult for firms to acquire the skilled talent they need.

Chapter 2 centers in turn on the development of HRM in literature and the emergence of Sustainable HRM: building a theoretical overview of Sustainable HRM development. Departing in this way from a Strategic HRM perspective, which represented the mainstream thinking in the last decades and has as its focus the contribution of Human Resource Management to financial results and the returns provided to shareholders. Moving towards to a broader context of HRM in a light of sustainability, pursuing positive outcomes in all three aspects of the Triple Bottom Line (Kramar, 2022 and Stankevičiūtė and Savanevičienė, 2018), not with the mere and unique objective of maximizing shareholders’ returns anymore.

At this point, having analyzed the theoretic basis underlying our research topic, we are able to move on to developing a framework of practices that can allow us to confront individual preferences, to then be able to develop our empirical analysis in Chapter 4. Chapter 3 consists exactly in this: building a framework of reference to develop our survey. Attaining from available literature and distinguishing among different bundles of practices. Extrapolating from this analysis the final output for the practices of Sustainable HRM to be presented to respondents and investigated in the questionnaire.

Chapter 4 finally consists in the empirical part of the present work, studying the attitudes of individuals towards Sustainable HRM practices. After having developed the research questions to inquire, with the support of existing research, a questionnaire was in fact developed to serve as the basis of our study, followed by the analysis of the data obtained from it. The latter consisted first on an initial presentation of descriptive statistics obtained from the sample, to contribute to the initial research questions posed regarding the general attitudes on the issue. This was followed by the creation of a regression model to analyze the relevant factors influencing individuals’ perception (or rather organizational attraction) and active interest (or job pursuit intention) towards a firm adopting different Sustainable HRM practices. While a cluster analysis was lastly developed to investigate the existence of different subgroups among individuals which may take contrasting stances towards such practices, in function of their preferences on Sustainable HRM.

The study concludes in Chapter 5 to report all relevant results obtained and the possible limitations affecting the present work.

## **Chapter 1. The Relevance of Sustainability**

Sustainability is a relevant subject in nowadays' environment and has become a matter in which companies have increasingly started to focus at the core of their strategic objectives. For this reason, before conducting our analysis, delving into Sustainability inside of firms and, more particularly, to be able to investigate which Sustainable Human Resource Management practices may contribute to attract individuals to organizations, it is important to first understand why talking about sustainability is significant. What this chapter wishes to do is in fact developing an analysis of what made sustainability and Sustainable Development a stringent focus and a target for countries and organizations worldwide.

In its first section the present chapter concentrates on the beginning steps of Sustainable Development, highlighting the role of the Brundtland Report in gaining conscience on the need to adopt a development model that may take into consideration the incumbent environmental challenges and threats affecting our World. The focus will then move on to the relevant role organizations play into the issue of sustainability and what are those factors and trends that contribute to make it such a pressing matter for firms. Starting in fact from the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals by the U.N., the focus will expand to the importance played by the evolution of stakeholders' and legislators' understanding of corporate responsibility, which has evolved from mere economic ends to broader and more inclusive social and environmental issues. All this has been although accompanied by a parallel yet voluntary push towards integrated reporting that has been affecting firms. The adoption of sustainable practices and strategies starts in fact to be seen not only as a mere compliance to external expectations, but as a tool for organizations to gain an additional advantage. The section (1.1) concludes therefore, in support of such argumentation, with an overview of the potential benefits for listed and non-listed companies which may result from turning towards sustainable efforts.

All of this plays in accordance with the overall intent of this thesis: to analyze sustainability not only in light of the constraints and obligations imposed to firms by multiple and complementary factors. But rather to perceive it as an opportunity and a tool to exploit to gain a competitive advantage. In light of all afore-mentioned aspects, the second part of this chapter (section 1.2) stems from this concept, spreading in this way the topic to analyze the relevance of sustainability in Human Resource Management. With HRM gaining relevance, a sustainable approach to it becomes in fact inevitably discussed. And, with Sustainable HRM emerging as a new approach to people-management (Stankevičiūtė and Savanevičienė, 2018),

firms are being forced to start looking at HRM in lights of sustainability, trying to pursue positive outcomes in light of a Triple Bottom line approach (Kramar, 2022).

In the last part of the chapter (1.3) the relevance played into the topic by the ‘war for talent’ (Chambers et al., 1998) eventually becomes central. Analyzing its characteristics, from its origins to the trends that have been adding fuel to the fire, and the importance played by talent in organizational competitive advantage. Highlighting the significance of being able to attract, and maintain through time, a skilled workforce that has been affecting corporations in the last decades and which justify the present study. The discussion at last aims towards an analysis of how the expectations of the young and future workforce play into it, making light in this way into the role of sustainability and Sustainable HRM practices as a leverage for firms to pursue. Making us understand the relevance of adopting Sustainable HRM and how a focus of corporations on sustainability can contribute in their efforts to win this strenuous war that has relentlessly been affecting the labour market.

### **1.1 An Introduction to Sustainability Relevance inside of Firms**

The term “Sustainable Development” was first popularized in 1987 by the World Commission on Economic Development (WCED) in the now most-known Brundtland Report, which was the precursor in highlighting the stringent need humanity was facing to adopt an improved development model. Popularizing in fact the concept of Sustainable Development (SD), the Report wanted to promote how crucial it is to foster a model of growth that may allow humankind to satisfy the needs of current generations without, in the meantime, having to compromise the possibility of future generations to satisfy their own (Brundtland, 1987). The World is in fact facing stringent critical issues, which have not stopped from aggravating since the Report was first issued, due to the growth path mankind has been following. Over the last decades we have indeed been assisting to the challenges imposed by Climate Change, such as the degradation of our planet’s living conditions, a decreasing availability of raw materials for mankind and a global footprint which has become increasingly worrying (Du Pisani, 2006). For all these reasons, Sustainable Development advocates for an urgent need of adopting an integrated approach which may allow us to conjugate economic growth with the issues imposed by Climate Change. Providing in this way a framework of reference that jointly takes into consideration environmental concerns and economic development strategies.<sup>11</sup> In this scenario, ever since the 20th century, sustainability has therefore relentlessly been transforming further

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability>



into both a focus and a target for countries and organizations worldwide, in this common effort to try and conjugate economic development with the climate crisis our planet is facing.

Building from this, the adoption in 2015 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) more recently accompanied and fueled the issue. Addressing the challenges humanity needs to face, in fact, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* has been serving as a guideline for world-wide economies and economic entities towards the path of Sustainable Development (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). The Goals, set out through measurable targets, demand greater worldwide cooperation and are meant to guide governments' decisions in facing the challenges brought by the insurance of an environmental, social, and economical Sustainable Development (Choi et al., 2016 in Gusmão Caiado et al., 2019). The enforcement of the SDGs, making such need for an evolution towards a sustainable path an incrementally pressing issue for firms, has thus been playing in support of a Triple Bottom Line concept that also spread to corporations. Encouraging (or rather forcing) in this way firms to focus on “not just [...] the economic value that they add, but also on the environmental and social value that they add – or destroy” (Elkington, 2004 in Henriques and Richardson, 2004 p.3). The rampant and in parallel debate of the relevance of sustainability of firms has been in fact soaring, recognizing these as crucial entities that do play a “pivotal role” (Nicolò et al., 2023 p.829) in the contribution to Sustainable Development. Thus, to be able to move towards a development which is truly sustainable, in which “environmental, social, and economic concerns must be integrated throughout decision making processes” (Emas, 2015 p.3) firms act as crucial contributors.

But the factors which over the last decades have at once contributed to make progressively tangible the relevance of organizational sustainability have been multiple and complementary. What we have been witnessing over the last decades are thus different and interdependent trends that added on to the perception of a sense of urgency: an urgency for a shift of firms towards the adoption of sustainable business strategies<sup>2</sup> and practices. And the main underlying factor which heavily affected the issue can especially be found in how all different groups of enterprises' stakeholders have become subject to growing direct and indirect expectations. Expectations which were brought, according to Hirsig et al. (2014), by the recent changes that have been affecting the global business environment, an increased consciousness relating to sustainability and the current trends towards sustainable investments. The perception of the responsibilities organizations play into the broader society has been in fact transforming

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/what-is-the-triple-bottom-line>

from being limited to the mere end of generating profits, towards a more inclusive and broad set of responsibilities for the firms: the generation of shared value (Latapí Agudelo et al., 2019). Concurrently being influenced and accompanied by such increasing stakeholders' pressure on the matter, another of these trends is then represented by the current wave of requests directed to firms coming from lawmakers. In a push from the latter towards the adoption of corporate non-financial reporting, this has thereof increasingly been legislated and made mandatory for firms all over the World. With the issuing of the first Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidelines in 2000 and the first draft of the Integrated Reporting Framework (IRF) in 2003, we have indeed been witnessing proofs of increased requests from legislators, which are now demanding companies to disclose information that does not merely concern financial outcomes anymore, but which also relates to environmental and social issues. This, together with an increased subsequent legislative attention put on Corporate Social Responsibility (Leyens, 2018 and Lin, 2020) as “the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society” (CEE, 2011 p.2), has then clearly been leading to a resulting shift of firms towards mandatory sustainable efforts. So, with ever-increasing external expectations for firms to be more socially responsible in their operations, through Corporate Social Responsibility organizations have actively been taking responsibility for the impacts they generate on the environment and society, aligning in this way their strategies with sustainability goals. Fostering thus the shift of organizations towards sustainable efforts and entailing for the management of enterprises a broadening of focus in the aim for a good performance, which should be looked at and achieved simultaneously at three different levels. Going back once again to the importance of adopting a sustainable path which supports (in a Triple Bottom Line concept) the economic, social and environmental performances of a firm, which taken together represent the three pillars of sustainability (ILO, 2007 in Ehnert et al., 2014), that become concurrently relevant for organizations.

On the flip side of the coin, these pending expectations of stakeholders also translated from firms into voluntary internal pushes towards the adoption of integrated reporting, in a form that may actually provide insight to both internal and external stakeholders on the economic, social and environmental impact of an organization (Crous et al, 2022), even beyond what is mandated for them. Specifically because these efforts towards the adoption of sustainable strategies and practices, in turn, can be seen as not only mere compliances, but rather as tools which can bring additional tangible advantages for firms. And all these potential benefits firms may face thanks to the adoption of sustainable strategies and practices are important to analyze, and will be summed up in *Table 1*.

In fact, although sustainability practices tend to be more commonly adopted by large companies rather than SMEs (82% of big Italian enterprises compared to 36% of small ones, according to ISTAT, 2023a), reported performance benefits for sustainability-oriented firms are many, even for smaller companies. Not only firms that present high ratings for CSR and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors report lower costs of debt and equity and tend to outperform the market in the medium and long term (Deutsche Bank, 2012); they are also characterized by 3.7 times higher average operating margins compared to lower ESG performers (Accenture, 2020) and tend to “score 2.6x higher on total shareholder return (TSR) than medium performers” (Accenture, 2021 p.5). Sustainability practices can therefore be accountable for better financial performances, even in terms of stock market returns, with highly-sustainable companies significantly outperforming low sustainability companies over the long term (Eccles et al., 2014). The advantages of adopting sustainable practices are although not limited to the present: in a recent IBM’s study (2022), most executives were reported to also agree on the fact that sustainability investments will induce better business results in the next 5 years. While investors believe that ESG programs will be contributing more shareholder value in five years than today (Mckinsey, 2020). All of this eventually signaling how stakeholders expect companies to place importance on sustainability, actually reward those that do and anticipate to continue rewarding them in the medium and long term.

But the benefits stemming from the adoption of sustainability practices are, as said, not limited to listed companies: they also have been reported for SMEs. For SMEs developing sustainability strategies in fact, according to SDA Bocconi School of Management’s Sustainability Lab survey (2022), among those questioned almost 8 out of 10 report improved employees’ satisfaction levels, while 7 out of 10 also disclose improved customer satisfaction. On top of that “64% [claim having] increased operational efficiency, 60% to have gained market share, or obtained access to new markets (54%) and developed/acquired/consolidated their competitive advantage (50%)”, have “access to better insurance conditions (47%), and better credit conditions (43%)” (p.19). On a broader concept, all firms with high levels of sustainability also show increased workers’ productivity (+10,2%) compared to those which do not adopt sustainability practices, with “a sustainability premium” that seems to increase in parallel with the environmental and social sustainability levels of the firm (ISTAT, 2019 p.53).

Table 1. Benefits related to the adoption of sustainable strategies and practices for organizations.

<p><b>Listed companies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highly-sustainable companies appear to significantly outperform low-sustainability firms in terms of stock market returns over the long term. <i>(Eccles et al., 2014)</i></li> <li>○ High ratings for CSR and ESG factors are related to lower cost of debt and equity. <i>(Deutsche Bank, 2012)</i></li> <li>○ Higher ESG performers show:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 3.7 times higher average operating margins compared to lower ESG performers. <i>(Accenture, 2020)</i></li> <li>▪ 2.6x higher Total Shareholder Return (TSR) compared to medium performers. <i>(Accenture, 2021)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>○ ESG programs’ contribution to shareholder value will be higher in 5 years than today, according to investors. <i>(Mckinsey, 2020)</i></li> <li>○ Executives agree sustainability investments will contribute to create improved business results in the next 5 years. <i>(IMB, 2022)</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>SMEs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Within firms adopting sustainable strategies and practices:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 8 out of 10 report better employees’ satisfaction levels <i>(SDA Bocconi, 2022)</i></li> <li>▪ 7 out of 10 report improved customer satisfaction. <i>(SDA Bocconi, 2022)</i></li> <li>▪ 64% report increased operational efficiency, 60% to have gained market share, 54% to have obtained access to new markets and 50% to have developed, acquired or consolidated their competitive advantage. <i>(SDA Bocconi, 2022)</i></li> <li>▪ 47% report benefits on access to improved insurance conditions and 43% better credit conditions. <i>(SDA Bocconi, 2022)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Highly-sustainable firms show a 10,2% increase in workers’ productivity compared to companies that don’t adopt sustainability practices. <i>(ISTAT, 2019)</i></li> </ul>

All these data reveal therefore not only the existence of a positive relationship between sustainable practices and levels of productivity (expressed in terms of value added per worker), but also that most firms adopting sustainable practices can enjoy a series of benefits in terms of performance, whether these may be organizational, reputational, economic or competitive (SDA Bocconi, 2022). This adds on to all the advantages the adoption of sustainable strategies can bring for firms, not merely in compliance to external expectations anymore, but also given the tangible benefits these can bring. Which translates in the opportunity to adopt the related practices also due to an active choice on the matter: to grasp their competitive potential.

## 1.2 Sustainability as a competitive advantage, spreading to HRM

Corporate Sustainable Development initiatives have therefore, as analyzed, become business imperatives and addressing climate concerns has become a pressing issue for organizations, affecting all industries. In this light, businesses are indeed actively trying to capture the value created by this push for sustainability, which can deliver greater prosperity for firms, while also designing organizations to last.<sup>3</sup> The focus of this thesis is in fact that it is necessary to point out how sustainability must not only be seen as a tool to provide new solutions, making economic systems and organizations more viable in the long term and less impacting on society and its well-being (Ehnert et al., 2014). It is relevant to be reminded that sustainability can be looked at as an overall concept that can allow firms to gain a competitive advantage in face of changing markets (Schnietz and Epstein, 2005; Wahba, 2008). As it has been thoroughly looked into (see, for example Hart, 1997 and Porter and Kramer, 2006), also Corporate Social Responsibility can represent a powerful source of competitive advantage and innovation for organizations, and should not merely be perceived as a tool of compliance with stakeholders' expectations. Precisely for these reasons, most businesses "have recognized the importance of CSR either as a reaction from pressures from its stakeholders and the civil society [but also] based on the recognition of the strategic value of CSR" (Hirsig et al., 2014 p.137). Accordingly, the notion of sustainability is attracting increasing interest in the fields of organizations, which are focusing on Corporate Sustainability as a complex and multi-faceted construct that covers environmental, social and economical organizational outcomes (Hahn and Figge, 2011). And the attention on the matter more recently spread to Human Resource Management (Ehnert, 2006; Ehnert and Harry, 2012).

With the topic of Human Resource Management becoming increasingly important and analyzed in the last decade (Ehnert et al., 2014), the relevance of sustainability in HRM, tied to themes of CSR, is consequently soaring as a "new approach to people management with the focus on long-term human resource development, regeneration, and renewal" (Stankevičiūtė and Savanevičienė, 2018 p. 1). Firms are thus starting to also look into a broader context of HRM in light of sustainability, pursuing positive outcomes in all three aspects of the Triple Bottom Line (Kramar, 2022). With a sustainable approach to HRM developing (in line with the broader concept of sustainability) not only due to the increasing discussion the Brundtland Report brought - in highlighting the need of a future development which may take into account sustainability and the reducing resources our planet is facing - or to all the afore-mentioned

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bcg.com/capabilities/climate-change-sustainability>

aspects, but also given global limits are increasingly impacting the restrictions businesses must face (Ehnert and Harry, 2012). Encouraging in this way firms to have a proactive role in the control of their impacts (especially in the long term) on the natural, social and human environment they affect (Ehnert et al., 2014), and making it relevant for companies to integrate sustainable practices and principles into their management of Human Resources. Also due to the significant role HR functions play inside of organizations in the communication, implementation and promotion of CSR goals through sustainable HRM practices (Jang and Ardichvili, 2020). With all this leading to a broader understanding and acknowledgement of the role of HRM in making organizations not only economically and socially but also ecologically sustainable and responsible.

But what makes Sustainable HRM so relevant in nowadays working environments is an important topic to look into, to understand more deeply why the issue has become central in recent Human Resources literature. One focal point that underlies its relevance, and is particularly important to delve into, is what has been referred to as the ‘war for talent’, which is affecting firms and their strategies. The trends, mutations and challenges the global market is facing from both the part of employees and employers are in fact different and numerous. In this, the relevance of sustainability extended to HRM practices, has particularly arisen due to the present conditions firms need to face.

### **1.3 The War For Talent – A Crucial Contributor to the Issue**

Different are the factors which have been feeding the soil of what has been identified as an increasingly harsh war for talent. Not only are we facing a shortage of labour resources, a scarceness (or lack thereof) of competent and committed people available and a coinciding increasingly competitive and diverse labour market (Ehnert, 2009); all these are also accompanied by an “increased demand for skilled employees” from organizations (Backes-Gellner, 2004 p.218). In this, skilled employees have always been important for the competitive advantage of firms, but have become even more so in the last decades.

The discussion of the “war for talent” companies are facing was first brought to light in 1998 by McKinsey & Company, which in their Report started the debate on the fact that “better talent is worth fighting for” (Chambers et al., 1998 p. 45). In their study, the management-consulting world-renowned firm cried out the compelling need organizations faced of availing of superior talent. Especially in what was, and still is today, a multicultural and technologically advancing World, where job mobility is constantly increasing and switching employer is made

easier, becomes then crucial to avail of “more sophisticated talent” (p.47). Yet, the difficulties companies were actually instead having (at the turn of the millennium) in attracting and retaining such individuals turned into what was described as an actual ‘war’ for it, due to a market characterized by increasingly complex economic demands. McKinsey were therefore at the time among the first making clear, in an almost prophetic manner, how “Superior talent [would] be tomorrow’s prime source of competitive advantage” (p.48), pointing out in this how the power of creating and constantly refining a superior employee value proposition played an essential role in this war for talent which was affecting employers. But the issue has not stopped being relevant since.

Beechler and Woodward (2009) and Ehnert (2006) did not fail to point out how different are in fact the factors still contributing to the creation of a fast-changing and complex global environment for companies, which are intensely trying to attract, retain and motivate, while also developing talents. As a matter of fact, with an increase in the retirement age and a decrease of younger workforce availability, brought by increased lifespans, lower birth rates and consistently high rates of youth unemployment, especially in Developed Countries (Truxillo and Fraccaroli, 2013), the market is forced to face an ageing workforce. Such demographic forces consequently create a dramatic shift in the age distribution of the population and result in elders remaining in the workforce for longer (Beechler and Woodward, 2009). Changes are then also brought by globalization and the consequent reduction of barriers, thanks to a decrease in legal and regulatory obstacles. This, resulting in the economic integration and increased competition among countries the last decades have been witnessing, has also had a profound impact on the labour supply and talent war (Beechler and Woodward, 2009). On top of this, with a working environment characterized by “more knowledge intensive contents of work, rapid technological changes, constant innovations, and more flexible workplaces and time schedules” (De Vos and Van der Heijden, 2017 p.42), globalization and ongoing technological innovation have been fostering another pending issue: the need for substituting unskilled labour with skilled labour resources. And yet, both advanced and developing economies are facing shortfalls in the amounts of educated and skilled workers needed. Anticipating in fact in its study a relevant labour shortage of college-educated workers for the future, McKinsey (2017) predicts companies will to not be able to fill one each ten roles needed, and less likely to fill it with skilled-enough employees, or “top talent” (p.1). On top of this, a more diverse workforce, with a high variety of cultural backgrounds and an increased presence of women make any one-size-fits-all approach “ineffective in terms of meeting the real needs” of the multiplicity of categories of employees (Darcy et al., 2012 p.1) which compose the labor market. And all these,

together with higher stress levels and the general strains put on employees are just some of the issues companies are facing. So not only the issue has not stopped being relevant but, according also to Ehnert (2009), such demographic developments, the internationalization and globalization, taken together with the scarce quality that is afflicting some educational systems have instead actually been exacerbating the war for talent. We are in presence of an ever increasing demand for skilled labour, while its supply has been steadily decreasing and has been characterized by a scarcity of highly qualified employees (Dupont et al., 2013), making the issue very real still nowadays.

In light of all these trends and looking then at recent data elaborated by different organizations, it appears clear that sustainability can be used as a leverage for firms in an effort to win the war for talent affecting the labor market. As a matter of fact, employees' expectations are now departing from mere financial compensation, which is not the factor most influencing today's talent market anymore (IBM Institute for Business Value, 2021a). Talents are rather deeply attracted to firms with a strong stance on sustainability "for reasons such as aligned values, pride in the organization they work for, and a feeling of being cared for" (Chapman CG, 2022). Confirmed by the fact that 3 out of 4 employees report to be more likely to apply for a job with companies engaged in sustainability and many actually specifically state to look for such organizations when changing jobs (Stepstone, 2023). Almost half of the full potential workforce is then willing to accept a lower salary to work for a company they believe to be either socially or environmentally sustainable (IBM Institute for Business Value, 2021b). This shift is even clearer in younger generations, with many Gen Zs and millennials making career decisions based on personal values, often turning down employers' offers which do not align with them. With the majority of Gen Zs (55%) and Millennials (54%) stating to research the environmental impact and policies of an employer before accepting a job from them (Deloitte, 2023), employers are actively recognizing such issues and understand how crucial the adoption of ethical and sustainable practices are in the attraction of younger talents. In fact, whilst 49% of Gen Z refuses to work for a firm which is not making proactive efforts to be more sustainable, 42% would not even be willing to accept a job for a company whose values on environmental and social issues do not align with theirs (Randstad, 2023)! Younger generations are thus increasingly unwilling to give up on their ideals and are at the same time empowered by skills shortages to look for jobs that also offer non-financial sources of fulfillment, with the desire to contribute to society driving job satisfaction (Global Energy Talent Index Report, 2023). Meanwhile, those who are happy with their employers' societal



and environmental impacts and their efforts to create a diverse and inclusive culture, are more likely to want to stay with their employer in the long term (Deloitte, 2022).

This makes us realize how currently relevant the adoption of Sustainable HRM inside of firms is, and how companies that are focused on sustainability and social responsibility can “attract purpose-driven employees” (IBM Institute for Business Value 2021a, p.7), given sustainability concerns are shown to actively impact workforce’s (and especially youngsters’) decision-making and retention. With individuals desiring to constitute part of an inclusive and diverse workplace, which commits to environmental and social sustainability practices that align with their values, firms are starting to realize its relevance in such a harsh war for talent. Organizations are thus increasingly understanding sustainability’s worth not only relating to competitiveness and reputation, but also as a “leverage” to the end of attracting, retaining and developing workforce (SHRM, 2011): with the crucial role the HR function entails.

But, what are we referring to when we talk about Sustainable HRM? And what are the implications that adopting HRM practices tied to sustainability notions can bring? It is essential to develop an understanding of the development of Human Resource Management in literature and more particularly where the notion of Sustainable HRM developed and stemmed from, which will be the focus of the upcoming chapter. Clarifying in this way firstly its main differences with previously-developed notions of HRM, to have a clearer view of what this concept implies for organizations. Building at last a deeper awareness of which are the practices, pointed out by previous authors, companies are adopting and which will be further investigated later on in our analysis.

## **Chapter 2. Sustainable HRM Development in Literature.**

Before analyzing individuals' preferences among different practices that relate to Sustainable HRM, it is important to gain some knowledge on why it is relevant to talk about Human Resource Management, developing an understanding of how literature ended up with the concepts that this analysis is based upon.

The first part of Chapter 2 (section 2.1) consists in getting in this way a basic timeframe for the knowledge of HRM development. From its birth as an academic discipline and its definition (in what can be defined as a more 'modern' and inclusive conception), towards the analysis of its relevance. The latter will be done especially presenting the resource-based view of the firm (through the theories of Barney, 1991 and McMahan, 1992), highlighting how the very same was crucial in explaining the workforce's role in granting a competitive advantage for organizations (Wright et al., 2001).

From such conceptualization departs the second section of the chapter (2.2), which will explain how those of Strategic HRM were the principles that dominated literature of Human Resource Management in the last decades. After pointing out its features, the chapter moves on in fact to its purposes and, consequently, its lacks in what is an ever changing business environment.

What is then represented by the third and last part of this chapter (2.3) will move on in explaining how the lacks that affect the Strategic HRM approach could be obviated, overruling it as a dominant approach. What was in fact able to emerge as a succeeding state in the tradition of HRM thinking was exactly the Sustainable model. Sustainable HRM departs in this way from Strategic HRM as a new approach to people management (Kramar, 2022), creating HRM systems "that simultaneously help a firm achieve its environmental, social and economic goals" (Taylor and Lewis, 2014 p.297).

The present chapter allows us to finally have, as the basis of our upcoming analysis, a theoretical overview of what led to the development and spread of Sustainable HRM practices in organizational and academic settings.

### **2.1 The Relevance of Human Resource Management for Entities**

To develop an understanding of the topic, it is first important to acknowledge what Human Resource Management is. According to Kaufman (2007) even though its existence "as a generic activity involving the management of other people's labor in production" can be attributed to the entirety of human history (p. 24), the birth of Human Resource functions inside organizations is quite more recent and first stems from the late 19th century, with the rise of

modern industry. Even so, Human Resource Management as an academic discipline only started affirming some time later and more specifically from the mid-20th century, when the distinguished works of McGregor (1960) and Strauss and Sayles (1960), among many others, were able to deeply influence this field of study. The authors played in fact a big role in the recognition of HRM's relevance, highlighting the need organizations faced to develop an approach in the management of their human resources that was strategic and may have taken into account both individual and organizational goals. So, at the time, the importance of human resources as crucial assets for firms, with the potential to give companies "a competitive advantage in the global marketplace" (Taylor et al., 1996 p.979) started to be acknowledged.

Yet, to keep it in a more recent perspective and give it a definition, Human Resource Management has recently been more specifically defined by Kramar (2014) that expanded the issue from its initial, rather simplistic definitions to a more inclusive and clearly-defined concept. Kramar, in fact, departing from earlier constructs of HRM that identified it with the practices adopted by firms in the management of their *employees* (see, for example Boxall and Purcell, 2008), rather indicated it as a "broad term [referring] to the activities associated with the management of the people who do the work of organisations" (Kramar, 2014 p.1075). The range of individuals considered, which firms must manage and look after as the recipient of their HRM practices and activities, becomes in this way extended beyond those covered by contracts of employment with the organization. The modern concept rather includes thereof many distinctive figures which are still relevant for firms' success, such as subcontractors, consultants, suppliers and different individuals who simultaneously come into the picture and are tied to the organization, even if through non-employment contracts (Kramar, 2014). Careers management becomes in this way applicable to all those "individuals being part of the workforce, with peripheral and external workers being no exception, and regardless of the type of contract they have" (De Vos and Van der Heijden, 2017 p.47). In conclusion, the "management of work and people towards [its] desired ends", according to the definition of HRM by Boxall et al. (2007, p.7), is for any organization both an inevitable and a fundamental activity, which has always existed but started to receive attention in literature only in the last decades.

What served as a focal point of reference in explaining the role of people, and therefore this essentiality of Human Resource Management, in granting a competitive advantage sustained in time for organizations was the resource-based view of the firm. Such theory started to be looked into, fostering the attention towards HRM by researchers and served as a point of

reference for the development of Strategic Human Resource Management, which is appointed by many as the predecessor of Sustainable HRM (for e.g. in De Prins et al., 2014; Kramar, 2022; Stankevičiūtė and Savanevičienė, 2018).

A focal contributor to these developments was Barney (1991) who, in his conceptualization of the resource-based theory, pointed out how firms can achieve a competitive advantage and maintain it in time (creating therefore a *sustained* advantage) through the implementation of value-creating strategies that are both not being implemented by other competitors and difficult to duplicate. The resource-based view asserts therefore that the resources a company avails, or is “endowed” (p.116) of, do hold the potential of sustained competitive advantages. But this can happen only if such resources the company possesses and is able to exploit are valuable, rare, non-substitutable, and inimitable. Only then these can be strategic, allowing such realization of a sustained competitive advantage. Wright and McMahan (1992, in App et al., 2012), expanding this conceptualization and moving into our focus of interest, argued therefore how human resources can have the potential to be sources of such sustained competitive advantage. So, given HRM practices are not easily transferable (because they are firm specific and adapted to the circumstances of an organization) these could not be copied, preventing a firm from losing the competitive advantage which may derive from them (Wright et al., 2001). Consequently, the “growing acceptance of internal resources as sources of competitive advantage” was able to bring legitimacy to the important strategic role which people play in firm’s success (Wright et al., 2001 p.701). Also Lado and Wilson (1994), applying the resource-based theory of the firm to HRM, added in fact to the theory suggesting how human resource systems can actually contribute to a sustained competitive advantage. In this way “facilitating the development of competencies that are firm specific, produce complex social relationships, are embedded in a firm's history and culture, and generate tacit organizational knowledge” (Lado and Wilson, 1994 p. 699).

Departing from these concepts, Taylor et al. (1996) identified the role of “human organization [...] as a key differentiator between corporate winners and losers” in the 21st century (Taylor et al., 1996 p.980), endorsing its relevance as a critical factor to manage by organizations. We can therefore understand why HRM is relevant in the achievement of a sustained competitive advantage, that can allow organizations to emerge. But, notwithstanding such affirmations, we are reminded that to reach such conditions “employees must be both highly skilled and motivated - that is, [it is essential to dispose of] a high-quality workforce” (App et al., 2012 p.264) and it is essential for HRM competencies to “be constantly developed and converted into competitive advantages” (Zaugg and Thom, 2002). It has therefore been

made extensively clear and established by literature how the HRM function and its activities may represent a factor that can allow an organization to outperform its competitors. One that is important to analyze and monitor.

Understanding in this way the relevance of internal factors of firms, and in particular Human Resources, for a company's success (Ehnert, 2009) and recognizing the importance of people-management, we are able to understand how "an increasing strategic importance is placed on human resource management" (Zaugg et al., 2001 p. 9). Departing from such bases, Strategic HRM (SHRM) started therefore to develop in the 1970s and 80s, also as a reaction to an "increasingly turbulent and fast-changing, uncertain environment", which was at that time bringing uncertainty to global markets (Kramar, 2014 p. 1069).

## **2.2 Mainstream Thinking and the Strategic Model to HRM.**

The principles of Strategic HRM (SHRM) were what dominated HRM literature during the last decades, more particularly from the 1980s, representing the mainstream thinking in the discipline (De Prins et al., 2014 p.267). SHRM emerged in fact adopting as a focus all those HR strategies which companies adopt and design, trying to "measure their impact on the performance" (Boxall et al., 2007 p.3).

What first marked the cornerstone for the development of Strategic HRM was Walker's (1978) suggestion for the need to create a link among a firm's business strategy and human resource planning. This was more certainly defined by Devanna, Fombrum and Tichy (1981), whose article contributed the foundation of this subfield of HRM, deeply exploring the relationship among organizational strategy and HRM (Wright et al., 2001; Allen and Wright, 2007). What started indeed to be pointed out was how managerial attentions should be concerned with HRM, departing from seeing it as a mere administrative function and being instead conscious of its competitive potential and its role in the achievement of organizational success (Beer et al., 1984). Such starting points led as a consequence to the creation of the subfield of SHRM that is, according to Wright et al. (2001, p.701), not only devoted to "exploring HR's role in supporting business strategy", but simultaneously concerned with creating firm-specific HRM practices that are adapted to the circumstances of an organization. Through its objective the ending scope becomes in this way to create practices that are not easily-transferable nor copyable, retaining from the point of view of organizations the competitive advantage their workforce may represent.

In short, SHRM wants to study the role of Human Resource Management activities (through their alignment with organizational goals) in contributing to business effectiveness and to the improvement of organizational performance (Schuler and Jackson, 2005). Thus, the unfolding of SHRM established field-of-research brought scholars and organizations to study the link between HRM and its potential positive contributions to the financial performance and productivity inside the firm. But at first, and then for a long time, such essentiality of HRM strategies for organizational success was simply seen in one optic: in terms of the potential financial returns that HRM practices could contribute to create. The positive impact on the productivity, turnover and overall financial performance of an organization these could bring was for long studied and is in fact currently undeniable (see for example Huselid, 1995; Arthur, 1994 and Lee et al., 2017). But, this model, that has also been described as the Michigan (or Hard) Model to HRM, is characterized by an unique focus: the need to “ apply *best practices* in selection, appraisal, rewards, and HR development to increase shareholder value”, which is appointed as the “one and only purpose of the organization” (Fombrun et al., 1984 in Aust et al., 2020 p.2). This implies therefore that Strategic HRM thinking merely focuses on the positive contributions the Human Resource Systems can have on the productivity and financial performance of the firm, for the mere purpose of maximizing shareholders’ returns (Beer et al., 2015). Defining then outcomes “mainly in terms of economic value (productivity and efficiency)”, while neglecting the well-being of employees and society (Beer et al., 2015 p.427) and leaving out environmental concerns.

So, adopting as its main focus HRM’s contribution on organizational financial outcomes (Kramar, 2014), the model fails in this way to take into account the numerous and broader concerns of different stakeholders and the paradoxes and tensions which addressing these concerns may cause (Ehnert, 2009; Kramar, 2014). Foresaking the consideration of societal and environmental outcomes, and rather focusing on economic organizational outcomes in assessing the effectiveness of an HRM system (Beer et al., 2015), this conceptualization does not match anymore what are the expectations coming from the external as well as internal environment of firms. So, in a context in which in the last three decades Strategic Human Resource Management has been able to emerge as a dominant approach to HRM (Kramar, 2014) and “mainstream HRM has been strongly identified with strategic HRM thinking” (De Prins et al., 2014 p.263) more recently a newer, more sustainable approach to Sustainable HRM appeared, seeming now to be affirming (Ehnert and Harry, 2012), representing a succeeding stage in such tradition of thought.

### 2.3 Evolving Towards a Sustainable Approach.

On top of other sustainable efforts, Sustainable Human Resource Management has undeniably become an emerging topic for companies, given external pressures are (as said) increasingly pushing organizations to incorporate sustainability as a core value into their corporate policies and strategies. Stretching in this way the scope of Strategic HRM, in order to encompass sustainability issues, we are presented with the implicit assumption that the sustainable approach will represent the “next, complementary stage in the tradition of HRM thinking” (De Prins et al., 2014 p.267).

Although there being no consensual and clear definition of sustainable HRM (Wikhamn, 2019; Fei and Wang, 2022), it being a very recent topic of analysis, according to Kramar (2022) Sustainable HRM departs from the goal of SHRM, towards new and more comprehensive goals. First, the focus of the Strategic HRM concept concentrated in fact on adopting and planning HRM practices and activities to increase organizations’ “economic efficiency and effectiveness and contributing to financial success through planned HRM activities” (Wright and McMahan, 1992 in App et al., 2012). But whilst it did link in an explicit manner “people-management policies and practices to the achievement of organisational outcomes and performances” (Kramar, 2014 p.1069), this was only done, as specified, concentrating on a financial perspective: with the ending scope of maximizing shareholders’ value. On the other hand, the more recent Sustainable HRM approach seeks instead to achieve a far more complex goal: managing people to achieve positive financial, social, and ecological outcomes simultaneously, both in the long and the short term. Recognizing in this way the achievement of positive outcomes as ‘ends’ in themselves, not just ‘means’ to financial ends (De Prins et al., 2014; Kramar, 2022). Therefore moving towards an approach that “explicitly recognises the legitimacy of organisational practices, particularly HRM practices, in furthering a wider range of outcomes, not merely financial” anymore (Kramar, 2014 p.1070): taking into consideration the environment in which the business operates. Recognizing the existence and relevance of a multiple range of stakeholders and the necessity to take into consideration the multidimensionality of organizational outcomes (Aust et al., 2020; Beer et al., 2015). So, while Strategic HRM designs practices to further organizational strategy and economic outcomes, this focus was expanded through the adoption of Sustainable HRM practices. Developing a framework to manage people “in the achievement of positive outcomes in the three aspects of the triple bottom line (TBL)” (Kramar, 2022 p.150). This, as we know, is especially relevant given the challenges the workforce market is facing and the hot topics of environmental matters, working-life quality and the well-being of workers which have become

more and more a central focus in HRM literature, developing a great interest in the adoption of multi-stakeholder perspectives and the need to take into consideration environmental and social contextual factors (De Vos and Van der Heijden, 2017).

With such circumstances, the conditions underlying HRM strategy and decision-making have been impacted, motivating the need for increasingly sustainable-centric HR practices and strategies (Ehnert, 2009). Influencing in this way the HR functions and the strategies adopted by firms in the attraction, motivation and development of talent. But, in a context in which younger generations and the future workforce is demanding and expecting tangible sustainable efforts from the organizations they belong to (or may look into as future employers), understanding which Sustainable HRM practices may make a company appealing for the market becomes relevant. The scope of our analysis consists, in fact, in understanding to what extent being socially and environmentally responsible in managing employees may represent a competitive advantage in talents' attraction and what are the activities that seem to particularly influence such attractiveness towards an employer, from a Sustainable HRM point of view. Contributing in this way to the gap that for our present knowledge affects existing literature.



### **Chapter 3. Creating a Comprehensive Framework of Reference.**

We have therefore explored the theoretical background justifying the unfolding of sustainability matters, both in organizational and literary contexts. This makes us understand how the adoption of different Sustainable HRM practices by firms may not only contribute to reach sustainable goals posed by authorities, in line with the expectations of stakeholders, but could also grant an additional advantage in attracting and later retaining human capital resources, making a company more competitive in the labor market. This is especially relevant in changing economies, in which different trends are affecting the market contexts and it therefore becomes crucial for organizations to attract and retain highly qualified and skilled employees, to be able to endure a competitive advantage. The establishment of an employer brand based on a sustainable management of the workforce represents “an important tool for attracting and retaining high-quality workers” (App et al., 2012 p.263). Sustainable HRM may consequently offer the possibility for companies to differentiate themselves in such an increasingly complex labor market: enhancing their attractiveness as employers. But what specifically, within Sustainable HRM, is attractive for individuals?

With the adoption of Sustainable HRM, scholars have been advocating for a model that “better reflects how organizations are currently changing and developing toward more multistakeholder perspectives” (Aust et al., 2020 p.2). What has been defined by Bush (2020, p.1) as “the most common conceptualization of Sustainable HRM” contemplates in fact an emphasis on the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), which allows in this way to consider “the impacts of HRM on a broader range of outcomes, including financial, environmental, and human and social outcomes” (Lu et al., 2023 p.331). This implies having to respectively integrate economic, social and environmental goals into organizational operations and planning. In this way, the development of an approach which may provide win-win-win strategies and solutions is favoured, through developing practices that may benefit all these dimensions, which may still nonetheless be in conflict and paradoxal (Enhert, 2009 and Bush, 2020). Yet, what has been presented so far by literature is lacking compliance with such requirements, and some issues need to be obviated. In the first section (3.1) it will be first analyzed what still needs to be made, drawing from authors’ suggestions to create a point of reference which may differ to what has been proposed in research so far. Later in section 3.2 a first distinction among practices is made thanks to Ehnert’s work (2009). Practices will be in fact differentiated in three initial bundles, according to their ending scope of adoption: that of attracting and retaining talent, that of motivating and maintaining it and, lastly, practices adopted to develop and invest in the skills of the workforce. To lastly draw in the final part from many different sources and authors that

can allow us to create a comprehensive set of practices, which may represent some of the most commonly-adopted practices of Sustainable HRM, resulting in the framework proposed in section 3.1.3. This will represent the main basis for our analysis: our developed and finished set of reference. Building up in this way to the creation of a comprehensive set of practices which differentiates among the dimensions of sustainability and the objective they serve to.

### **3.1 Posed Issues of Existing Literature: Where to Depart From**

It has been made clear that sustainability involves three different aspects to it, which are coexisting and intertwined (see, for example Ehnert et al., 2014 and Kramar, 2022). As cited, the outcomes to be achieved are in fact simultaneously financial, so on the economical side, social (human) and ecological. Despite this conceptualization, literature tends instead to be “inconsistent” (De Prins et al., 2014 p.263) and discriminates in its analyses among these three different aspects, often concentrating in only one between the social and ecological dimensions, rather than building an omnicomprehensive view of the practices adopted by firms. Rather in contrast to the TBL model, most authors have thereof been omitting to explore sustainability dimensions in their entirety. With different and “competing concepts” emerging (Ehnert and Harry, 2012 p.228), different Sustainable HRM types have in fact come up in literature, each emphasizing a different range of outcomes (Aust et al., 2020; Kramar, 2014). The two main approaches to refer to are Socially Responsible HRM and Green HRM, which fragment Sustainable HRM into different types.

The first example of this fragmentation, referred to as ‘Socially Responsible HRM’, serves according to Lu et al. (2023) the aim of creating social value through “socially-responsible HR behavior, policies, and practices” (p.333), enhancing what is the organizational influence on the people that compose the organization. Looking at the people inside the firm, such as employees, executives and management, but also those outside of it (not only customers, suppliers and subcontractors but the overall community) in the consideration of health, safety and quality matters (Scouarnec, 2005). This first limiting typology of Sustainable HRM concentrates on following sustainable purposes that relate to the social dimension while still serving the economic purpose - as the main ending scope is that of trying to minimize the negative impacts of firms (Dyllick and Muff, 2016). Such approach involves in fact the implementation of Socially Responsible HRM activities with the purpose of minimizing negative impacts on the business and reducing business risks. This is realized by adopting organizational “approaches and activities aimed at socially responsible and economically appropriate recruitment and selection, development, deployment, and release of employees”

(Aust et al., 2020 p. 217). Yet, in all this, the environmental dimension is clearly left out of focus.

The second main type of Sustainable HRM presented in literature is then the Green approach to Sustainable HRM, also known as ‘Green Human Resource Management’ (GHRM), which represents the other face of the coin. GHRM research has been defined as “the HRM aspects of environmental management [which] expands the scope of [Strategic HRM] to incorporate sustainability issues” (Renwick et al., 2013 p.1). GHRM is factually mainly concerned with promoting the environmental dimension of sustainability in organizations. According to Amjad et al. (2021, p.4) GHRM utilizes in fact HRM strategies “to promote the sustainable utilization of assets within an organization in order to achieve the goal of environmental sustainability”, through the adoption of corporate practices and approaches which react to individuals and executives’ concerns. Even this concept is expected in its focus to serve an economic purpose, through the reduction of the carbon footprint of an organization and the contribution to its green credentials as a response to stakeholders’ and regulatory needs and expectations (Aust et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2023). But again, the sustainability goal leaves out one aspect: the social dimension.

Factually, both these typologies of sustainable practices have been recognized as successful for the attraction of talent. First, with socially responsible behaviours and attitudes promoting workers' well-being and fostering a positive working environments, Socially Responsible HRM “can help attract talent, [...] reinforce staff loyalty and [...] motivate employees” (Lefkowitz, 2006 in Dupont et al.,2013). While GHRM, on the other side, has been described as a good strategy for talent retention, with an attachment of the firm to the natural environment having a high likelihood of differentiating the organization in the labor market, offering a competitive edge to the firm (Kivinda et al., 2021). Yet, what we want to explore is instead the third type of Sustainable HRM literature refers to: Triple Bottom Line HRM (TBL-HRM). In a context which departs from exclusively implementing Socially Responsible HRM activities or merely being concerned with environmental issues related to Human Resource Management, but rather building up from an omnicomprehensive TBL-HRM viewpoint.

What the concept of Triple Bottom Line HRM implies is a simultaneous focus on all three the “presumed economic, environmental and social purposes of HRM” (Aust et al., 2020 p.4). While also understanding new approaches are emerging, such as Common Good HRM – to serve the common-good through the development of an outside-in perspective rather than simply looking after TBL models (Aust et al., 2020) – the scope of this analysis is clear. What

is crucial here is to create an understanding of which are the practices which can be attributed to TBL-HRM, establishing in this way a more accurate picture of their existence. A sustainable organization has been factually defined as “an enterprise that simultaneously contributes economic, social and environmental benefits — known as the ‘Triple Bottom Line’ — to society, while also ensuring its own long-term sustainability as an organization” (SHRM, 2011 p.1) and nonetheless often literature has been shown to focus on either one of these, not building an omnicomprehensive review of these three different concepts. So being able to create a distinction in between these dimensions of sustainability and confront them, creating an understanding on which may be most effective in attracting employees, remains to this date still fairly unexplored.

To support such argumentation, different were the suggestions from literature which also stemmed as the propeller of our analysis. These further highlight the need we are facing, generally recognized by authors, to distinguish among Sustainable HRM practices, individuals’ preferences relating to them and the mediating role personal characteristics (and more specifically individual values) play into it. Fei and Wang (2022, p.198) suggest in fact that “future studies should examine sustainable HRM as a bundle of practices [and] studying it as such will reveal the precise effects of sustainable HRM strategies and practices”. Diaz-Carrion et al. (2018) add that, in this, “future research could include the perception of the employees regarding the implementation of sustainable HRM systems as the direct receivers of such policies and practices” (p.138). Additionally, Lis shows in her study regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (2012) that not all its dimensions have the same relevance but may vary in importance, suggesting, just in line with our intents, to investigate if the perception of different CSR-dimensions may vary “through individual personal characteristics” (p.290). The author then later on encourages again future studies to analyze whether “personal characteristics moderate the perception of the dimensions of CSR”, influencing in this way employer choice (Lis, 2018 p.112).

Departing therefore from the suggestions made by different authors, the current analysis wants to contribute to this existing gap in literature. This results in trying and identify all different HRM practices of sustainability which companies put in place, using as a point of attention how these may impact organizational attractiveness for individuals. Departing then from such perceptions to develop an analysis on how the individual values or characteristics (such as age, gender and education) may mediate such preferences. Creating a term of comparison among the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainability .

### 3.2 An Initial Distinction: Attraction, Motivation and Development Practices

To create therefore a frame of reference in our analysis it becomes relevant to understand, through the exploration of available literature, which are the existing practices of Sustainable HRM organizations adopt. While previous research already identifies general characteristics of Sustainable HRM, and its divergence from Strategic HRM (e.g. Kramar, 2014; Kramar, 2022; Nilipour Tabatabaei et al., 2017; Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018), what it lacks is exactly what we want to investigate: which are the specific main practices companies can adopt, subdividing them first and foremost in different bundles to analyze separately.

Being in its early stage of development (Ehnert and Harry, 2012), literature on Sustainable HRM presents in fact scarce evidence on which are the relevant practices companies adopt in the application of the concept of Sustainable HRM. And when it does, as said, it seems to only study them marginally, failing to present a comprehensive set of activities. Some studies try in fact to identify the Green HRM practices (e.g.: Dumont et al., 2017 and Renwick et al., 2013) while other simply focus on Corporate Social Responsibility applications (such as Ehnert et al., 2015 and Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018). Yet many miss to put together all relevant dimensions of sustainability, in an effort to create some comparability among these. What we will therefore attempt, through the review of those few resources available to draw from, is to create a fairly-comprehensive list of all the activities that can be appointed as Sustainable HRM practices. To create such comparability in our analysis.

The first objective is that of creating a set of reference to distinguish the practices analyzed in groups, other than our main subdivision between different dimensions of sustainability, but also according to the scope they serve to the organization. Different are the distinctions made in pre-existing literature to try and summarize among different HRM sustainable practices, creating “bundles” which have been depicted in ways that are different, although close in substance (see for e.g. Aust et al., 2020; Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018; Ehnert, 2009; Ehnert and Harry, 2012; Genari and Macke, 2022; Stankeviciute and Savaneviciene, 2018). Selecting among these, the most recurrent and appropriate for our analysis seemed that of Ehnert’s work (2009). Through the reference and revision of it we can summarize in fact all different HRM sustainable practices subdividing them in three main bundles that differ (distinguishing among the activities) in terms of ending scope of adoption. These three subgroups can be observed in *Table 2* and respectively relate to activities put in place by organizations to either (1) attract and retain, (2) maintain and motivate and, lastly, (3) develop and invest in the skills of their workforce.

Given in fact Sustainable HRM integrates sustainability principles into the management of Human Resources inside organizations, it does so by implementing different practices. The three categories presented by the author represent in this way the main objectives linked to Sustainable HRM which companies pursue, illustrating the “key internal drivers why companies link the idea of sustainability to HRM” (Ehnert, 2009 p. 228). Ehnert (2009, p.236) categorizes in fact HR-related sustainability activities into the following three main objectives. The first category represents a bundle of activities that companies adopt to *attract* highly skilled talents, in an attempt to win the war for talent in an increasingly competitive environment, becoming in this way an employer of choice for talents in the global market. But analyzing the factors that affect the workforce gains relevance to develop an employer brand that not only can serve as a tool to attract future employees and workforce, but also in retaining existing ones. This is in fact the end of those HR activities, linked to sustainability, that compose the second bundle and are adopted for the end of *maintaining inside the organization a motivated and healthy workforce*, which in turn puts relevance on employees’ wellbeing and motivation. The third and last recognized category of Sustainable HRM activities represents instead those activities adopted by the organizations that focus on *investing* in talent development and training employees. May these be the current or future workforce, this bundle includes all those activities that may develop their knowledge and transform them into long-term assets, allowing them to grow and bring innovation and ameliorating solutions inside the firm. In her work though, Ehnert seems to focus on her analysis on those HRM practices which can almost exclusively be linked to only one of the three dimensions Sustainability is made of: the social one. The author, in her thorough review of which are the most relevant practices adopted by companies in terms of Sustainable HRM, seems instead to almost completely leave out the environmental aspects tied to it.

<b>Bundle</b>	<b>Scope of adoption</b>
<b>1. Attract and retain talent</b>	Being recognized as an employer of choice by the actual and potential employees.
<b>2. Maintain and motivate talent</b>	Creating a healthy and productive workforce that is able and willing to perform.
<b>3. Develop and invest in talent’s skills</b>	Investing in talent-development and in training employees (current and future).

Table 2. Differentiating HRM practices according to Ehnert's work (2009).

Adding this to the aforementioned suggestions from existing literature, and departing from this first distinction summarized in *Table 2*, we can build on the first scope of this analysis: to create a set of comparable practices among the different dimensions of sustainability.

### 3.3 A Resulting Comprehensive Framework of Sustainable HRM Practices

The first intent is therefore to build a comprehensive framework containing the main practices companies adopt that have been appointed by literature as practices of Sustainable Human Resource Management. Creating in this way a set of comparable activities put in place by firms in the sustainable management of their Human Resources. Once identified the main three sets of activities, or bundles, each practice may relate to (such as the attraction, evaluation and compensation, and the development of talent) it is relevant to make a distinction among the three dimensions of sustainability: the environmental, the social and the economic. This can further reduce the intent each of the practices follows and the scope each activity can be further distinguished into. Adopting in this way a Triple Bottom Line approach which doesn't, for instance, fail to leave out the social dimension to focus on the ecological one, or on the contrary concentrating on the environmental dimension excluding the socially-responsible activities company adopt. Differentiating among the different dimensions of sustainability, to later test their relevance in influencing organizational attractiveness in the eyes of individuals. To investigate through literature how the activities relating to HR management can be declined among these three complementary aspects. What becomes of interest is therefore to be able to define a-priori a series of activities which relate to the sustainable management of human resources, relating exclusively to one of the three dimensions: economical, social or ecological.

Such first intent has purposely not been reached through scrutinizing single organizations' core values through in-loco inquiries, that would very much limit our scope of analysis and not allow to project the results obtained to any other organization. Every firm applies in fact unique and irreplicable standards and values, given its individuality and in light of its own needs and goals. For this, practices that firms display in their sustainability reports seem diverse among different countries and between organizations themselves, even if a certain degree of homogenization is present (Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018). Given this diversification the best possible approach to adopt becomes drawing from both existing literature and sustainability reports of the most sustainable corporations according to the Corporate Knight's Global 100 Index (2022). Making it possible in this way to build a set of practices applied by firms that can relate to different dimensions of Sustainability in HRM, to create more general terms of comparison.

First, for the development of an exhaustive set of practices that relate to the environmental dimension of Sustainable HRM, research on Green HRM and the related practices developed were used, selecting among the most relevant and recurring in literature.

In fact, given as previously pointed out Green HRM can be defined as those HRM activities that "enhance positive environmental outcomes" (Kramar, 2014), especially helpful in the definition of the measures of the environmental dimension of HRM was the work of Dumont, Shen and Deng (2017). The authors, empirically testing the influence of the environmental dimensions of HRM on the people inside organizations, developed in fact some quite exhaustive measures for Green HRM. Another main point of analysis, was then the work by Renwick et al., 2013, which were among the main contributors in creating an exhaustive set of practices adopted in GHRM, accompanied by many others that can be found in the final output.

For the practices that instead refer to the Social dimension of Sustainable HRM the contribution of many other additional authors was looked into. One of these is Ehnert (2015), that analyzing corporate sustainability reports of Forbes' top 250 global companies, in her paper summarizes and creates an index table on "how companies [that adhere to the GRI reporting guidelines] acknowledge Sustainable HRM" (p.2). Another crucial contributor was Diaz-Carrion et al. (2018) who, through a Delphi study, tried and developed a measurement scale for Corporate Social Responsibility relating to the HRM field. But many others were the authors which have been providing examples of practices that companies adopt which can be appointed as Sustainable Human Resource Management activities, even trying to provide more complete sets that included all dimensions, such as the cases of Hronova and Spacek (2021) and Stahl et al. (2020), that although very much still mainly focus on the social side. Thanks to all these points of references, and some additional marginal contributions, enough evidence is collected to have a complete overview of what are the practices that relate to the environmental dimension and the social one, identifying in each bundle a fair amount of exemplifications.

Yet, having identified the practices related to two of the three main dimensions which compose sustainability, thanks to previous literature contribution, what is missing is the economic one. The issue is in fact the "lack of attention to the economic dimension of sustainability, which to date has not been studied" (Choi and Ng, 2011). Even if different authors developed the matter and pointed out how the economic dimension of sustainability "constitutes [in] a firm's capability to generate economic value from their operations and improve financial performance" (Nandan and Jyoti, 2020 p.114 in Vanka et al., 2020) and "implies meeting the economic needs of the population, producing a maximum output in order to achieve a high standard of living within the constraints of the existing capital" (Iniesta-Bonillo et al., 2016). However, such critical point is reinforced by Choi and Ng (2011) who assert how for the economic sustainability dimension there is "no comparable study to follow"



(p.275). The authors, which used as a point of reference the reinterpretation of Dyllick and Hockerts' work (2002) made in fact clear how the economic dimension of sustainability is deeply intertwined with the other two through the concepts of eco-efficiency and socio-efficiency, which are deeply interdependent with the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability. Not leaving space for it to be investigated separately as a bundle of practices to distinguish in the present study. In support of this argument, it is useful to appoint to literature again. Some examples of Sustainability practices which relate to the economic dimensions have been summarized by Jepsen and Grob in their paper (2015, p.170-173). These involve, for example, the inclusion of statements inside job descriptions on how employee will be held responsible of environmental impacts. Or again seeking people with “skills in sustainable knowledge and practices[...], provide telecommuting, work-from-home and other mobile or non-office-based work design options [and] provide access to sustainability champions in the organization”. Other examples from Stahl et al. (2020, p.7) include then to “invest in social capital as a source of innovation and sustained advantage” and creating “long-term triple bottom line-based incentives in managerial compensation plans”, together with pursuing long-term sustainable performances and avoiding short-termism. Yet, as it can be noticed, such practices cannot be distinguished from the environmental and social dimension in a study that wishes to investigate what dimension appears to especially appeal to the labor market.

So what is relevant is to create a comparison among those practices that are identifiable and relatable to either one of the dimensions, understanding what may be individuals' preferences related to different bundles. This resulted in the development of a set of practices that tries to be as comprehensive as possible and additionally splits activities which relate to different dimensions of sustainability into the afore-mentioned bundles based on Ehnert's work (see *Table 2*). To create therefore, inferring from these, a set of practices and policies which companies put in place to present to the respondents. *Table 3,4 and 5* thus, drawing from the existing literature, represent this distinction to give a clearer image of what these practices are.

Having develop a framework of reference for our data analysis, the further step becomes to apply it to investigate our research questions: analyzing wether different practices of Sustainable HRM could serve as a strategic tool for companies to adopt in the war for talent that has been affecting them. Is a dimension of sustainability, distinguishing between the social and environmental practices, preferred over the other? Do individual values and characteristics of the person (either value or background-related) bring people to prefer certain practices over others? And in what way?

Table 3. Sustainable HRM Practices to Attract and Retain Talent.

	SOCIAL DIMENSION	ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION
<p><b>Attract and Retain</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying as an employer that supports employees' well-being and positive employment relationships: granting work-life balance, employee assistance, inclusiveness and diversity management, opportunities for individual expression of voice, etc. (Lu et al., 2023; Stahl et al., 2020)</li> <li>Recruitment websites providing details on socially-responsible activity of the firm, such as providing specific Corporate Social Performance indexes (Albinger and Freeman, 2000).</li> <li>Considering diversity when hiring: attentiveness for inclusion and equality in the composition of workforce and governance bodies of all genders, age groups and minorities. (Ehnert et al., 2015; Hronova and Spacek, 2021)</li> <li>Evaluating ethical decision-making skills of individuals when hiring. (Jepsen and Grob, 2015)</li> <li>Putting in place transparent and unbiased selection processes. Adopting recruitment policies that grant equal opportunities, local employment and occupational integration. (Corporate Knights Global 100 Index, 2022; Dupont et al., 2013)</li> <li>Offering secure and fair jobs: attentiveness on the ratios of permanent/temporary and Full-time/Part-time contracts offered (Coulon, 2006; Hronova and Spacek, 2021).</li> <li>Have a high percentage of people covered by collective-bargaining agreements. (Hronova and Spacek, 2021)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Employer branding: building and displaying a good environmental reputation. (Tang et al., 2018)</li> <li>Corporate website providing details on environmental activity of the firm and all relating active policies and targets (e.g. targets on carbon emissions reduction, waste-management and green energy). (Hronova and Spacek, 2021)</li> <li>Putting in place strategic objectives which include active policies for employees to reduce carbon emissions and being attentive to ecological issues. (Renwick et al., 2013)</li> <li>Considering candidates' green attitudes, awareness and sensitivity on environmental issues when recruiting and selecting employees. Looking for candidates that are environmentally knowledgeable and motivated. (Dumont et al., 2017; Renwick et al., 2013; Stahl et al., 2020)</li> <li>Creating recruitment ads and job descriptions which emphasize environmental practices, to grant alignment between organizational and workforce values (Renwick et al., 2013).</li> <li>Creating job recruiting interviews that allow to select and evaluate talent based on green criterias, testing environmental knowledge, beliefs and values (Renwick et al., 2013; Stahl et al., 2020).</li> </ul>

Table 4. Sustainable HRM Practices to Motivate and Maintain the Workforce.

	SOCIAL DIMENSION	ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION
<p><b>Motivate and Maintain</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basing performance evaluation on a wide range of aspects to focus on developing employees strengths and improve collaboration. (<i>Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018; Pulakos, 2004</i>)</li> <li>• Creating rewards for good citizenship and moral behaviour, sanctioning those who breach organizational sustainable and ethical standards. (<i>Luthans et al., 2006 in Lu et al., 2023</i>)</li> <li>• Linking compensation to employees' ethical and responsible behaviors and their contribution to social performance objectives. (<i>Diaz-Carrion et al, 2018; Lu et al., 2023</i>)</li> <li>• Establishing pay systems that are targeted, diverse, flexible, and consistent with sustainability goals, not discriminating by gender, type of contract or other criterias. (<i>Diaz-Carrion et al., 2021; Nilipour Tabatabaei et al., 2017</i>)</li> <li>• Allowing a proper work-life balance: offering flexible work arrangements, distance-working options and competitive vacation policies. (<i>Nilipour Tabatabaei et al., 2017</i>).</li> <li>• Putting in place employee assistance programs to support employees and families: granting parental and breastfeeding leaves, aid for disabled children, childcare, behavioral coaching, counseling and eldercare support. (<i>Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018; Ehnert, 2009; Hronova and Spacek, 2021</i>)</li> <li>• Assure further social benefits such as retirement or insurance plans, subsidised lunch, home ownership assistance and financial planning. (<i>Corporate Knights Global 100 Index, 2022</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating explicit links between environmental performance and executive contracts. (<i>Cordeiro and Sarkis, 2008; Renwick et al., 2013</i>)</li> <li>• Considering employees' workplace green behavior in performance appraisals and in promotions: creating green KPIs criterias of performance appraisals and setting green goals and targets for entire workforce for all members of the workforce. (<i>Dumont et al, 2017; Tang et al., 2018</i>)</li> <li>• Creating compensation mechanisms which reward all employees for reaching environmental objectives:</li> <li>• Financial compensation: such as green travel benefits (rewards for transport and travel) and green tax (promote bicycles and an ecologic car fleet). (<i>Tang et al., 2018</i>)</li> <li>• Non-monetary compensation: recognition and praise or excellence awards for notable actions, paid vacations, time off and gift certificates. (<i>Govindarajulu and Daily, 2004</i>)</li> <li>• Putting in place reward schemes for staff that acquires environmental competencies (<i>Renwick et al., 2013</i>).</li> <li>• Develop organizational policies and practices that encourage talent to participate in green activities and actively contribute to green objectives, such as: recycling, better waste management, videoconferencing, virtual interviews, online training, car-sharing, home-working and energy-efficient office spaces. (<i>Mandip, 2012; Philpott and Davies 2007</i>).</li> </ul>

	SOCIAL DIMENSION	ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION
<p><b>Motivate and Maintain</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring and eliminating child and forced labor, physical abuse and any incidents of discrimination inside the organization, cautiously supervising all repairing actions taken (Ehnert et al., 2015; Stahl et al., 2020).</li> <li>Screening significant suppliers and contractors on human rights and closely monitoring reparative and preventive actions taken (Stahl et al., 2020).</li> <li>Encouraging workers' health and wellness: creating programs and activities to promote health, physical well-being and stress reduction, while also offering psychological support and periodic medical reviews. (Corporate Knights' Global 100 Index, 2022; Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018)</li> <li>Committing to increase labor security and safety, minimizing psychological and physical work-risks (also through climate surveys). Avoiding and preventing unsafe working conditions, injuries, occupational diseases and fatalities (Diaz-Carrion et al., 2021; Ehnert et al., 2015; Hronova and Spacek, 2021).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting wider employee participation (not restricted to managers and specialists) in environmentally-friendly practices: newsletters, suggestion schemes and problem-solving groups, low carbon championships, teams to tap employees' tacit knowledge and suggest improvements; encouraging tele/video conferencing, car-sharing and homeworking. (Renwick et al., 2013)</li> <li>Checking partners' HRM systems, consistency with sustainability goals and compliance with environmental codes. Putting the work into any necessary changes of partners. (Stahl et al., 2020)</li> <li>Putting attention on employees' and partners environmental compliance and responsibilities, correcting incidents and communicating organizational environmental concerns and policies. (Hronova and Spacek, 2021; Lu et al., 2023)</li> <li>Design practices in the workplace that help reduce harmful emissions and increase recycling (reduced workplace-driven pollution and waste; better energy use). (Stahl et al., 2020)</li> </ul>

Table 5. Sustainable HRM Practices to Develop and Invest in Employees' Skills.

	SOCIAL DIMENSION	ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION
<p><b>Develop and Skills-Investing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in career-development through programmes and training. Granting equal, non-discriminatory access to professional training, not differentiating between workers profiles such as men/women, employees/executives and younger/older employees. (Dupont et al., 2013; Nilipour Tabatabaei et al., 2017)</li> <li>• Providing training opportunities on human rights and to increase employees' skills and ability in ethical and responsible behaviour. (Hronova and Spacek, 2021; Lu et al., 2023)</li> <li>• Training workers on on-the-job health and safety, encouraging involvement and contribution on the topic. (Hronova and Spacek, 2021)</li> <li>• Offering education, counseling and prevention programs to assist workforce, their families and community members on health issues and serious diseases. (Ehnert et al., 2015)</li> <li>• Supporting local communities through social projects, service learning programs (promoting citizenship and social responsibility) and local creation of jobs. (Choi and Ng, 2011; Dupont et al., 2013; Stahl et al., 2020)</li> <li>• Supporting long-term investments for society and external stakeholders and favouring company-sponsored volunteering. Taking part of well-being programs and charitable giving opportunities (Lu et al., 2023; Nilipour Tabatabaei et al., 2017)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training staff to increase awareness on climate change and the organization's environmental impact. (Bansal and Roth, 2000 in Renwick, 2013; Stefanelli et al., 2020)</li> <li>• Provide all company members with green training to promote green values and develop knowledge and skills required for green management (Dumont et al., 2017)</li> <li>• Educating individuals on eco-friendly practices, such as waste-reduction and waste-collection, for both in and out of the workplace application. (Phillips, 2007) To improve employees' knowledge and skills on environmental issues. (Stefanelli et al., 2020)</li> <li>• Training management to support environmental projects developing environmentally-oriented leaders that can empower ecological objectives of the organization. (Daily et al., 2012).</li> <li>• Empowering employees to later encourage them to make suggestions and be proactive towards environmental improvements. (Govindarajulu and Daily, 2004; Stefanelli et al., 2020)</li> </ul>

## Chapter 4. Methodology

To study Sustainable HRM's potential to contribute to organizational competitive advantage in the war for talent different were the questions investigated, presented in section 4.1. We'll therefore be developing a questionnaire (section 4.2) to analyze what may be individuals' preferences on these matters. This was based on the framework developed in Chapter 3, that presents an overview of some of the practices organizations adopt in the effort to integrate sustainability into the management of their HR (*Tables 3, 4 and 5*). In the final part of this work different empirical analyses were then adopted to infer the intended research questions in section 4.3, allowing us to analyze what are the preferences of individuals on these matters, to identify which are the factors that could be relevant in characterizing an employer as appealing for the labor market. Understanding in this way what are the leverages that can be used by firms to not only improve their performance, but increase perceived attractiveness for all stakeholders which look into it. Drawing at last the results from the data analyzed in section 4.4 and present at last all observed limitations and suggestions for further research.

### 4.1 Theoretical Backgrounds and Purpose of the Research

As introduced, the current study aims to determine the relative perceived importance of different practices of sustainability relating to workforce management. As its final intent this thesis wants therefore to contribute to existing knowledge of Sustainable HRM, a field of study which is still in its infancy, in different ways.

Given theoretical reasons and empirical evidence support, the present work proposes that social and environmental Sustainable HRM practices, individually, may foster attractiveness from individuals towards an organization. Understanding in this way whether Sustainable HRM represents a potential tool to attract talent, contributing to differentiate the firm in the labor market. We will therefore be verifying if such conceptualization may be true through an analysis of our respondents' inputs and inquiring what seem to be individuals attitudes towards sustainable practices of HRM. Identifying whether different Sustainable HRM practices and dimensions may seem to particularly influence individuals' attraction towards an organization that puts them in place, analyzing in this way Sustainable HRM's potential to differentiate firms in the labor market. Similar studies were conducted, in our knowledge, regarding practices of sustainability which strictly related to Corporate Social Responsibility (Backhaus et al., 2002) or general social and ecological policies, analyzing their role and relevance in job applicants' attraction to an organization (e.g. Aiman-Smith et al., 2001). A number of studies also explore the effect of CSR adoption compared to other factors (such as

financial compensations, location or the intellectual challenge a certain job may offer) when selecting and looking at an employer (e.g. Lis, 2018). But while existing research investigates different dimensions and broadly defined practices of CSR, studying their influence on organizational attractiveness (Evans and Davis, 2011; Gully et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2014; Lis, 2012), it fails to explore the practices of sustainable management of the workforce in particular. Or, while invoking for its need in theory, fail to investigate it empirically (such is the case of Rank and Palframan, 2021). Consequentially, further research is needed to obviate for this lack. And given we can observe a gap in trying to consider how different practices of Sustainable HRM may influence individuals' consideration of an organization which adopts them, it is of relevance to provide deeper insights on the following question: what are the effects on organizational attractiveness if different Sustainable HRM practices are compared? The first main research question of the present study consistently follows:

*Q1: Do people seem to exhibit neat preferences among practices that relate to either one dimension of sustainability over the other?*

The desired output of the work consists in fact in understanding which among the dimensions of sustainability is preferable with respect to the others. Do the socially-sustainable efforts put in place by corporations seem to generally be more capable of drawing individuals compared to environmentally-responsible HRM activities? Or does it rather appear to be the contrary? The objective becomes in this way to analyze the preferences of individuals to try and infer whether Sustainable HRM appears to be an effective tool in talents attraction. To understand what is considered relevant in the labour market and whether some dimension may be seen as more appealing for the workforce (both potential and present) when facing organizations.

The first scope the first initial inquiry desires to reach is therefore to understand why individuals may choose one company or another based on HRM strategies these put in place. Investigating in this way whether Sustainable HRM practices can contribute in considering a firm particularly attractive and induce individuals' willingness to put an effort to be able to work for an organization that puts in place certain sustainable practices over others.

The second main objective to face is then to investigate whether organizational attractiveness may be influenced by different characteristics of individuals. It is in fact relevant to monitor Human Resource Management practices not only in managerial terms, to create a general understanding of which among them may be considered more attractive, but also to

shed light into which factors related to individuals may weight in into their preferences. Analyzing how individual characteristics seem to drive such preferences becomes relevant in understanding how different individuals may be attracted by an organization depending on the messages and hints the very same firm sends out to the public, and what is considered relevant in attracting them. Studying whether individual characteristics may drive people towards a company or another, or on the other hand being able to understand which individuals may be more leaning towards an appreciation and proud in the sustainable activities a firm may put in place. This constitutes the focus of our second research question:

*Q2: What background characteristics and values of individuals influence attitudes towards Sustainable HRM practices?*

It is in fact expected that certain personal characteristics may come into play with individuals' preferences among sustainable practices. Several variables like gender, age, race, education and work experience have been shown to influence organizational attraction towards different organizations, given certain aspects of the firm (Evans and Davis, 2011; Greening and Turban, 2000; Judge and Bretz, 1992; Judge and Cable, 1997; Lis, 2012; Ng and Burke, 2005; Wang and Juslin, 2011). May these be their gender, age, ethnicity or education, or the deep impact expected to be played by individuals' values. But, given the absence of extensive sources in literature to support the expected differences among individuals' preferences, the creation of different hypothesis to prove may be hard to sustain. The present analysis will instead be concentrated on the creation of a model. A model which wants to try and understand whether the preference over certain practices seem to actually be linked to different values or characteristics of the individuals, making an organization more attractive for them, and more appealing in the search for a job: in accordance with the P-O fit theories.

To add on the topic, it has been made extensively clear in literature that values are critical motivators of behaviors and attitudes (Schwartz, 2012) and serve as guiding principles in lives of individuals (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). Values do in fact influence individuals' perceptions and direct people's decisions and behaviors (Gandal et al., 2005). What is of interest investigating is therefore not only the background characteristics of people, but whether there also exists any correlation between individual values orientations and preferences towards different aspects of sustainability, in line of Rank and Palframan's work (2021). The authors, in their work, examine in fact the extent to which personal value orientations may predict internal CSR preferences, leading thereof later to increased sustainable employee behavior. Also Gully et al. (2013) adopted this approach in relating Socially and Environmentally



Responsibility (SER) efforts of firms and the role played by these on recruitment initiatives, studying how values of individuals may influence organizational attraction. Consequently, these points of reference can translate into our search to investigate in this way the existence of a relationship between different personal values and the preferences towards different practices. Strong foundations for such inquiry are especially provided by the Person-Organization fit (P-O fit), Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA), Social-Identity and Signaling theories. These serve to develop our understanding on the matter and inquire how differences among individuals may draw them towards organizations which develop certain practices and put them at the core of their values.

For a deeper understanding of the role played by individual values in preferences it is useful to refer to different and complementary psychological theories, and the most known is probably the Person-Organization fit theory (P-O fit). According to Kristof (1996) P-O fit concerns the “compatibility between people and the organizations in which they work” (p.1) and is influenced by the “congruence between individual and organizational values” (p.5). Developing this theorization, Cable and Judge’s studies (1996) established in fact in their findings that people have preferences to work in organizations that reflect their personal values and, consequently, different individual values may predict that they may be attracted to organizations with certain characteristics over others (Judge and Cable, 1997). Given “value congruence is positively related to affective outcomes and evaluations”, this represents an important player on job choices of individuals, and on whether these may decide to become part of a certain organization and later remain in it (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998 p. 384). Also the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) framework (according to Schneider et al., 1995) adds on to the P-O fit theory, asserting that organizations attract and select individuals with goals similar to that of their own. What especially is of importance for us in the ASA model is especially the first A, which relates to the Attraction paradigm. This “concerns the fact that people’s preferences for particular organizations are based upon an implicit estimate of their own personal characteristics and the attributes of [the] organization” (Schneider et al., 1995 p.749). Individuals choose to enter in this way in companies that will allow them to reach their personal goals, drawing inferences from such alignment in values. And whether an individual finds an organization attractive depends on the person’s perceived value congruence with it.

To further explain the phenomenon on how such congruence among individual and organizational values do influence organizational attraction for seekers, two are the main

psychological theories that have been referred to: respectively, the Social-Identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986) and the Signaling theory (Rynes, 1991 in Highhouse et al., 2007).

The Social-Identity theory contributes in fact to the issue asserting that “people identify with organizations as a means of expressing themselves and acquiring social approval” and “joining a particular organization is a concrete, public expression of a person's values and abilities” (Highhouse et al., 2007 p.136-143). Organizational attraction for individuals is determined therefore not merely by instrumental attributes of the job, but also by the symbolic meanings that people attribute to belonging to a certain organization (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). So, according to Cable and Turban (2001), candidates and job seekers with congruent values to that of an organization can be more attracted to it compared to applicants whose values result incongruent, due to a lack of fit. This is given by the fact, as suggested by the authors, that people are motivated in the maintenance or increase of their self-esteem, and people's jobs and, consequently, employers are an important part of their self concept and identity.

The Signaling theory further builds up the issue. According to Jones et al. (2014, p.385) “job seekers often have little information about recruiting organizations, so they rely on signals that they receive from whatever information they do have to make inferences about working conditions and other organizational characteristics”. This means that these signals individuals receive, inform them and influence their perception of value fit with the organization. Consequently in this way organizational practices and activities send job seekers signals about the values of the very same organization, according to which individuals infer their own fit with the firm. The signal they catch affects in this way individuals choices and attitudes, influencing their attraction towards an entity with which they perceive the greatest fit.

So, according also to Judge and Bretz (1992, p.262) organizational values have an effect on individuals' decision to accept a given job offer, which will depend on what is emphasized by the organization in question. A certain value orientation of individuals makes them more likely to accept a job in an organization with which they may feel an alignment in values and they may be driven to “seek jobs where their values fit the organizational environment”. Yet, while asserting these concepts, the authors were specifically investigating such correlations regarding individuals *work* values. Accordingly, also De Cooman et al. (2007 and 2009) and Dumont et al. (2017) test the P-O fit paradigm in relation to the work values of individuals. The literature provides us in fact with many examples of research put in place to investigate the relation between CSR preferences linked to organizational attraction and individual values (Evans and Davis, 2011; Rank and Palframan, 2021; Wang and Juslin, 2011; Zhang et al., 2019). What we want instead to investigate is whether some of the values of individuals, in which

these can be generally distinguished and that must not only refer to working environments, may attract them to an organization which adopts Sustainable HRM practices, or more generally if these may tend to make them prefer certain sustainable practices over others. Also inferring from Evans and Davis (2001), Wang and Juslin (2011) and Rank and Palframan (2021)'s works which all try and investigate the relationship between personal values orientation and such preferences among individuals over sustainability adoption by corporations. The literature provides us in fact with many examples of research put in place to investigate the relation between CSR preferences linked to organizational attraction and individual values (Evans and Davis, 2011; Rank and Palframan, 2021; Wang and Juslin, 2011; Zhang et al., 2019). In Evans and Davis (2011) it was empirically tested how individuals with higher other-regarding value orientations - so with higher concern towards others – tend to show higher attraction towards organizations that put in place socially-responsible practices, given “CSR reflects a concern for interests beyond one’s personal interest” (p.461). But this was not investigated more specifically regarding the practices adopted in the management of their workforce by organizations. The intent of this work is to apply these concepts to investigate Sustainable HRM adoption and its perception among individuals. This can allow us therefore to study if certain dimensions may be more attractive for individuals who relate more strongly to some values over others, and whether values play a role in encouraging the interest towards an organization and people’s desire to work for it.

Finally, it becomes then of relevance to investigate, as the final intent of the analysis, whether individuals can be divided into subgroups, each representing a different attitude towards Sustainable HRM practices. Also analysing along whether certain types of people tend to prefer or to be attracted to certain dimensions of sustainability over others. This can be useful for organizations to create an understanding on how certain sustainability practices may be particularly important for a certain typology of individual. Building in this way an awareness that, through the implementation of certain practices, diverse types of individuals may be drawn towards the firm.

In conclusion, it is possible to generally expect that certain characteristics of individuals may bring them to distinct preferences. For this reason, a model was created to test whether the preference on certain practices may be tied to certain aspects of individuals.

## 4.2 Research Design: Questionnaire Development

A self-completion questionnaire was employed to collect data. The instruments that guided our research and inquiry, presented to participants, were combined in four distinct groups, each representing a different section of the questionnaire. A Likert-type response scale was adopted for all study variables which didn't require an open answer or represented a multiple choice question. The 5-point Likert scale measured agreement, varying from 1= Strongly Disagree to the maximum level of 5= Strongly Agree (according to Likert, 1932). For an overall view of the questionnaire's composition see *Scheme 1* (Annex A).

### *Section 1. Education on Sustainability Matters*

The first questions introduced to respondents at the opening of the questionnaire served to assess the level of knowledge of individuals relating to sustainability topics. Given in fact the perception of sustainable activities put in place by organizations can be impacted by the level of education of respondents on sustainability matters (Evans and Davis, 2011), it becomes relevant to understand how this variable may be related to individuals' preferences. Such inquiry, comprising 3 different questions, could serve to infer on the basis of these responses (on whether individuals consider themselves updated and aware regarding Sustainability issues) if there may be any impact on individuals' preferences relating to Sustainable HRM.

EDS1 (Question 1) wanted to investigate if individuals had obtained progressed education on sustainability (through courses and seminars). Then understanding whether the person considered themselves overall knowledgeable on sustainability issues (Question 2, EDS2), and more particularly, had some prerequisite knowledge on Sustainable HRM practices (Question 3, EDS3). So the first two questions were asked to understand the general level of knowledge on sustainability issues of respondents, while the third one was also added to infer whether these were updated on Sustainable HRM topics (presenting some examples to better clarify what they were asked).

The questions on EDS were put at the beginning particularly to acclimate respondents with the subjects treated inside the questionnaire, while also more specifically to understand their progressed knowledge on Sustainable HRM, before being presented with quite a comprehensive overview of such practices that may have impacted their self-reported understanding on the topic. Investigating thereof the education of individuals on sustainability before being influenced, as said, by all the concepts presented and investigated.

### ***Questionnaire Section 2.1. Sustainable HRM Practices***

The first really consistent part of the work constituted primarily on creating a full-bodied set of practices which represent Sustainable HRM. Drawing from existing literature and reviewing the practices pointed out by it, these were split more clearly in practices that belonged to the social dimensions and others that pertained to the environmental one, as explained in Chapter 3 and can be seen in *Tables 3, 4 and 5*. After having analyzed which practices were the most relevant to investigate (mostly in terms of comparability) selecting and revising them to generalize them in an ideal organization respondents should envision, the final output of practices to investigate can be observed in *Table 20* in *Annex A*. Opposing practices that are comparable but pertain to different dimensions (either social or environmental) were selected.

For each one of the bundles Attract, Maintain and Develop, four practices were drawn out to be presented to respondents: of these, two relating to environmental and the other two to social practices. So two practices were selected for each “section”, representing one among the objectives of “attract”, “motivate” or “develop” the talent, and referring to either social or environmental dimensions. For a total of  $3 \times 2 \times 2 = 12$  items. Given  $3(\text{attract, motivate and develop}) \times 2(\text{practices per each section}) \times 2(\text{social or environmental dimension}) = 12$  practices. Creating in this way a possible comparison to juxtapose and be able to confront individual preferences, to study which bundle may be considered the most attractive for respondents.

After having selected the different practices of sustainability to include in the analysis, the subsequent matter to face was how respondents should have been introduced to them, to be able to analyze their preferences related to these. So as said, in line with the final intent of the study: understanding whether the adoption of certain practices may contribute to make a company more attractive in the labor market. An initial consideration pointed to the creation of a policy-capturing study. Given in fact the suggestions contributed by literature which refer to policy-capturing as a way to avoid studying in an overly-simplistic manner how different elements may impact organizational attractiveness (Lis, 2018). Being individuals' decisions on job choices have a complex nature, policy-capturing can in fact obviate to the problem, proposing examples of realistic trade-off decisions about jobs offered to individuals in job choice situations (Karren and Barringer, 2002). On top of that, policy-capturing is a technique which may mitigate socially desirable responding, so being less susceptible to people feeling the pressure for “faking good” and responding to questionnaires according to what they perceived as a more socially-desirable manner (Tomassetti et al., 2016; Karren and Barringer, 2002). The potential of adopting the policy-capturing technique, asking individuals to rate a

relevantly high number of vignettes which compared high/low levels of sustainability in the HRM practices adopted by an ideal organization, was although hindered in the present study. Given, as also specified by Karren and Barringer (2002), these studies typically involve students or managers which are more likely to commit to answering to a relatively demanding and long process, being committed to the questions asked, as directly involved in the process. Respondents should read numerous described scenarios (from a minimum of 40-45 to a maximum of 80-90 according to Cooksey, 1996) and to be effective such designs do require “enough scenarios and cues to yield stable estimates, but not so many so that respondents get bored or fatigued” (Aiman-Smith et al., 2001 p.227). Such task was considered too demanding to be proposed to random respondents in voluntary surveys, and is in fact usually proposed to classes of students, in in-class environments which could grant their commitment to the process (see, for e.g., Turban and Keon, 1993; Cable and Judge, 1994; Cable and Graham, 2000; Lis, 2012; Aiman-Smith et al., 2001). The task was believed to be too demanding and a turnoff for participants. Given also the length of the survey could be a critical factor to avoid elevated rate of abandonment, it was necessary to turn to other options.

So, just as in Backhaus et al. (2002) and Judge and Bretz (1992), participants were asked to use a 5-point Likert-type scale to indicate the importance of each practice analyzed on organizational attractiveness: which has nevertheless been recognized as the “most widely used method to collect close-ended self-report responses in the social sciences” (Tomassetti et al., 2016 p.263). Respondents were therefore presented with a set of practices companies may put in place, and organization attractiveness was assessed in two different ways.

### ***Questionnaire Section 2.2. Dependent variables***

Accordingly, the dependent variable to investigate, as explained throughout the analysis, was the level of organizational attractiveness perceived by individuals, in a company that puts in place different Sustainable HRM practices. Two different items were proposed to respondents to assess the organizational attractiveness, through a 5-point Likert agreement response scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). For the dependent variable the definition of Turban and Keon (1993) adapted by Lis, 2018 and Greening and Turban (2000) was adopted. Not the overall construct was resumed but rather two elements which composed it, measuring two different intentions with reference to the different practices. The dependent variable organizational attractiveness was in fact divided in two components to be investigated separately: Organizational Attractiveness (OA) and Work Effort (WE).

According to Aiman-Smith et al. (2001), it is in fact relevant to point out that recruits' general attraction to a firm may not directly relate to actively seeking a job in an organization. The authors call out the need to differentiate organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intention as two distinct concepts. While Organizational Attractiveness is described “as an attitude or expressed general positive affect toward an organization” Job Pursuit Intentions represent on the other hand the willingness “to take action to find out more information about an organization, to contact the organization” (Aiman- Smith et al. 2001, p.221). In this way two different variables were adopted to be measured, and operationalized according to two different formulations provided for in literature (Greening and Turban, 2000). The first expression referred to general Organizational Attractiveness (OA), investigated through the sentence “I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics”. While the second was represented by Job Pursuit Intention, or more precisely Work Effort (WE) “I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company” purposely selected for being strongly worded and representing the actual intention for the individual to actively pursue a position with a certain employer (or “Work Effort”).

The two attitudes were therefore investigated for each among the 12 practices selected, creating in this way four different dependent variables that constitute the core of the work. This is due to a distinction made among the two attitudes and on whether the practice proposed related to the environmental dimension or the social one. The four dependent variables are: organizational attraction related to social practices (Social\_OA), organizational attraction tied to environmental practices (Envir\_OA), work effort related to social practices (Social\_WE) and work effort tied to environmental ones (Envir\_WE).

### ***Questionnaire Section 3. Individual Values: Adopting Schwartz’s Human Values Scale***

Personal values were then analyzed. What was used to create a scale of values to be investigated inside the survey and later serving in our data analysis is a revision of Schwartz’s Value Survey (2007). The author of reference was in fact among the first to create a systematic approach to individuals’ value recognition and empirical validation (Schwartz, 1992 in Schwartz and Bardi, 2001) and with the desire of constructing a theory of basic human values that may also be applied cross-culturally, he was able to develop and empirically validate a scale of values of individuals (Sandy et al., 2016). The well-known theorization of Schwartz (1992, p.1) includes a scale of 10 main basic human values, also described as “ten motivationally distinct value types [...] likely to be recognized within and across cultures and used to form value priorities”. Extensively applied in literature, not excluding Sustainable

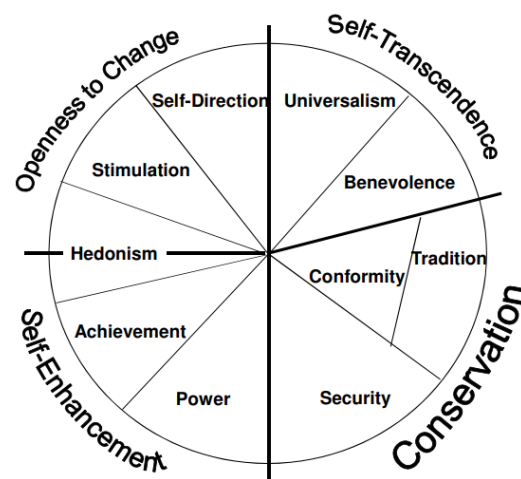
HRM research (e.g. Wang and Juslin, 2011; Rank and Palframan, 2021; Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2015), these elements are summarized in *Table 6*.

*Table 6. Types of Values in terms of Defining Goals. From Schwartz et al. (2001)*

VALUE	DEFINING GOAL
<i>Benevolence</i>	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact.
<i>Universalism</i>	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature
<i>Self-Direction</i>	Independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring
<i>Stimulation</i>	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.
<i>Hedonism</i>	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.
<i>Achievement</i>	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.
<i>Power</i>	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.
<i>Security</i>	Safety, harmony and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.
<i>Conformity</i>	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.
<i>Tradition</i>	Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self.

The 10 broad values individuated by Schwartz are organized on a circular motivational continuum so that values closer together in the circle are conceptually more closely related and in alignment (Schwartz, 2006), giving rise to the circular structure observable in *Figure 1*. Conflicts and similarities among these 10 basic values identified by Schwartz additionally create an integrated structure of values that can be partitioned in four wider categories, that Schwartz (1992) identifies as Higher-Order Values (HOVs), observable in the figure. These are, respectively, Conservation, Openness to Change, Self-Enhancement, and Self-Transcendence, representing “the poles of two dimensions” (Rudnev et al., 2018 p.1166).

As it can in fact be noticed in *Figure 1*, two orthogonal dimensions exist, including each two higher-order values to juxtapose and study.



*Figure 1. Schwartz's Dimension of Values and the 4 Higher-Order Values. From Schwartz., 2012.*



According to Schwartz (2006) Conservation (Security, Conformity and Tradition) and Openness to Change (Stimulation and Self-Direction) values are put in contrast, capturing in this way the conflict that exists for individuals between values that emphasize preservation and resistance to change and values which emphasize independence and readiness to change on the other hand. Whilst the second orthogonal dimension puts in contrast Self-transcendence and Self-enhancement values, expressing in this way a contrast among those values that emphasize personal interests and success and values that focus on concern for others' well-being and altruism. Lastly "the basic value Hedonism is not clearly assigned to one of the 4 higher-order values", since it shares elements of both openness and self-enhancement (Lechner et al., 2022 p.6).

Other measures were analyzed such as the Big Five personality traits (which are respectively neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) also utilized by Judge and Cable (1997) but, consisting of 60 different items, this model was considered too extensive and demanding for respondents to evaluate. Personal values were consequentially analyzed instead through the items identified by Schwartz (2003) in the PVQ, through its 21 items rielaborated as shown in *Annex A*, later rielaborated and summarized in the four Higher-Order values identified by Schwartz (1992), serving as the point of reference in our data analysis.

#### ***Questionnaire Section 4. Demographics***

The last section of the questionnaire consisted then in different questions regarding demographic data of respondents. These variables were included given the suggestion according to past research on their relevance in job choice and organizational attractiveness (Greening and Turban, 2000; Judge and Bretz, 1992; Judge and Cable, 1997), and especially given the objectives of the present analysis, more particularly research questions (Q) 3 and 6. In the questionnaire such variables were put last instead than first to allow respondents to be more concentrated and less fatigued in the beginning and central part of the questionnaire, which were the most crucial and concentration-demanding topics. Respondents in this way could respond more quickly to the last section and not be tempted to leave the survey. To support such argumentat, results showed in fact no respondents leaving after completing section 3 without also responding to all questions of section 4.

With regards to demographic questions, respondents were required to report on:

- Level of Education.
- Work experience (2 items)
- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity

The ordinal variable for level of education was considered especially useful later on to be able to investigate whether individuals' preferences may depend on education levels, providing therefore the possibility to analyze whether highly-educated people would show greater appreciation for an organization that puts in place sustainable practices. The professional experience of individuals was instead respectively investigated through two different questions. The first being a categorical variable, expressed as "Have you ever had any work experience?" to which respondents had the possibility to only choose between "Yes" or "No". While the second non-mandatory question stated: "If yes, how many years (accumulated) have you worked?", that constituted a continuous variable given respondents needed to provide the number of working years in the available cell. Also the age variable was expressed as a continuous variable, through which it would be useful to investigate whether there seem to exist any relation between years of age and attention to sustainability matters, or if the variable does not seem to influence individuals' preferences regarding Sustainable HRM instead. Lastly, gender and ethnicity categorical variables were included into the set of questions (while still providing for respondents the option to not specify what they identified with) with the expectation to provide similar contributions. This is due to the difficulty both women, non-binary persons and individuals that do identify in a minority are facing on the job, brought by discrimination and inequality in treatment, pay and compensation and career-advancement opportunities. Facing such disadvantages in the labour market<sup>4</sup>, non-caucasian and non-male individuals may be expected to take a stronger stance and be particularly attracted for organizations which provide socially-sustainable opportunities of non-discrimination and equal-opportunities. This seem in fact to be confirmed by Ng and Burke's work (2005) which found women and ethnic minorities do seem to rate diversity management as important when accepting job offers.

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/375.pdf>

## 4.3 Data Analysis

### 4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics

#### *Data collection and procedures*

The subsequent stage of the work consisted on the elaboration and launch of the questionnaire, which was electronically developed and updated on the Survey Monkey platform. From there, the survey was distributed on different platforms to reach the maximum number of responses possible. The survey was created in two, equivalent versions to dispose of a bigger potential platform, resulting thereof in a bigger amount of individuals reached, the possibility was provided to respondents to choose between two different languages. The questionnaire was in fact designed in English, translated in Italian and then consistency of meanings among the two was analyzed to make sure of their equivalence in the two versions, assuring no ambiguities were present. It was then made sure that all questions were understandable, concise and simple even for individuals not acquainted with the topics treated. Different opinions were consulted on the understandability and clearness of the questions presented, on top of assessing whether the time indicated to complete the questionnaire by the platform Survey Monkey (of approximately 7 minutes) was reasonable. After estimating no problems seemed to emerge in the completion of the questionnaire, and having revised some of the Italian terms for improved clarity, its link was sent and responses collected. The link to the questionnaire was distributed with a snowball sampling technique (also known as network or chain sampling) through the personal relations of the researcher. The questionnaire was also uploaded online, and through a diverse range of websites and reaching different platforms, to try and reach the highest number possible of respondents over a 3 weeks period of collection timeframe between September and October 2023. Full anonymity was also assured to participants in the initial indications to encourage full honesty (which was asked from respondents, assuring the inexistence of “right or wrong answers”). The data collection phase was then followed by the analysis of all collected responses.

#### *Sample*

The responses to the questionnaire were analyzed with IBM<sup>®</sup> SPSS<sup>®</sup> \_28. Initial returned responses were 150, but after an initial data-cleaning process 22 participants were eliminated due to having left the questionnaire before filling out all the data or having taken incredibly low response time (less than 1 or 2 min), leaving a total of 128 valid responses (N=128), a 85,33% of the initial amount. The option of replacing the missing values through the medium of nearby

points method was in fact discarded, given all missing responses showed that respondents exited at half questionnaire: data were missing for the entire sections 3 and 4, which constituted more than 15% of the data, leading to also exclude all partially incomplete questionnaires (according to Lu et al., 2023).

The median time respondents required to complete the questionnaire was 07 minutes and 51 seconds.

All informations regarding the demographical characteristics of the sample can be found in *Annex B*. Among the 128 participants returning the survey complete a majority were females (66,4%), 32,8% males and 0,8% identified as “other” (1 individual). The Mean age was 26,64 years (SD= 6,115), with a minimum age of 18 years old and a maximum of 52 years, representing therefore quite a young sample. The vast majority of the sample identified their ethnicity as white/caucasian (76,6%, 98 people), while the remaining 23,4% were split into other racial groups. 11,7% of respondents were asian/pacific islanders, 3,1% of multiple ethnicity (or pertaining to other unspecified groups), 1,6% black and 1,6% hispanic. While a 5,5% of the sample preferred not to specify their ethnic group of belonging. Most of the respondents had a Bachelor’s Degree (37,5%) or a Master’s (32%), while only the 21,1% had an high school diploma and none of respondents only attended middle school. 89,1% of respondents had progressed work experience and only 10,9% did not. Among those who had any work experience the Mean accumulated working years were 5,881 (SD= 6,2970), with a minimum experience of 2 months and a maximum of 30 years among individuals.

Relating to the descriptive statistics of the sample, it shows thereof a relevance of female participation, as expected according to literature. In fact Smith’s (2008) contribution lead us to expect a significant relationship between response rate and gender, given the feminine gender is generally more receptive and active in surveys presented in online platforms. This (according to the author) will have to be considered in our analysis of data, not implying these may be free of gender biases. Also, the diversity among participants is quite limiting, with an ethnicity background mainly consistent of white individuals. An additional interesting point to infer and consider in the elaboration of data is the high general level of education among respondents. With only 21,1% of the sample having obtained only an High School diploma this may affect our results towards more educated responses, not representing exactly the average preferences of individuals. In Italy, in fact, among individuals between 25-64 years of age those who achieved tertiary education (any diploma or degree obtained over high-school diplomas) represent the 20,3% of the population, while the european average is 34,3% (ISTAT,2023b).

Among the present respondents this percentage sharply peaks instead at the 78,9%, which will have to be considered in our analysis.

### ***Sustainability education.***

To better interpret our results and draw some inferences from it, after having presented the general descriptive statistics of the sample, it was investigated whether high levels of education in Sustainable topics were shown among respondents. Exploring if individuals had obtained progressed education on sustainability issues through courses and seminars (EDS1), considered themselves overall knowledgeable on sustainability topics (EDS2) and, more particularly, if they had some prerequisite knowledge on Sustainable HRM practices (EDS3).

As we can notice in *Table 7* below, among the sample, respondents generally considered themselves more aware on practices of Sustainability in the workplace (EDS3), with a majority agreeing to the question (63,3%). This also applies, even if at a lower level, in the grade of informance relating to sustainability issues in general (53,9% agreeing to being up to date on the topic, EDS2). But, as we can observe, this tendency differs in the first question, in which the majority of individuals are neutral or discord on having attended any courses or seminars on sustainability (EDS1). As we can observe in fact, in EDS1 the median and mean of responses deviates from the other two. This, on one hand, may simply mean that individuals learn about sustainability and practices of sustainability in the workplace not through courses or activities put in place by schools, universities or other entities, but more likely are in touch with the issues through social medias or other means of communication, not having had any institutionalized formation on the topic. Yet, on the other, it may instead represent a symptom of a distortion in the responses due to a social desirability bias which may influence respondents. In fact, given individuals may be concerned on their self-presentation, which depends on the answers provided, these may tend to over-report socially desirable knowledge and activities relating to themselves (Krumpal, 2013). Stating to be updated on sustainable topics (both general, EDS2, and relating to HRM, EDS3) to provide what is perceived as a socially-desirable response. Both of these views taken together can lead us to consider that individuals may retain a superficial and non-academic knowledge relating to sustainable topics, and state to consider themselves updated on the issues, but actually lack any formal education on it.

Table 7. Sample Levels of Education on Sustainability matters

	EDS1 “I attended some courses/seminaires on sustainability in the past”			EDS2 “I consider myself up to date with sustainability issues”			EDS3 “I am up to speed with practices of sustainability in the workplace”		
<b>R</b>	Freq.	Percentage (%)	Cumul. Perc.	Freq.	Percentage (%)	Cumul. Perc.	Freq.	Percentage (%)	Cumul. Perc.
5= S.A.	17	13,3%	13,3%	15	11,7%	11,7%	16	12,5%	12,5%
4= A	39	30,5%	43,8%	54	42,2%	53,9%	65	50,8%	63,3%
3= N.	19	14,8%	58,6%	44	34,4%	88,3%	24	18,8%	82,0%
2= D.	35	27,3%	85,9%	13	10,2%	98,4%	19	14,8%	96,9%
1= S.D.	18	14,1%	100%	2	1,6%	100%	4	3,1%	100%
<b>Total</b>	128	100%		128	100%		128	100%	
<b>Median</b>	<b>3,00</b>			<b>4,00</b>			<b>4,00</b>		
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3,02</b>			<b>3,52</b>			<b>3,55</b>		
<b>S.D. (<math>\sigma</math>)</b>	<b>1,298</b>			<b>,0887</b>			<b>0,995</b>		

Note: R= Agreement scale;

S.A.=Strongly Agree; A= Agree; N = Neither Agree nor Disagree; D= Disagree; S.D.= Strongly Disagree.

### ***Sustainable HRM***

To analyze the results central to our research questions, the first thing was to observe responses relating to Sustainable HRM practices and its different dimensions. Having presented to respondents a list of activities that firms can put in place, identified by literature as pertaining to Sustainable HRM, these were in fact asked to state their attitudes toward each presented practice. To understand whether the themes seem relevant for individuals the mean and S.D. of responses could serve as a relevant point of analysis, discarding the option for any cases in which the resulting mean among respondents showed figures lower than 3. The descriptive statistics relating to this section can contribute in the research question Q1. Inferring in fact from the data it can be both analyzed what seems to be the general attitudes of individuals relating to practices of Sustainable HRM (Q1), and whether individuals show any clear pattern of preferences among different dimensions of sustainability. So, in our case, analyzing preferences between the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability.

A summary of the responses to the different practices' perception is provided in Table 8 and 9, in which are included the Means and Standard Deviation of the responses, represented through two different matrix schemes. According in fact to the selected practices, the preferences of individuals were both investigated singularly (enumerating the figures for all the single practices) and two by two, according to the bundle they relate to (Attract and retain, A, Motivate and Maintain, M or Invest and Skills-Develop, D). It was distinguished whether the responses referred to the organizational attraction (OA) induced by the practice, or to the

intention to put effort to be able to work for a company that puts in place such activities (WE), for which the reason of two separate tables. *Table 8* relates in this way to OA and *Table 9* to WE. For a more detailed analysis Annex C provides the response rates at a more molecular level for each distinguished practice.

<b>ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRACTION (OA)</b>				
<b>Social Practices (P_S)</b>	Attract and Retain talent (P_S_A)	Mean= 4,20 (SD=,686)	P_S_A1	Mean= 4,34 (SD= ,827)
			P_S_A2	Mean= 4,06 (SD= ,761)
	Mantain and Motivate (P_S_M)	Mean= 4,38 (SD= ,640)	P_S_M1	Mean= 4,13 (SD= ,813)
			P_S_M2	Mean= 4,63 (SD= ,732)
	Develop and Skills-Investing (P_S_D)	Mean= 4,32 (SD= ,611)	P_S_D1	Mean= 4,18 (SD= ,736)
			P_S_D2	Mean= 4,46 (SD= ,698)
<b>Environmental Practices (P_E)</b>	Attract and Retain talent (P_E_A)	Mean= 4,04 (SD=,751)	P_E_A1	Mean= 3,88 (SD= ,860)
			P_E_A2	Mean= 4,20 (SD= ,784)
	Mantain and Motivate (P_E_M)	Mean= 3,98 (SD= ,716)	P_E_M1	Mean= 3,88 (SD= ,980)
			P_E_M2	Mean= 4,09 (SD= ,814)
	Develop and Skills-Investing (P_E_D)	Mean= 4,03 (SD= ,746)	P_E_D1	Mean= 3,98 (SD= ,874)
			P_E_D2	Mean= 4,08 (SD= ,770)

Table 8. Organizational Attraction Values Related to Different Practices of Sustainable HRM

<b>WORK EFFORT: JOB PURSUIT INTENTION (WE)</b>				
<b>Social Practices (P_S)</b>	Attract and Retain (P_S_A)	Mean= 3,92 (SD= ,745)	P_S_A1	Mean= 4,00 (SD=0,860)
			P_S_A2	Mean= 3,84 (SD=0,791)
	Mantain and Motivate (P_S_M)	Mean= 4,30 (SD= ,668)	P_S_M1	Mean= 4,03 (SD= 0,860)
			P_S_M2	Mean= 4,57 (SD= ,781)
	Develop and Skills-Investing (P_S_D)	Mean= 4,21 (SD= ,623)	P_S_D1	Mean= 4,02 (SD= ,736)
			P_S_D2	Mean= 4,41 (SD= ,704)
<b>Environmental Practices (P_E)</b>	Attract and Retain (P_E_A)	Mean= 3,89 (SD= ,771)	P_E_A1	Mean= 3,80 (SD= ,852)
			P_E_A2	Mean= 3,98 (SD= ,837)
	Mantain and Motivate (P_E_M)	Mean= 3,90 (SD= ,746)	P_E_M1	Mean= 3,82 (SD= ,926)
			P_E_M2	Mean= 3,98 (SD= ,778)
	Develop and Skills-Investing (P_E_D)	Mean= 3,89 (SD= ,758)	P_E_D1	Mean= 3,88 (SD= 0,851)
			P_E_D2	Mean= 3,91 (SD= ,798)

Table 9. Work Effort Values Related to Different Practices of Sustainable HRM

As we can see, at a singular-practice level, individuals generally report consistently high levels of attraction (OA) for firms that adopt both social and environmental practices of sustainability (*Table 8*), which also translates, even if less considerably, in a reported job pursuit intention (WE) brought by the activities (*Table 9*). The adoption of Sustainable HRM practices seems therefore to influence organizational attraction for individuals, which also reflects (though to a lesser extent) to the efforts these state to be willing to put to be able to work with an organization that implements different socially and ecologically sustainable practices in the management of its workforce. Overall Standard Deviations results display quite an homogeneous dispersion measure within the sample (with all Coefficient of Variation below 0,25), which means respondents seem to quite conform in terms of attitudes with regards to the issues.

Comparing among the two dimensions the practices may relate to, we can notice how results for social practices are all consistently above the indifferent level of 3 (Not agree nor disagree) for the sample, but the appeal of sustainability only translates partly to the environmental dimension. It can in fact be noticed how results for the Environmental dimensions appear consistently lower compared to the interest shown towards socially-sustainable activities. With results visibly dropping relating to job pursuit intention (WE) related to environmentally conscious practices, compared at least to social activities' impact on individuals willingness to put any active effort to be part of an organization that adopts them. However, the descriptive statistics for the sample seem to still also show for this dimension mean values above the indifference level. So again, despite this decrease, the majority of individuals in the sample seem to be pretty clearly non-indifferent and positively impacted by such activities.

Delving into the data more specifically, variables related to each one of the three bundles (respectively the attraction, the motivation and the development bundle) were created, for both the social and environmental dimensions. This was done computing the mean between the statements which related to each of the six sections, and which results can still be observed in *Table 8* and *9*. Among social activities, the bundles reported to influence organizational attractiveness (OA) the most were, in this order, practices adopted to motivate and maintain the workforce (Mean= 4,38; *SD*= ,640) then those to develop it (Mean= 3,89; *SD*=,686) and lastly, quite surprisingly, those activities related to a socially-conscious attraction of individuals to the organization (Mean= 4,20; *SD*= ,758).



Relating instead to the environmental dimension of Sustainable HRM, the practices adopted to attract individuals were those seeming to make the organization most attractive (Mean= 4,04;  $SD=,751$ ), while activities to develop an environmentally-conscious workforce are the second bundle in relevance to influence organizational attractiveness (Mean= 4,03;  $SD=,716$ ). Lastly, the activities that serve to motivate individuals in the pursue of sustainable ecological goals seem then to be the least appealing (Mean= 3,98;  $SD=,746$ ).

To distinguish then different bundles according to the extent in which these may bring individuals to exert an effort to work for an organization, even in this case the social dimension seem to have the strongest impact. In fact, respondents agree to its influence, but more so relating to the practices adopted to motivate and mantain the workforce (Mean= 4,30  $SD=,668$ ). Also the activites of investment and skill-developing organizations adopt regarding its workforce are impacting (Mean= 4,21;  $SD=,623$ ), while again a little less those to hire and attract new labor (Mean= 3,92;  $SD=,745$ ). For the environmental dimensions individuals seem instead to take weaker stances and demonstrate some appeal, but not with really outstanding results. Those practices relating to the environmental dimensions adopted to motivate and compensate the workforce seem in fact the most impacting for the efforts they may induce individuals to put to work for an organization that adopts them (Mean= 3,90 ( $SD=,746$ )). But the results no not differ particularly from those environmental HRM activites put in place to attract the workforce, that show very similar potential (Mean= 3,89;  $SD=,771$ ), as do the practices of investing in the workforce which relate to the environmental dimension (Mean= 3,89;  $SD=,758$ ).

Having overviewed the descriptive statistics relating to the core section of the questionnaire, understanding what differences exist among practices investigated, it is then necessary to enlarge our focus of interest, to contribute to our research questions more clearly. Taking organizational attractiveness (OA) and the effort put to belong to an organization (WE) relating to different Sustainable HRM practices as our dependent variables, it is in fact useful to more generally observe the results of individuals' agreement to OA and WE induced by Social practices of HRM compared to Environmental ones.

Calculating the mean of the responses to all the six social practices identified in the present work (two related to attraction, two were practices adopted to motivate and maintain employees by firms and the other two to develop the workforce), we identified a variable to summarize how individuals agreed to the statement "I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics" and then to the phrase "I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company". The process was repeated for the environmental practices, uniting in this way all the

practices that relate to one dimension in one variable and all those belonging to the other in another, but still differentiating between organizational attractiveness (OA) and job effort (WE). The four different dependent variables of reference were therefore developed, which figures on the sample can be observed in *Table 10* and *11*. To summarize, a clearer distinction was made among:

- Organizational attraction tied to social practices adopted by the firm (Social\_OA)
- Job pursuit intention tied to organizational adoption of social practices (Social\_WE)
- Organizational attraction tied to environmental practices (Envir\_OA)
- Job pursuit intention tied to organizational adoption of environmental practices (Envir\_WE)

	Social OA	Social WE
<b>Mean</b>	4,299	4,143
<b>Median</b>	4,333	4,167
<b>St. Dev. (<math>\sigma</math>)</b>	0,517	0,547
<b>N</b>	128	128

*Table 10. Socially-responsible HRM practices: influence on organizational attractiveness and job pursuit.*

	Envir OA	Envir WE
<b>Mean</b>	4,014	3,893
<b>Median</b>	4,083	3,917
<b>St. Dev. (<math>\sigma</math>)</b>	0,649	0,662
<b>N</b>	128	128

*Table 11. Environmental Sustainable HRM practices: influence on organizational attractiveness and job pursuit..*

As observable, the sample seem to exhibit two clear patterns. The first observation is that, as already foreseen in the previous and more detailed analysis, individuals seem to generally report stronger preferences towards socially-sustainable practices compared to green activities of Human Resouce Management. But the second pattern that also emerges shows that, although respondents appear to be appreciative in general towards the presented sustainable HRM activites put in place by organizations (with no mean resulting very close to the indifference level 3), this seem confirmed to not fully translate in an active pursuit for the firm. In fact, despite reporting high agreement levels to considering an organization attractive (OA) if this put in place sustainable practices, we can notice how the work effort (WE) individuals would be willing to exert to be able to work for such an organization is lower for both the social and environmental dimensions.

To be able to use the scales created summarizing all practices in four dependent variables, applying thereof inferential statistics, the last step was to test validity and reliability of the scales developed. The related reliability and validity tests were performed on the scales adopted that compose the four dependent variables (which separately includes six items each) and results can be observable in *Table 12*. The component matrix was in fact studied for validity, through the principal component analysis, testing data from each set of measures to be able to reduce the number of dimensions on the data set<sup>5</sup> and reconducing all questions related to Sustainable HRM practices into the four dependent variables: Social\_OA, Social\_WE, Envir\_OA and Envir\_WE. As we can see from *Table 12* all the coefficients of practices selected to build our dependent variables appear fairly above the limit of 0.5, thus not requiring for any to be removed: all items should be therefore retained to form the variable, confirming the validity of each component included in contributing to the measure tested. A reliability analysis was therefore conducted and the reliability of the measures was tested, checking Cronbach's Alpha for all four dependent variables. Resolving in this way to the need to check each of the four scales' reliability, regarding therefore every dependent variable constructed, to determine its internal consistency through the Cronbach's Alpha (Kivinda et al., 2021). For the four variables of analysis results yielded consistently high Cronbach's  $\alpha$  (all showing values above 0.75), indicating satisfactorily high internal consistency of the scales.

All 21 items composing the individual value variables were then used to create the composite variables representing the four Higher-Order dimensions of Schwartz, calculating the mean of the items that composed each one of them, creating juxtaposing variables, to investigate in our model how differences in these among respondents may contribute to their perception towards sustainable practices.

Reliability was also measured for Schwartz's constructs (testing the reliability of the four individual higher-order values), that would be used investigate the existence of any significant relationship among individual values and preferences regarding Sustainable HRM practices. The tests reported the values observable in *Table 13*. As stated in Lechner et al. (2022) such values, even if below 0.75, couldn't still be considered acceptable given "the nature of the scales as heterogeneous higher-order constructs". So, in line with the authors' work the results were considered acceptable for Openness and Conservation ( $\alpha \approx 0,6$ ) and good for Self-Transcendence and Self-Enhancement ( $\alpha \approx 0,7$ ).

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://towardsdatascience.com/what-is-the-difference-between-pca-and-factor-analysis-5362ef6fa6f9>

Having now tested whether the conditions held in place to apply inferential statistics on the variables developed, different were the analysis adopted, which could contribute to the remaining unexplored research questions.

Table 12. Validity and Reliability Testing for the Developed Variables of Interest..

Variable	Reliability Statistics		Validity Testing	
	Cronbach's $\alpha$	N. of elements	Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>	
Social_OA	.764	6	S_H1_OA	0.693
			S_H2_OA	0.669
			S_M1_OA	0.630
			S_M2_OA	0.675
			S_D1_OA	0.749
			S_D2_OA	0.629
Social_WE	.777	6	S_H1_WE	0.772
			S_H2_WE	0.745
			S_M1_WE	0.559
			S_M2_WE	0.643
			S_D1_WE	0.711
			S_D2_WE	0.727
Envir_OA	.857	6	E_H1_OA	0.778
			E_H2_OA	0.802
			E_M1_OA	0.620
			E_M2_OA	0.842
			E_D1_OA	0.822
			E_D2_OA	0.766
Envir_WE	.876	6	E_H1_WE	0.818
			E_H2_WE	0.802
			E_M1_WE	0.675
			E_M2_WE	0.825
			E_D1_WE	0.798
			E_D2_WE	0.854

a.Extraction method: Principal component analysis

Table 13. Reliability Analysis for Schwartz's Constructs.

Reliability Statistics			
Variables: High-order values	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Values included	n. of items
Self-transcendence	0,690	Benevolence and Universalism	5
Self-enhancement	0,688	Personal Power and Achievement	4
Openness	0,584	Self-direction, Stimulation and Hedonism	6
Conservation	0,584	Tradition, Conformity and Security	6

### 4.3.2 Developing a Regression Model

After a first analysis of the descriptive statistics of our data, it is relevant to understand whether the characteristic of individuals, and which one among these in particular, may influence their attitudes towards a firm that adopts Sustainable HRM practices, whether these be environmental or social. Investigating if there may exist any relevant relationship among the characteristics of an individual, or potential employee, and the degree to which this may be driven towards employers that integrate sustainable practices into the management of their human resources. Developing a model to understand how individual differences could influence the possibility a person may be particularly attracted towards an organization which adopts Sustainable HRM activities, or may be more willing to exert particular efforts for such a firm. Inferential statistics were adopted and a linear regression developed to study which dimensions seem to affect individuals preferences regarding sustainable practices estimate the coefficients of the independent variables assumed to better influence and predict results. The intent is to predicting in this way OA and WE values relating to the social and environmental practices based on different independent variables. These relationships will be tested regressing all four dependent variables with the independent ones of interest, but only after some adjustments and consideration are considered.

Before starting the regression analysis to try and contribute to the research questions it was first verified whether the data was characterized by normality and homoscedasticity of residuals. In this way making sure the assumptions for the parametric test statistics were observed and non violated, validating the possibility to apply the linear regression model.<sup>6</sup> Not assuming any underlying distribution of our data, the further step was then to test for normality of residuals before running a multilinear regression, to be able to infer if errors in the data appeared random and independent of each other.<sup>7</sup> The normal probability plot of the residuals of the regression models seemed to confirm the first assumption of normal distribution of error terms<sup>8</sup>, supported by both the graphs, as observable in *Annex C*, and the central limit theorem. The test for homoscedasticity to verify whether there existed any heteroscedasticity problems<sup>9</sup> was then performed through the Breusch-Pagan test with the results observable in *Annex C*, confirming the null hypothesis of homoscedasticity.

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://online.stat.psu.edu/stat501/book/export/html/910>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/advice/0/what-best-methods-assess-normality-residuals>

<sup>8</sup> <https://online.stat.psu.edu/stat501/lesson/4/4.6>

<sup>9</sup> <https://towardsdatascience.com/linear-regression-assumptions-why-is-it-important-af28438a44a1>

Table 14. Correlations and Descriptive statistics for the Independent Variables

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Gender <sup>a</sup>	,67	,47	,											
2. Age	26,6	6,1	0,13											
3. Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>	,23	,42	,07	,072										
4. Tertiary instruction <sup>c</sup>	,41	,49	-,054	,31**	,022									
5. Work experience	,89	,31	,075	,189*	-,042	,14								
6. Years of work	5,88	6,30	,16	,82**	-,058	,06	.c							
7. EDS1	3,02	1,30	-,03	-,048	,21*	-,05	,024	,024						
8. EDS2	3,52	,89	,02	-,06	,131	,02	,066	-,073	,41**					
9. EDS3	3,55	,99	-,08	-,06	,104	,11	,067	,003	,41**	,52**				
10. Conservation	3,32	,54	-,03	-,132	,26**	-,099	-,004	-,015	0,03	-,015	-,132			
11. Openness	3,89	,49	,08	-,057	,055	-,002	,04	-,063	-,007	-,001	-,01	0,025		
12. Self-Enhancement	3,27	,69	-,19*	-,012	0,161	0,08	0,02	-,083	,037	,092	0,084	,32**	,223*	
13. Self-Transcendence	4,25	,49	,15	-,21*	-,112	-,18*	-,034	-,20*	-,051	,028	-,124	0,126	,204*	-,21*

Note. N = 128,

<sup>a</sup>Gender: 0 = Male 1 = Female or Others;

<sup>b</sup>Ethnicity: 0 = White/Caucasian, 1 = Non-White,

<sup>c</sup>Tertiary instr.: 1 = Associate' s Degree, Bachelor' s or Master' s Degree, 0 = High school or Middle School

\*. The correlation is significant at level  $\alpha=0,05$

\*\*. The correlation is significant at level  $\alpha=0,01$

After having performed all necessary tests, a linear regression model was created to estimate how different characteristics of individuals may be relevant in their perception of Sustainable HRM practices and these were regressed on each among the four dependent variables. To study in this way whether there seemed to exist any link among the background or values of individual and their attitudes towards the adoption by corporations of sustainability activities in the management of the workforce (contributing in this way to research questions Q3 and Q4). All categorical variables were further coded to binary variables (dummy variables 0,1)<sup>10</sup>. Gender was assigned value 0 for males and 1 for female or others. The ethnicity variable was transformed in a dummy of value 0 if individuals were white and 1 for all other ethnic groups, to be able to confront any differences between caucasians and all individual pertaining to other ethnicities. A dummy for tertiary education also assumed value 1, assigning to lower educational levels (such as middle school and highschool) the value 0, obtaining in this way a binary variable to identify whether the individual had high levels of scholar education or not. Through the analysis of the correlation coefficients among independent variables (*Table 14*), it was noticed how years of work experience and age appeared heavily correlated (.82). Due to its high correlation to age the variable Years of Work was accordingly considered to not add additional information and for this reason was dropped from the model, with the variable Work Experience left to represent the professional characteristics within the sample. We can notice how the correlation among remaining independent variables, even if significant among some variables, do not appear worrying.

For the creation of the regression model the independent variables to be tested were included in four different blocks, so all variables in one block were entered in a single step, to estimate whether their addition could contribute in the prediction of the dependent variables.

---

**DEPENDENT VARIABLES: Social\_OA, Social\_WE, Envir\_OA, Envir\_OE**

---

1. Demographic variables	Age (continuous variable) Gender (Male=0; Female or Other =1) Ethnic group (White=0; Non-White=1) Tertiary education (High and Middle School=0; Other=1)
2. Work experience	Work experience (categorical variable: Yes/No)
3. Education on Sustainability	EDS1: Attended courses/seminaires on sustainability EDS2: Up to date with sustainability issues EDS3: Up to date with practices of Sustainable HRM
4. Higher Order Values	Conservation Openness to Change Self-Enhancement Self-Transcendence

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ibm.com/topics/linear-regression>

The first block of variables included were the demographic characteristics, particularly the gender, age, ethnicity and instruction of respondents. Second the variables related to the level of educational knowledge on sustainability issues of individuals were united to the model, represented by the variables EDS1, EDS2 and EDS3. The professional characteristics represented the third block, most particularly only taking into consideration whether the individual stated to have any working experience (Work experience), while leaving out the variable Years of work due to its high correlation observed with the age of the individual, included in the first block. The last section included then the values of individuals, taking the mean average scores of all items that composed the four high-order values. Creating in this way four variables which represent individuals' orientation, with Openness to Change opposing Conservation values and Self-Enhancement opposing Self-Transcendence values, according to Schwartz's theory (1992).

The regression procedures estimated the importance played by each independent variable in responding to questions about organizational attractiveness (OA) or job pursuit intentions (WE). Each column in *Table 15* provides the regression results (coefficients and standard errors) for each one among the four dependent variables studied. Self-transcendence values showed to be the most strongly predictor of individual attitudes across all dependent variables. For the social dimension of sustainability this was followed in relevance by work experience of individuals, openness to change values and awareness on sustainability issues (EDS2), which all seemed to contribute in predicting both organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions tied to social practices, even if only at a 0,1 confidence level.

In contrast, for the environmental dimension EDS2 showed to be the second strongest predictors after self-transcendence values, at a 0,01 confidence level, for both organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intention tied to the adoption of environmental activities. Always looking at the environmental practices, openness values seem to influence organizational attractiveness with a 5% significance, followed then by the dummy variable of ethnicity (although with a 1% significance). Job pursuit intention linked to ecological practices, also influenced significantly by openness values showed instead difference in the coefficients of gender and work experience, both statistically significant in the prediction of the dependent variables.



Table 15. Regression Analysis for all Four Dependent Variables Related to Individuals Demographical Characteristics and Individual Values.

Dependent Variable	SOCIAL_OA		SOCIAL_WE		ENVIR_OA		ENVIR_WE	
<i>Independent Variables</i>	B	(S.E.)	B	(S.E.)	B	(S.E.)	B	(S.E.)
Gender	,040	(,086)	-,021	(,096)	-,158	(,102)	-,267**	(,112)
Age	-0,005	(,007)	,000	(,976)	0,01	(,008)	0,01	(,009)
Ethnicity	-,115	(,099)	-,034	(,110)	-,200*	(,118)	-,049	(,129)
Tertiary_Instruction	,070	(,084)	,039	(,094)	-,042	(,101)	,016	(,110)
Work_exp	-,246*	(,127)	-,278*	(,142)	-,159	(,151)	-,144*	(,165)
EDS1	,014	(,034)	,017	(,038)	,045	(,041)	,031	(,045)
EDS2	,092*	(,053)	,155*	(,059)	,271***	(,063)	,292***	(,069)
EDS3	-,013	(,049)	-,066	(,055)	-,068	(,058)	-,084	(,064)
V_Conservation	-,116	(,082)	-,087	(,091)	,018	(,098)	,012	(,107)
V_OpennessToChange	,153*	(,085)	,176*	(,095)	,227**	(,101)	,221**	(,110)
V_SelfEnhancement	-,013	(,066)	,003	(,074)	-,097	(,079)	-,059	(,086)
V_SelfTranscendence	,498***	(,090)	,438***	(,100)	,584***	(,107)	,499***	(,116)
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	,298		,2194		,367		,276	
F value	5,483***		3,964***		7,146***		5,044***	

Note. N = 128, \* $p < 0,10$ ; \*\* $p < 0,05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0,01$ ; \*\*\*\* $p < 0,001$ ; \*\*\*\*\* $p < 0,0001$ ;

<sup>a</sup>Gender: 0 = Male 1= Female or Others;

<sup>b</sup>Ethnicity: 0= White/Caucasian, 1= Non-White,

<sup>c</sup>Tertiary instr.: 0= High school or Middle School, 1= Other

The adjusted  $R^2$  for all four regression models do not show excessively brilliant measures of variance explained by the variables introduced. However, it is important to notice that Ozili (2022 p.5-9) explains how when dealing with social sciences, that “deal with human behaviour [which is subject to change] due to individual self-interest, group dynamics, feelings and other factors”. Accordingly, given the difficulty in predicting human behaviors and preferences this may make it difficult for a model to capture all factors predicting individuals behaviour. Consequentially, also lower R-squared can still be considered acceptable if at least “some of the explanatory variables are statistically significant”. The regression model could still be considered a good one and should not be discarded only due to a low  $R^2$ . Which validates our regression model.

### 4.3.3 Cluster Analysis

The last step of the process to study individuals' attitudes towards organizational adoption of Sustainable HRM practices consisted then in applying a cluster analysis. This was done to investigate the existence among the workforce of grouping classes that may be similar in order of preferences, relating to different practices of sustainability. The cluster analysis can in fact be effective to explore whether the sample of respondents could be split into different groups, or “clusters”, which differentiate from each others based on certain characteristics. This can be useful to help firms in making better, informed decisions, serving as a guide in understanding whether the workforce landscape seem to be composed by different groups which are attracted to certain practices in particular. Assuming there may be different sub-groups which may be more oriented towards the social side rather than the green one, the intent for the creation of a cluster analysis was to group individuals in function of their preferences on the social compared to environmental dimensions of sustainability. Also investigating the existence of individuals which root strongly for sustainable causes and define themselves attracted to organizations which implement them, but would also be willing to put effort to be part of such companies, opposed instead to a possible set of individuals which are quite indifferent to it. After having aggregated the data in function of the answers and preferences, we will investigate how these clusters are characterized through a Post-Hoc analysis, possibly obtaining an expanded detail on some ideal profiles companies could concentrate on in function of the same practices the firm adopts. Who are the individuals who would appreciate sustainable activities more? And are these individuals only considering the firm attractive or would they actually be more willing to put in the work to be able to work for a similar firm?

Given the dimension of the sample was not extremely low (which could exclude the option to use K-means cluster analysis) neither too large (as to not make useful nor applicable hierarchical clustering), a dual approach was adopted. The clusters to identify were based on the four dependent variables treated in our models. This allows to confront attitudes regarding different dimensions of sustainability (either social and environmental) and further detailing the impacts of such practices on Organizational Attraction or Job Pursuit Intention. The distance among datapoints was first computed visually through Hierarchical clustering, understanding through the dendrogram what could be an appropriate number of clusters to determine. The selected cluster method was the Ward's method, measured through squared euclidean distances. The Ward's method is considered appropriate in the analysis of quantitative variables, performing cluster analyses based on variance rather than distances or associations among observations.<sup>11</sup> This methodology to hierarchical clustering provides therefore clean information, visualized from the dendrogram. Obtaining a visual summary of the cluster solutions, at first an appearance of 5 different clusters (in the sample of n=128) was obtained, seeming to emerge from the graphical visualization of the dendrogram. Having now established the clusters to consider to provide to the database, the K-means clustering methodology was adopted at such point. This clustering method is in fact especially useful to partition a dataset into a predetermined number of groups. Testing in this way through a non-hierarchical approach whether clusters really differed in terms of preferences of Sustainable HRM practices, observing the difference in characteristics among them. In fact, the K-means cluster analysis can allow us to group items together based on scores across the different variables, with each cluster being represented by its centroid (that corresponds to the mean of points assigned to the cluster)<sup>12</sup>.

The results obtained from the initial partition of the dataset in 5 different groups and the compenence of each group were examined. It was although observed from the results that, grouping all data in 5 different clusters through the K-means cluster analysis, two groups appeared to be quite reduced in terms of observations included. Together with one cluster containing 12 respondents and another only 8 among individuals, no neat distinction seemed to additionally emerge across groups. It was then proceeded to test (first verifying through the two-steps analysis whether the number of clusters would appear sufficient, which yielded optimistic results) the k-means cluster analysis through the definition of 4 clusters, reducing the number by one. This solution appeared to provide a better-distributed set of clusters, with the

---

<sup>11</sup> <https://online.stat.psu.edu/stat505/lesson/14/14.7>

<sup>12</sup> [https://uc-r.github.io/kmeans\\_clustering](https://uc-r.github.io/kmeans_clustering)

smallest sub-group containing at least 20 observations each (15,6% of the sample). The output can be observed in *Table 16* which summarizes cluster centers for all four defined groups.

*Table 16. Differentiation of Attitudes related to Sustainable HRM as a Result of Cluster Analysis.*

	<b>Final cluster centers</b>			
	Cluster			
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Social_OA	4,79	4,41	3,95	3,59
Social_WE	4,75	4,23	3,63	3,50
Envir_OA	4,75	4,09	3,77	2,93
Envir WE	4,74	3,91	3,51	2,96
<i>N. of cases in each cluster</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>20</i>

*Agreement scale of ordinary variables ranging from 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree*

The resulting cluster analysis differentiates therefore four typologies of individuals within the sample. It can be noticed how values are consistently above the indifferent level of 3 for the social dimension, even though as noticed in cluster 4 this does not apply to environmental sustainability. Factually, Cluster 4 exhibits lower figures across all variables confronted, while cluster 1 seems to exhibit consistently high values for both organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions towards firms that adopt both social practices of sustainability and environmental activities on the matter, with no discrimination among the two. Clusters 2, the most numerous among the four, show high levels of agreement relating to all variables, yet a stronger attitude towards the social dimension. Cluster 3, on the other hand show lower values across all variables, but still appear not indifferent, especially regarding sustainable practices. It can lastly be noted how for cluster 2 and 3 values differ among organizational attraction (OA) and job pursuit intention (WE) for both dimensions (social and environmental). Implying even if these two clusters show cluster centers that are at relatively high levels for organizational attraction, such attitudes do not necessarily translate (or at least not as much) in an active effort of pursuit for an organization that implemented Sustainable HRM practices.

After having aggregated all data in function of the responses of individuals relating to their preferences on different dimensions through the cluster analysis applied, it could be possible to narrow the focus. As said in fact, it becomes relevant to try and understand the internal characteristics of individuals that pertain to a cluster. Are certain aspects of the individual relevant to the extent in which this may be part of a certain cluster over another?

This analysis could be useful for organizations in understanding whether some ideal profiles exist, differentiating among people's characteristics that may bring them to appreciate more or take more pride in being part of an organization that adopts more environmentally-conscious practices of Sustainable HRM, or more socially-focused activities on the matter. On the other side, it is also relevant for organizations to understand whether other individuals may be indifferent to these.

To investigate the impact of all different independent variables of our model on the probability of pertinence to a certain cluster, an ANOVA was run to analyse whether any group showed indication of differing from the other. An initial observation of the variables' means and SD among clusters, and how these may differ can, also be observed in *Table 17*. A Post-Hoc test was then performed through a One-way ANOVA, to determine whether there exists statistical significance on any difference in mean scores between different categories of individuals that belong to a cluster or another. According to Williams and Abdi (2010) if the results coming from such analysis should indicate an ANOVA F that was significant (showing therefore there exist a difference in the independent variables studied among clusters, but not specifying which among the tests may differ), *least significant difference (LSD)* test. The LSD was selected given it is considered as more powerful in comparison with other methods of post-hoc comparison, due to the fact that "the  $\alpha$  level for each comparison is not corrected for multiple comparisons" (Williams and Abdi, 2010 p.3). This methodology allows us therefore to compute whether there exists any significant difference between two means (or in our case of interest between two clusters) relating to the independent variable investigated.

In *Table 18* can be observed the results of all One-Way ANOVAs performed separately on the independent variables, considering as a factor the categorical variable of pertinence to the cluster (ranging from 1 to 4). It can be noticed that many of the variables do not show any significant differences among groups, except for EDS2 and the value of Self-transcendence, which show an undoubtable confidence level, whilst Openness still seem to display some between-group difference, even if only at a 10% confidence level.

Table 17. Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) for Individual Clusters

Variable	Cluster 1		Cluster 2		Cluster 3		Cluster 4	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Age	25,13	3,40	27,22	6,91	26,45	4,03	27,40	8,21
Gender <sup>a</sup>	,73	,45	,64	,49	,60	,50	,75	,44
Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>	,17	,38	,26	,44	,20	,41	,30	,47
Tertiary Education <sup>c</sup>	,40	,498	,43	,499	,25	,44	,55	,51
Work Experience	,87	,346	,86	,35	,95	,22	,95	,22
EDS1	3,20	1,45	3,03	1,26	3,15	1,23	2,55	1,23
EDS2	4,07	,79	3,38	,86	3,50	,69	3,15	,99
EDS3	3,67	1,12	3,45	1,03	3,55	,95	3,65	,75
Conservation	3,32	,51	3,31	,58	3,37	,46	3,28	,57
Openness	4,05	,497	3,89	,47	3,88	,44	3,68	,56
Self-Enhancement	3,33	,799	3,16	,75	3,28	,53	3,48	,46
Self-Transcendence	4,53	,35	4,29	,43	4,21	,45	3,74	,53
N	30		58		20		20	

<sup>a</sup>Gender: 0 = Male 1 = Female or Others; <sup>b</sup>Ethnicity: 0 = White/Caucasian, 1 = Non-White, <sup>c</sup>Tertiary instr.: 1 = Associate's Degree, Bachelor's or Master's Degree, 0 = High school or Middle School

Table 18. One-Way ANOVA: Analyzing Individual Characteristics among Clusters

One-Way ANOVA	Between Groups	
	F	Sign.
Age	,89	,45
Gender	,60	,61
Ethnicity	,51	,67
Instruction	1,28	,29
Work experience	,69	,56
EDS1	1,14	,34
EDS2	6,10	<,001
EDS3	,40	,75
Conservation	,09	,97
Openness	2,40	,07
Self-enhancement	1,20	,31
Self-transcendence	13,72	<,001

Table 19. Post- Hoc Test: Multiple comparisons, LSD.

CLUSTERS	
Cluster 1:	Overall enthusiasts
Cluster 2:	Socially-inclined individuals
Cluster 3:	Attracted but skeptical
Cluster 4:	Indifferents

Variable	Cluster (I)	Cluster (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)
EDS2	1	2	,69****
		3	,57**
		4	,92****
	2	3	-,12
		4	,23
		4	,35
Openness	1	2	,16
		3	,18
		4	,38***
	2	3	,02
		4	,22*
		4	,20
Self-Transcendence	1	2	,24**
		3	,32***
		4	,79****
	2	3	,09
		4	,55****
		4	,47****

Note: The mean difference is significant at the level: 0,10\* 0,05\*\* 0,01\*\*\* <0,001\*\*\*\*

## Chapter 5. Discussion

The war for talent in the last decades has been affecting firms and the global market as a whole, together with all the challenges brought by the current conditions that are impacting job markets. We have been facing in fact a scarce availability of labour resources, especially competent ones, while on the other hand an increased demand for skilled employees is coming from firms (Backes-Gellner, 2004), in what has been defined as an increasingly competitive and diverse labour market (Ehnert, 2009). With this, talent has been recognized as a crucial factor in the competitive advantage of firms, just like has been the necessity of creating a superior value proposition from employers. In such an environment, Sustainability has been recognized as a potential leverage for firms to be adopted in an effort to win the war for talent that is affecting them. With employees' expectations departing from mere financial compensation (IBM Institute for Business Value, 2021a) talents have become significantly attracted to firms with a strong stance on sustainability, with similar concerns shown to actively impact workforce's (and especially youngsters') decision-making and retention.

The focus of this thesis is therefore to point out that sustainability must not only be seen as a tool to provide new solutions, making economic systems and organizations more viable in the long term and less impacting on society and its well-being (Ehnert et al., 2014). In this line, the scope of the present analysis consists instead in understanding to what extent being socially and environmentally responsible in managing employees may also represent a competitive advantage in talents' attraction. Analyzing therefore what are the activities that seem to particularly influence such attractiveness towards an employer, from a Sustainable HRM point of view. Contributing in this way to the gap that for our present knowledge affects existing literature, the first intent pursued was to develop, in function of existing research on Sustainable HRM, a set of practices which may represent the most relevant activities put in place by organizations in what can be defined as a Triple Bottom Line approach to Sustainable HRM. After having built a comprehensive framework that could identify and confront different Sustainable practices of HRM, these were employed to develop our instrument of analysis. Our research questions were in fact examined through the distribution of a questionnaire and the analysis of the sample obtained.

The possibility was developed in this way of studying practices of sustainability that relate to Human Resource management to be able to identify whether these may influence individuals attraction towards an organization. This was done differentiating among two aspects of organizational attraction: whether individuals consider themselves attracted to a firm, or

*Organizational Attractiveness* (OA) and job pursuit intention, or rather the effort an individual would be willing to put to be able to become part of a certain organization, *Work Effort* (WE). Such attitudes were investigated across different activities companies put in place, may these relate to social or rather environmentally-sustainable efforts of HRM. This contributes to existing research which, despite investigating different dimensions that broadly relate to CSR and their influence on organizational attractiveness (Evans and Davis, 2011; Gully et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2014; Lis, 2012), fails to explore the practices of sustainable management of the workforce in particular. Although calling for the adoption of such approach (Rank And Palframan, 2021). It is especially relevant to understand not only what are individuals attitudes towards sustainable practices of HRM so wether Sustainable HRM can represent a tool to attract talent and differentiate firms in the labor market. What also contributes to existing research is the differentiation of practices of Sustainable Human Resource Management among those that relate to the environmental dimension of sustainability and those that pertain to social efforts. Such is the contribution that the first research question (Q1) desires to obviate to, understanding wether there exist any clear preferences among difference dimensions in sustainability. In this way building a picture of what are the effects on organizational attractiveness when similar practices that relate to either one or the other dimension (social or ecological) are compared.

The descriptive statistics developed in section 4.3.1 contributed to the first two questions. A first analysis of data seemed to show in fact how socially-sustainable activities report higher preferences from individuals, even though the potential of the environmental dimension of sustainability is not discarded by the results. Individuals showed to not be indifferent to any of the practices presented, displaying high scores on both the impact of the practices presented on Organizational Attraction and Work Effort.

The data observed can contribute therefore to the research questions of interest. It can in fact be concluded that individuals observed do seem to report consistently high levels of attraction and positive attitudes towards organizational adoption of Sustainable practices of Human Resource Management. Due to the obtained results, Sustainable HRM can be considered to represent a powerful tool for organizations in the attraction of talent and the potential to differentiate a firm in the labour market, improving their appealing in face of potential applicants. Even if figures reveal that the adoption by an organization of Sustainable HRM practices also impact the efforts individuals would be willing to put to become a part of it, such attraction does not fully translates in active job pursuit intentions (WE) induced by an organization that adopts such practices. With what regards instead wether any preference of one dimension over the other seem to emerge when comparing practices that relate to social and



environmental aspects, a pattern seem to consistently appear among all bundles of practices. Individuals generally report higher results for both attraction and job pursuit intention when presented with social practices, even if it must be reminded that the environmental dimension do not report mean values which are below the indifference level of 3. This implies therefore that, contributing to Q1, although the social dimension of sustainability may result more appealing for individuals, the environmental dimension is still relevant for organizational attractiveness and its focus should not be discarded. However, we must be reminded that the sample in consideration is not to be considered free of some impartiality. In fact, we are dealing with a sample with a consistently high representation of the female gender, educated individuals and with a reduced diversity in terms of ethnicity. Notwithstanding such issues, the level of agreement to Sustainable HRM is undeniably consistently high and cannot be disregarded.

In the second section of the data analysis, estimating the role played by individual background characteristics and values in influencing individual attitudes, the linear regression model contributed to further the second research question developed (Q2). Estimating the importance played by each independent variable on organizational attractiveness (OA) and job pursuit intentions (WE), related respectively to the adoption of social or environmental Sustainable practices of Human Resource Management, which constituted the four dependent variables of interest.

Analyzing the results, it can be first noticed how (in contrast with Ng and Burke's work, 2005) gender and ethnicity do not seem to significantly affect attraction towards an organization which implements socially-sustainable activities in HRM, nor it has any significant relation to implementing an effort (WE) to be part of such a firm. The fact of having a progressed job experience seem on the other hand to demonstrate a negative effect on the appeal of sustainability (although non significantly with regards to *Envir\_OA*). The disinterest towards organization which implement social or environmentally sustainable practices for those individuals that state to have progressed working experience could be justified by two different, non mutually-exclusive justifications. The first one being that probably, among those with working experience, many could be currently employed, which could hinder the interests or consideration towards an external firm in general, lowering the level of agreement towards considering an organization in question attractive (OA) or consider it as worthy to put an effort to be a part of (WE). According in fact to Cable and Judge (1994) the level of job experience of an individual is expected to negatively influence the probability of pursuing an organization: this could also mean therefore hindered levels of both reporting to be attractive to an organization, or be willing to be working for it, explaining the negative significant coefficients.

On the other side, another possible explanation could be the disillusionment brought by antecedent working experiences, which may induce individuals to depart from ideals when considering an organization, or overall considering that an organization which put the described practices in place could be too far from the reality these live in. All opposite considerations hold for individuals with no progressed professional experience.

Another variable which appears consistent in its contribution to the model, even if at a 10% level of significance, is how individuals that considered themselves up to date with sustainability issues (EDS2) are shown to also respond positively to both environmental and social dimensions of Sustainable HRM. The results appear although much more significant at the ecological level, with coefficients that are consistently higher. Presumably, those who consider themselves as knowledgeable with regards to sustainability issues, given their level of instruction on the topic, may appreciate more an organization that puts in place sustainable practices, understanding the urgency of the issue. Yet, their knowledge on sustainability topics may be limited to the ecological dimension, impacting in this way more consistently how these may perceive the efforts of a firm towards environmentally-conscious activities of HRM. Also, it is important to consider that the results may additionally be dependent on a social desirability bias affecting the distortion in the responses of individuals. Those who may in fact tend to over-report on their level of education on sustainability issues, to conform with what is considered as more “socially desirable”, may do so also relating to organizational evaluation. However, being aware of sustainability issues seem to influence both the attraction towards an organization that actively work in its contribution to it, and the efforts individuals would be willing to put to become part of a similar firm, even if on a larger scale with regards the environmental dimension. On the contrary, EDS1 and EDS3 do not appear as significant predictors, which is particularly interesting for EDS3 (the self-reported level of awareness on activities of Sustainable HRM adopted by organization).

Finally, looking at all four Higher-Order values, it appears how openness to change seem to positively influence the perception of firms adopting Socially-sustainable practices (both regarding OA and WE), but more significantly impacts the stances of individuals towards organizations that adopt environmentally-conscious activities relating to HRM, that also show higher coefficients. Individuals that report high scores in those values that emphasize independence and readiness to change seem therefore to show a relation to better perceiving those sustainable practices adopted by firms in the management of their workforce, probably due to a reduced worry towards the partaking by firms towards active changes to the current situations, through adopting a stronger stance for sustainability. But the most consequential coefficient and variable for the model is without any doubt the effect of High-Transcendence

levels for individuals. This suggest how a person with altruistic value-orientations, as could be expected, can be far more appreciative of an organization which adopts practices that look out for Sustainable HRM adoption, being both more likely to consider it attractive and stating to be willing to put more efforts to be a part of it. The positive coefficients on the variable are relevant and statistically significant for all regression models, and the hypotesis holds therefore for all dependent variables. It could be thus inferred from the data how Self-transcendence values seem to have a deep impact on individuals' attitudes towards the adoption of Sustainable HRM practices. The result is not surprising, and appears in accordance with Evans and Davis (2011). The authors in fact empirically tested how individuals with higher other-regarding value orientations - so with higher concern towards others – tend to show higher attraction towards organizations that put in place socially-responsible practices, given “CSR reflects a concern for interests beyond one’s personal interest” (p.461). The present analysis provides therefore consistent results in the effect that high reported levels for altruistic values also exert in all practices of Sustainable HRM.

The last step of the data analysis consisted thus in evaluating wether any difference could be observed inside the sample with regards to the attitudes of individuals towards Sustainable HRM. More particularly the option was considered of identifying different groups among the sample with different stances towards social and environmental practices, to observe therefore wether different approaches to the matter seemed to emerge among respondents. The cluster analysis was elaborated in the final part (section 4.3.3) of the data analysis. The approach was adopted to scrutinize on the existance, among the sample, of different groups, each characterized by a difference stance or attitude towards Sustainable HRM practices. : A k-means cluster analysis was performed defining 4 clusters, which conduced to fairly-populated groups and which all differed in the values of centers computed relating to the four dependent variables investigated.

The results obtained through the analysis of the cluster centers can be reinterpreted identifying four different classes of individuals, which could be better interpreted from the images below (*Images 1-4*):

*Cluster 1: Overall enthusiasts.*

These are individuals that consider both of the dimensions of sustainability as important, would be attracted to organizations that implement them and would be equally incined to exert an effort to work for those firms that put in place Sustainable HRM activites. Values are incredibly high (close to 5) for all dependent variables.

*Cluster 2: Socially-inclined individuals*

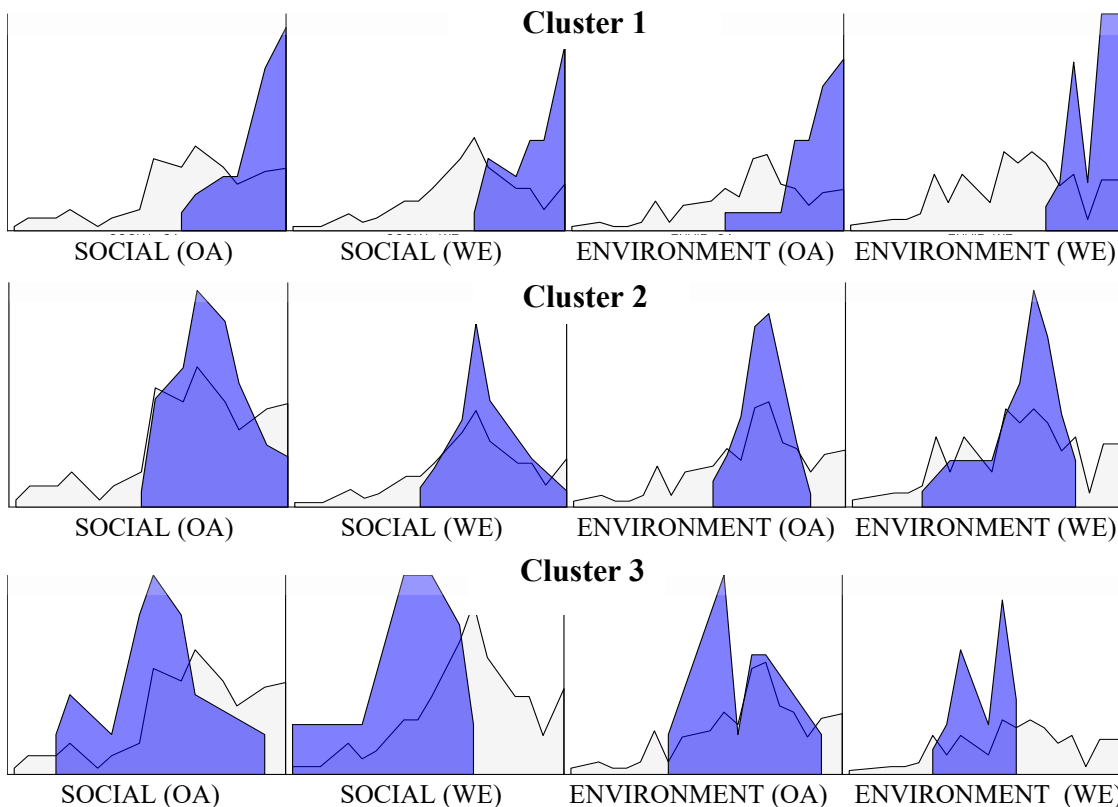
The most numerous cluster in the sample, reports quite high levels for all the dependent variables (the center are consistently over the indifference level of 3) but quite a clear inclination towards socially-sustainable practices, both for OA and WE. Reported attraction towards an organization that implements Sustainable HRM practices translate only partly to the willingness to put an active effort to be part of it, for both ecological and social dimensions.

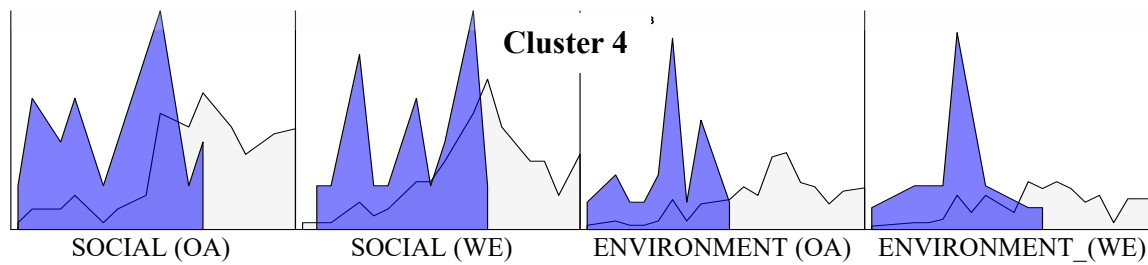
*Cluster 3: Attracted but skeptical*

These are individuals which, compared to cluster 2, show more cautious attitudes towards practices of Sustainable HRM. Particularly, as can be observed in Image 3, general attraction (OA) appears consistently higher than the actual effort they would exert (WE) to be a part of company that adopts them, for both dimensions.

*Cluster 4: Indifferents.*

This group of respondents show the lowest values across all variables among all individuals. Particularly, the interest towards the environmental dimension of Sustainable HRM seem to show levels of indifference. While, even if the social dimension is relatively more attractive and seem to affect job intention, it does so only marginally compared to other groups. Values relating to OA and WE converge for both dimensions.





Lastly, an analysis was conducted to investigate whether these clusters resulted to be composed by individuals which characteristics differed among-groups. The results of the Post-Hoc test seem to further confirm the conclusions inferred from the regression model. For individuals in Cluster 1 which show high levels of both OA and WE for both the environmental and social dimension, the level of self-reported awareness on sustainability issues (EDS2) seem to significantly differ from the others. Individuals part of Cluster 1 not only show increased levels of sustainability awareness (EDS2) compared to all other clusters, they also exhibit higher scores on Self-transcendence values. This can also be said comparing Cluster 2 and 3 to Cluster 4, which may signify how individuals may be increasingly indifferent to sustainability practices as their recognition in those values that relate to altruism and the concern for others according to Schwartz (1992) decreases. Another Higher-Order value which show significant difference among clusters, even if at lower significance, is then Openness. This relationship can be noticed especially between individuals with higher scores of preference attributed to Sustainable HRM practices (respectively Cluster 1 and 2), compared to those who retain themselves as more indifferent.

In conclusion, what the present study achieved was therefore to distinguish among different Sustainable HRM practices to inquire individuals' preferences relating to these. Distinguishing in fact among different Sustainable HRM activities and create a set of practices of reference to be investigated among individuals, understanding the mediating role personal characteristics and individual values may play into it. A framework of reference was therefore developed which could identify the practices put in place by organization, dividing them according to the objective they intend to achieve (attract, motivate or develop the workforce) and which identifiable dimension of sustainability these may relate to.

The matter was fully developed understanding then, through a regression model, the mediating role that personal characteristics and individual values may play into the attraction of talent to an organization that exerts different efforts towards a sustainable management of its human resources. Lastly analyzing through the implementation of a cluster analysis whether different attitudes seem to emerge towards Sustainable HRM among individuals, and whether

these stances seem to be affected by the features which characterize a person. However, this did not come without certain limitations.

### *Limitations and Future Suggestions*

A framework of reference was created in the present research, building up from literature resources, to compare and present different practices of sustainability adoption in HRM. Yet, given the constructed set of practices build up from pre-existing research, which often was very fragmented and failed to investigate among different aspects, this may present some lacks. The most critical point in the summary of practices created, that later served as the basis of our analysis, is how the economic dimension was left out. In fact, although sustainability is not limited to a social and environmental dimension, and rather must inglobate the relevance of the economic aspects of sustainability to truly refer to the Triple Bottom Line Approach, the framework fails to include it. This was done to create higher comparability among the other two practices, due to the fact that literature often cites economic sustainability as something which inglobates the social and environmental dimension, rather than being analyzable separately. To build our set of practices and create a term of comparison among them, to investigate individuals' preferences, this dimension was therefore excluded due to its difficulty of segregation. Despite such pitfall, it must not be failed to mention how the present work contributes anyway in presenting something that literature seemed to have failed to contribute to. This advancement resides in the act of having compared social and environmental activities of Sustainable HRM, in a framework that does not fail in this way to leave out one of the two, to concentrate exclusively on either Socially Responsible HRM or Green HRM and the role these may play in organizational attractiveness.

Even if the economical dimension could not be included inside our reference framework and, consequentially, our regression model, due to its reduce comparability with other dimensions, a possible suggestion for future studies is to attempt to examine how individuals report on their preferences towards Sustainable HRM when confronted with financial benefits and strictly economically-sustainable practices put in place by firms. Future studies could concurrently still investigate the social and environmental dimensions, but also look into preferences of people on these dimensions compared to other financial aspects, which may still be relevant. Adopting in this way this point of comparison to study the preferences of individuals on more "mainstream" forms of attraction and motivation over practices of sustainability in the workplace.

The present work also achieved the scope of studying the perception of individuals with regards to different dimensions of sustainability and how these may vary according to different characteristics of individuals (according to Lis, 2012 suggestion). Another possible suggestions for future research to obviate is although to study general preferences of individuals over practices as a bundle (as suggested by Fei and Wang, 2022). Further analysis could in fact be done on whether individual characteristics also play on preferences over attraction, motivation and development activities put in place by firms rather than just confronting all practices relating to the social and environmental dimensions as a whole. This could be done through a policy-capturing study, which could be infer better results from the data. Given in fact adopting such methodology, asking individuals to judge a multitude of scenarios with different attributes, can be considered more similar to real problems than is a self-report attribute design (Karren and Barringer, 2002). Being considered a very demanding task for respondents in answering to a questionnaire with voluntary participation, in a different study policy-capturing could instead allow to avoid studying in an overly-simplistic manner how different elements seem to impact organizational attractiveness (Lis, 2018), comparing different practices of Sustainable HRM in a multitude of scenarios.

Finally, results inferred from descriptive statistics, the regression models and the cluster analysis have been thoroughly analyzed. However, when drawing our results and in applying them to the overall population, some considerations must not fail to be considered. The sample investigated may be considered in fact quite limiting in terms of diversity. As analyzed, respondents were not only for a vast majority represented by the female gender, these were also mostly of white ethnicity. Additionally, further caution should be applied for an element which towers over the others: the sample taken in consideration is an highly-educated one, which could bias our results towards higher standards. In fact, with more educated people probably being characterized by a deeper intrinsic knowledge on sustainability issues, brought by educational settings, this may result in increased and more biased positive stances towards the adoption of Sustainable HRM. It would be therefore useful to analyze how responses may differ when taking in consideration a sample which is more diversified, not only in terms of education levels, but also for gender and racial inclusion.

**REFERENCES:**

Accenture, 2020. *Seeking Responsible Leadership*. Available online: <<https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/consulting/responsible-leadership>> [Accessed June 7, 2023]

Accenture, 2021. *Measuring Sustainability. Creating Value*. Available online: <<https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/strategy/measuring-sustainability-creating-value>> [Accessed June 7, 2023]

Aiman-Smith, L., Bauer, T.N., and Cable, D.M., 2001. Are You Attracted? Do You Intend to Pursue? A Recruiting Policy-Capturing Study. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 16, 219–237. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1011157116322>> [Accessed July 16, 2023].

Albinger, H.S., and Freeman, S.J., 2000. Corporate social performance and attractiveness as an employer to different job seeking populations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 38, 243–253.

Allen, M.R., and Wright, P., 2007. Strategic Management and HRM. In *The Oxford Handbook of Human Resource Management*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 88-104. Available online: <<https://www.academia.edu/11672915>> [Accessed August 20, 2023].

Amjad, F., et al., 2021. Effect of green human resource management practices on organizational sustainability: the mediating role of environmental and employee performance. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*. 28, 1-16. Available online: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348962585> [Accessed July 05, 2023].

Arthur, J.B., 1994. Effects of Human Resource Systems on Manufacturing Performance and Turnover. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37, 670-687. Available online: <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/256705>> [Accessed 20 March 20, 2023].

App, S., Merk, J., and Büttgen, M., 2012. Employer Branding: Sustainable HRM as a Competitive Advantage in the Market for High-Quality Employees. *Management Revue*, 23 (3), 262-278. Available online: <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41783721>> [Accessed March 15, 2023]

Aust, I., Matthews, B., and Muller-Camen, M., 2020. Common Good HRM: A paradigm shift in Sustainable HRM?. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(3). Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.10070>> [Accessed Mar 20 2023].



Backes-Gellner, U., 2004. Personnel Economics: An Economic Approach to Human Resource Management. *Management revue. Socio-economic Studies*, 15 (2), 215-227 Available online: <<https://www.nomos-elibrary.de/10.5771/0935-9915-2004-2-215.pdf>> [Accessed July 04, 2023]

Backhaus, K.B., Stone, B.A., and Heiner, K., 2002. Exploring the Relationship Between Corporate Social Performance and Employer Attractiveness. *Business & Society*, 41(3), 292-318. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650302041003003>> [Accessed July 16, 2023]

Bansal, P. and Roth, K., 2000. Why companies go green: a model of ecological responsiveness. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43, pp. 717–736. In: Renwick, D. W. S., et al., 2013. Green Human Resource Management: A Review and Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 15: 1-14. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2011.00328.x>> [Accessed July 05, 2023]

Barney, J., 1991. Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17: 99-120. Available online: <[https://josephmahoney.web.illinois.edu/BA545\\_Fall%202022/Barney%20\(1991\).pdf](https://josephmahoney.web.illinois.edu/BA545_Fall%202022/Barney%20(1991).pdf)> [Accessed August 25, 2023]

Beechler, S., and Woodward, I.C., 2009. The Global "War for Talent". *Journal of International Management*, 15 (3). Available online: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1075425309000453>> [Accessed August 23, 2023].

Beer, M., et al., 1984. *Human Resource Management: a General Manager's Perspective*. New York: Free Press.

Beer, M., Boselie, P., and Brewster, C., 2015. Back to the future: Implications for the field of HRM of the multi-stakeholder perspective proposed 30 years ago. *Human Resource Management*, 54 (3), 427-438. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21726>> [Accessed July 3, 2023].

Boxall, P., and Purcell, J., 2008. *Strategy and Human Resource Management*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Boxall, P., Purcell, J., and Wright, P.M., 2007. Human Resource Management: Scope, Analysis and Significance. *The Oxford Handbook of Human Resource Management*, 1–6. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available online: <[https://www.academia.edu/11672915/The\\_Oxford\\_Handbook\\_of\\_Human\\_Resource\\_Management\\_p.7](https://www.academia.edu/11672915/The_Oxford_Handbook_of_Human_Resource_Management_p.7)> [Accessed August 20, 2023].

Brundtland, G.H., 1987. *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. Geneva, UN-Dokument A/42/427. Available online: <<http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf>> [Accessed March 15, 2023].

Bush, J.T., 2020. Win-Win-Lose? Sustainable HRM and the promotion of unsustainable employee outcomes. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30 (3). Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2018.11.004>> [Accessed August 25, 2023].

Cable, D.M. and Graham, M.E., 2000. The determinants of job seekers' reputation perceptions. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 21, 929-947. Available online: <[https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379\(200012\)21:8<929::AID-JOB63>3.0.CO;2-O](https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379(200012)21:8<929::AID-JOB63>3.0.CO;2-O)> [Accessed July 16, 2023].

Cable, D.M., and Judge, T.A., 1994. Pay Preferences and Job Search Decisions: a Person-Organization Fit Perspective. *Personnel Psychology*, 47, 317-348. Available online: <<http://m.timothy-judge.com/Cable%20&%20Judge%20PPsych%201994.pdf>> [Accessed July 17, 2023]

Cable, D. M. and Judge, T., 1996. Person-Organization Fit, Job Choice Decisions, and Organizational Entry. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 67(3), 294-311. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.1996.0081>> [Accessed July 21, 2023]

Cable, D.M., and Turban, D.B., 2001. Establishing the Dimensions, Sources and Value of Job Seekers' Employer Knowledge During Recruitment. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, 20, 115-163. Available online: <[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-7301\(01\)20002-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-7301(01)20002-4)> [Accessed July 24, 2023]

CEE, 2011. *A renewed EU strategy 2011–14 for Corporate Social Responsibility*. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Brussels, 25.10.2011, COM (2011) 681 final.

Chambers, E.G., et al., 1998. The War for Talent. *The McKinsey Quarterly*. 3. 44-57. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/284689712>> [Accessed August 22, 2023]

Chapman CG, 2022 *Sustainability: HR's Next Frontier?* by Hasling, N. Available online: <<https://chapmancg.com/talent-acquisition/sustainability-hrs-next-frontier>> [Accessed June 10, 2023]

Choi, S., and Ng, A., 2011. Environmental and Economic Dimensions of Sustainability and Price Effects on Consumer Responses. *Journal of Business Ethics* 104, 269–282 Available online: <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-011-0908-8>> [Accessed June 11, 2023]

Choi, J., et al., 2016. Supporting the measurement of the United Nations' sustainable development goal 11 through the use of national urban information systems and open geospatial technologies: a case study of south Korea. *Open Geospatial Data, Software and Standards*, 1(1), 1-9. In: Gusmão Caiado, R.G., et al., 2018. A literature-based review on potentials and constraints in the implementation of the sustainable development goals. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 198, 1276–1288. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.07.102>> [Accessed May 24, 2023]

Cordeiro, J.J. and Sarkis, J., 2008. Does explicit contracting effectively link CEO compensation to environmental performance?. *Bus. Strat. Env.*, 17: 304-317. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.621> [Accessed July 23, 2023]

Corporate Knights Global Index, 2022. *The 2023 Global 100: Overview of Corporate Knights Rating Methodology*. Available online: <<https://www.corporateknights.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/2024-CK-Global-100-Methodology.pdf>> [Accessed June 11, 2023].

Coulon, R., 2006. Responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise et pratiques de gestion des ressources humaines. *Revue de l'organisation responsable*, 48–64. Available online: <<http://dx.doi.org/10.3917/ror.001.0048>>

Crous, C., Battisti, E., and Leonidou, E., 2022. Non-financial reporting and company financial performance: a systematic literature review and integrated framework. *EuroMed journal of business*, Vol. ahead-of-print, Issue ahead-of-print, 652 - 676. Available online: <<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/EMJB-12-2020-0134/full/html>> [Accessed May 23, 2023]

Daily, B., Bishop, J., and Massoud, J., 2012. The role of training and empowerment in environmental performance: A study of the Mexican maquiladora industry. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*. 32. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1108/01443571211226524>> [Accessed September 10, 2023]

Darcy, C., et al., 2012. Work-Life Balance: One Size Fits All? An Exploratory Analysis of the Differential Effects of Career Stage. *European Management Journal*, 2012, vol. 30, issue 2, 111-120 10.1016/j.emj.2011.11.001. Available online: <[10.1016/j.emj.2011.11.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2011.11.001)> [Accessed April 02, 2023]

De Cooman, R., et al., 2007. Graduate Teacher Motivation for Choosing a Job in Education. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*. 7, 123-136. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-007-9117-5>> [Accessed July 24, 2023]

De Cooman, R., et al., 2009. Person-organization fit: Testing socialization and attraction-selection-attrition hypotheses. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74(1), 102-107. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2008.10.010>> [Accessed July 08, 2023]

Deloitte, 2022. *Gen Z and Millennial Survey*. Available online: <<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/at/Documents/human-capital/at-gen-z-millennial-survey-2022.pdf>> [Accessed July 04, 2023]

Deloitte, 2023. *2023 Gen Z and Millennial Survey*. <https://www.deloitte.com/global/en/issues/work/content/genzmillennialsurvey.html>

Deutsche Bank, 2012. *Sustainable Investing: Establishing LongTerm Value and Performance*. By Fulton, M., Kahn, B. and Sharples, C. DB Climate Change Advisors, Deutsche Bank Group. Available online: <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2222740>>. [Accessed June 5, 2023]

Diaz-Carrion, R., López-Fernández, M., and Romero-Fernandez, P. M., 2018. Developing a sustainable HRM system from a contextual perspective. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 25(6), 1143-1153 Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1528>> [Accessed March 14, 2023]

Diaz-Carrion, R, López-Fernández, M, Romero-Fernandez, P.M., 2021. Constructing an index for comparing human resources management sustainability in Europe. *Human Resource Management Journal*. 3, 120–142. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12286>> [Accessed June 5, 2023]

De Prins, P., et al., 2014. Sustainable HRM: Bridging theory and practice through the ‘Respect Openness Continuity (ROC)’-model. *Management Revue*, 25(4), 263–284. Available online: <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/24710112.pdf>> [Accessed August 18, 2023]

Devanna, M. A., Fombrun, C., and Tichy, N., 1981. Human Resources Management: A Strategic Perspective. *Organizational Dynamics*, 9(3), 51-67.

De Vos, A., and Van der Heijden, B., 2017. Current thinking on contemporary careers: the key roles of sustainable HRM and sustainability of careers. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 28, 41-50. Available online: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877343516301099>> [Accessed August 20, 2023]

Dumont, J., Shen, J., and Deng, X., 2017. Effects of Green HRM Practices on Employee Workplace Green Behavior: The Role of Psychological Green Climate and Employee Green Values. *Human Resource Management*, 56 (4), 613-627. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21792>> [Accessed June 06, 2023]

Du Pisani, J.A., 2006. Sustainable development – historical roots of the concept, *Environmental Sciences*. 3:2, 83-96. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1080/15693430600688831>> [Accessed May 23, 2023]

Dupont, C., Ferauge, P., and Giuliano, R., 2013. The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Human Resource Management: GDF SUEZ Case. *International Business Research*, 6 (12), 145-155. Available online: <<https://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ibr/article/view/30336>> [Accessed May 30, 2023]

Dyllick, T. and Hockerts, K., 2002. Beyond the Business Case for Corporate Sustainability. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 11, 130-141. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.323>> [Accessed October 03, 2023]

Dyllick, T., and Muff, K., 2016. Clarifying the Meaning of Sustainable Business: Introducing a Typology From Business-as-Usual to True Business Sustainability. *Organization & Environment*, 29(2), 156–174. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/1086026615575176>> [Accessed September 10, 2023]

Eccles, R. G., Ioannou, I., and Serafeim, G., 2014. The Impact of Corporate Sustainability on Organizational Processes and Performance. *Management Science*, 60(11), 2835-2857. Available at: <<https://www.nber.org/papers/w17950>> [Accessed June 7, 2023]

Ehnert, I., 2006. *Sustainability Issues in Human Resource Management: Linkages, theoretical approaches, and outlines for an emerging field*. Available online: <<https://www.academia.edu/27528416>> [Accessed August 18, 2023].

Ehnert, I., 2009. *Sustainable Human Resource Management: A conceptual and exploratory analysis from a paradoxperspective*. Heidelberg: Physica-Verlag

Ehnert, I., 2014. Paradox as a Lens for Theorizing Sustainable HRM. Mapping and Coping with Paradoxes and Tensions, in: Ehnert, I., Harry, W., and Zink, K.J., 2014. *Sustainability and Human Resource Management*, edition 127, Springer, Heidelberg.

Ehnert, I., and Harry, W., 2012. Recent Developments and Future Prospects on Sustainable Human Resource Management: Introduction to the Special Issue. *Management Revue*. 23, 221-238. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262092020>> [Accessed Mar 22, 2023].

Ehnert, I., et al., 2015. Reporting on sustainability and HRM: A comparative study of sustainability reporting practices by the world's largest companies. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 27, 1-21. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.04.009>> [Accessed July 08, 2023]

Ehnert, I., Harry, W., and Zink, K.J., 2014. Sustainability and HRM – an introduction to the field. CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance. In: Ehnert, I., Harry, W., and Zink, K.J., 2014. *Sustainability and Human Resource Management*, edition 127, Springer, Heidelberg.

Elkington, J., 2004. Enter the Triple Bottom Line. In: Henriques, A., and Richardson, J. ed., 2004. *The Triple Bottom Line: Does It All Add Up* (1st ed.). Routledge. Available online: <<http://www.johnelkington.com/archive/TBL-elkington-chapter.pdf>> [Accessed May 29, 2023]

Emas, R., 2015. *The Concept of Sustainable Development: Definition and Defining Principles*. Florida International University. Brief for GSDR 2015. Available online: <[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5839GSDR%202015\\_SD\\_concept\\_definiton\\_rev.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5839GSDR%202015_SD_concept_definiton_rev.pdf)> [Accessed May 29, 2023]

Evans, R. W., and Davis, W. D., 2011. An Examination of Perceived Corporate Citizenship, Job Applicant Attraction, and CSR Work Role Definition. *Business & Society*, 50(3), 456-480. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650308323517>> [Accessed July 23, 2023]

Fei, X., and Wang, J., 2022. Sustainable Human Resource Management and Innovation. In: Chan, H.K., et al. (eds) *Responsible Innovation Management. Responsible Innovation in Industry*. Springer, Singapore. Available online: <[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-4480-2\\_10](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-4480-2_10)>

Fombrun, C., Tichy, N. M., & Devanna, M. A., 1984. *Strategic human resource management*. New York, NY: Wiley. In: Aust, I., Matthews, B., and Muller-Camen, M., 2020. Common Good HRM: A paradigm shift in Sustainable HRM? *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(3). Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.10070>> [Accessed Mar 20 2023].

Gandal, N., et al., 2005. Personal Value Priorities of Economists. *Human Relations*, 58(10), 1227-1252. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726705058911>> [Accessed July 23, 2023]

Genari, D., and Macke, J., 2022. Sustainable Human Resource Management Practices and the Impacts on Organizational Commitment. *Revista de Administração de Empresas*, 62(5), 1-23. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361927128>> [Accessed June 14, 2023]

Global Energy Talent Index Report, 2023. *The Global Energy Talent Index Report*. Available online:<<https://3277184.fs1.hubspotusercontentna1.net/hubfs/3277184/Gated%20PDFS/GETI-report-2023-web-version.pdf>> [Accessed June 10, 2023]

González-Rodríguez, M.R., Díaz-Fernández, M.C., and Simonetti, B., 2015. The Social, Economic and Environmental Dimensions of Corporate Social Responsibility: The Role Played by Consumers and Potential Entrepreneurs. *International Business Review*, 24(5), 836-848. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2015.03.002>> [Accessed June 25, 2023]

Govindarajulu, N. and Daily, B.F. (2004), "Motivating employees for environmental improvement", *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 104(4), 364-372. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1108/02635570410530775>> [Accessed August 08, 2023]

Graham, M. E., and Cable, D. M., 2001. Consideration of the incomplete block design for policy capturing research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 4, 26-45.

Greening D., and Turban., D., 2000. Corporate Social Performance As A Competitive Advantage In Attracting A Quality Workforce. *Business & Society - BUS SOC.* 39. 254-280. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/000765030003900302>> [Accessed September 06, 2023]

Gully, S.M., et al., 2013. A Mediated Moderation Model of Recruiting Socially and Environmentally Responsible Job Applicants. *Personnel Psychology*, 66, 935-973. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12033>> [Accessed July 26, 2023]

Hahn, T., and Figge, F., 2011. Beyond the Bounded Instrumentality in Current Corporate Sustainability Research: Toward an Inclusive Notion of Profitability. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 104, 1-21. Available online: <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0911-0>> [Accessed April 18, 2023]

Hart, S., 1997. Beyond Greening: Strategies for a Sustainable World. *Harvard Business Review*, 75, 66-76.

Highhouse, S., Thornbury, E.E., and Little, I.S., 2007. Social-Identity Functions of Attraction to Organizations. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 103(1), 134–146. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.01.001>> [Accessed July 23, 2023]

Hirsig, N., Rogovsky, N., and Elkin, M., 2014. Enterprise Sustainability and HRM in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises. In: Ehnert, I., Harry, W. and Zink, K. (eds) *Sustainability and Human Resource Management. CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance*, 127–152. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. Available online: <[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-37524-8\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-37524-8_6)> [Accessed May 10, 2023]

Hronová Š, and Špaček M., 2021. Sustainable HRM Practices in Corporate Reporting. *Economies*. 9(2):75. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.3390/economies9020075>> [Accessed July 10, 2023]

Huselid, M.A., 1995. The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 38 (3), pp. 635–72. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.2307/256741>> [Accessed March 21, 2023]



IBM Institute for Business Value, 2021a. *What employees expect in 2021*. Available online: <<https://www.ibm.com/thought-leadership/institute-business-value/report/employee-expectations-2021>>

IBM Institute for Business Value, 2021b. *Sustainability at a turning point. Consumers are Pushing Consumers to Pivot*. Available online: <<https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/WLJ7LVP4>>

IBM, 2022. *Own your Impact. Practical Pathways to Transformational Sustainability*. Available online: <<https://www.ibm.com/thought-leadership/institute-business-value/en-us/c-suite-study/ceo>> [Accessed June 9, 2023]

ILO, 2007. Report VI. The promotion of sustainable enterprises. Sixth item on the Agenda. International Labour Conference, 96th session, 2007. ILO, Geneva. In: Ehnert, I., Harry, W., and Zink, K.J., 2014. *Sustainability and Human Resource Management*, 127. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.

Iniesta-Bonillo, M. A., Sánchez-Fernández, R., and Jiménez-Castillo, D., 2016. Sustainability, value, and satisfaction: Model testing and cross-validation in tourist destinations. *Journal of Business Research*, 69 (11), 5002-5007. Available online: <[https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S014829631630234X?ref=cra\\_js\\_challenge&fr=RR-1](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S014829631630234X?ref=cra_js_challenge&fr=RR-1)> [Accessed July 10, 2023]

ISTAT, 2019. *Rapporto sulla Competitività dei Settori Produttivi. Ed. 2018*. Available online: <<https://www.istat.it/storage/settori-produttivi/2018/Rapporto-competitivita-2018.pdf>> [Accessed June 5, 2023]

ISTAT, 2023a. *Pratiche sostenibili delle imprese nel 2022 e le prospettive 2023-2025*. Available online: <<https://www.istat.it/it/files//2023/04/Pratiche-sostenibili-delle-imprese.pdf>> [Accessed June 5, 2023]

ISTAT, 2023b. *Report Livelli di Istruzione e Ritorni Occupazionali – Anno 2022*. Available online: <<https://www.istat.it/it/files//2023/10/Report-livelli-di-istruzione-e-ritorni-occupazionali.pdf>> [Accessed October 15, 2023]

Jang, S., and Ardichvili, A., 2020. The Role of HRD in CSR and Sustainability: a Content Analysis of Corporate Responsibility Reports. *European journal of training and development*, 44 (6/7), 549–573. Available online: <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/EJTD-01-2020-0006/full/html> [Accessed May 21, 2023]

Jepsen, D. M., and Grob, S., 2015. Sustainability in recruitment and selection: building a framework of practices. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 9(2), 160-178. Available online: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282393121> [Accessed July 14, 2023].

Jones, D. A., Willness, C. R., and Madey, S., 2014. Why Are Job Seekers Attracted by Corporate Social Performance? Experimental and Field Tests of Three Signal-Based Mechanisms. *Academy of Management Journal*. 57. 383-404. Available online: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262524446> [Accessed July 26, 2023].

Judge, T.A., and Bretz, R., 1992. Effects of Work Values on Job Choice Decisions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 77. 261-271. Available online: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278934551> [Accessed July 21, 2023].

Judge, T.A. and Cable, D.M., 1997. Applicant Personality, Organizational Culture, and Organization Attraction. *Personnel Psychology*, 50: 359-394. Available online: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1997.tb00912.x> [Accessed July 21, 2023].

Karren, R.J., and Barringer, M.W., 2002. A Review and Analysis of the Policy-Capturing Methodology in Organizational Research: Guidelines for Research and Practice. *Organizational Research Methods*, 5(4), 337–361. Available online: <https://doi.org/10.1177/109442802237115> [Accessed September 04, 2023].

Kaufman, B.E., 2007. The Development of HRM in Historical And International Perspective. In: *The Oxford Handbook of Human Resource Management*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 88-104. Available online: [https://www.academia.edu/11672915/The\\_Oxford\\_Handbook\\_of\\_Human\\_Resource\\_Management\\_p.7](https://www.academia.edu/11672915/The_Oxford_Handbook_of_Human_Resource_Management_p.7) [Accessed August 20, 2023].

Kivinda, M.P., et al., 2021. Green HRM for Employer Branding: Evidence from ISO 14001 EMS Certified Firms. *The Journal of Developing Areas.*, 55(3), 393–409. Available online at: <<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/791610>> [Accessed July 05, 2023]

KPMG UK, 2023. *Climate quitting - younger workers voting with their feet on employer's ESG commitments.* KPMG press release. Available online: <<https://kpmg.com/uk/en/home/media/press-releases/2023/01/climate-quitting-younger-workers-voting-esg.html>>

Kramar, R., 2014. Beyond strategic human resource management: is sustainable human resource management the next approach? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25:8, 1069-1089, Available online: <[10.1080/09585192.2013.816863](https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2013.816863)> [Accessed April 11, 2023]

Kramar, R., 2022. Sustainable human resource management: six defining characteristics. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 60: 146-170. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12321>> [Accessed Mar 14, 2023]

Kristof, A.L., 1996. Person-Organization Fit: An Integrative Review of its Conceptualizations, Measurement, and Implications. *Personnel Psychology*, 49(1), 1–49. Available online: <<https://leeds-faculty.colorado.edu/dahe7472/kristoff1996.pdf>> [Accessed Mar 14, 2023]

Krumpal, I., 2013. Determinants of social desirability bias in sensitive surveys: a literature review. *Quality & Quantity*, 47, 2025–2047. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-011-9640-9>> [Accessed October 17, 2023]

Lado, A., and Wilson, M., 1994. Human Resource Systems and Sustained Competitive Advantage: a Competency-Based Perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 19: 699-727. Available online: <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/258742.pdf>> [Accessed July 04, 2023]

Latapí Agudelo, M.A., Jóhannsdóttir, L. and Davídsdóttir, B., 2019. A Literature Review of the History and Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility. *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, 4 (1), 1-23. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-018-0039-y>> [Accessed May 23, 2023]

Lechner, C.M., et al., 2022. *Measuring the 4 Higher-Order Values in Schwartz's Theory: A Validation of a 17-Item Inventory.* Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/xmh5v>> [Accessed May 30, 2023]

Lee, C.C., et al., 2017. Impacts of Human Resources Management Innovations on Productivity and Effectiveness in a Medium-Size Non-Profit Organization. *Global Journal of Management and Marketing*, 1 (1), 51-61. Available online: <[https://www.igbr.org/wp-content/uploads/articles/GJMM\\_Vol\\_1\\_No\\_1\\_2017-pgs-51-61.pdf](https://www.igbr.org/wp-content/uploads/articles/GJMM_Vol_1_No_1_2017-pgs-51-61.pdf)> [Accessed March 21, 2023]

Lefkowitz, J., 2006. The Constancy of Ethics amidst the Changing World of Work. *Human Resource Management Review*, 16, 245–268. In: Dupont, C., et al., 2013. The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Human Resource Management: GDF SUEZ Case. *International Business Research*, 6 (12), 145-155. Available online: <<https://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ibr/article/view/30336>> [Accessed May 30, 2023]

Leyens, P.C., 2018. Corporate Social Responsibility in European Union Law: Foundations, Developments, Enforcement. In: du Plessis, J., Varottil, U., Veldman, J. (eds) *Globalisation of Corporate Social Responsibility and its Impact on Corporate Governance*. Springer, Cham. Available online: <[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69128-2\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69128-2_7)> [Accessed May 22, 2023]

Lievens, F., and Highhouse, S., 2003. The Relation of Instrumental and Symbolic Attributes to a Company's Attractiveness as an Employer. *Personnel Psychology*, 56, 75-102. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2003.tb00144.x>> [Accessed July 23, 2023]

Likert, R., 1932. A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes.. *Archives of Psychology*, 140, 1-55.

Lis, B., 2012. The Relevance of Corporate Social Responsibility for a Sustainable Human Resource Management: An Analysis of Organizational Attractiveness as a Determinant in Employees' Selection of a (Potential) Employer. *Management Revue*, 23(3), 279–295. Available online: <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41783722>> [Accessed July 16, 2023].

Lis, B., 2018. Corporate Social Responsibility's Influence on Organizational Attractiveness: an Investigation in the Context of Employer Choice. *Journal of General Management*, 43(3), 106-114. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0306307017749627>> [Accessed July 16, 2023]

Lin, L., 2020. Mandatory Corporate Social Responsibility Legislation around the World: Emergent Varieties and National Experiences. *The American Journal of Comparative Law*, 68 (3), 576–615. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcl/avaa025>> [Accessed May 23, 2023]

Lu, Y., et al., 2023. Sustainable human resource management practices, employee resilience, and employee outcomes: Toward common good values. *Human Resource Management*, 62(3), 331–353. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22153>> [Accessed August 26, 2023]

Luthans, F. Vogelgesang, G., and Lester, P.B., 2006. Developing the psychological capital of resiliency. *Human Resource Development Review*, 5 (1), 25-44. In: Lu, Y., et al., 2022. Sustainable human resource management practices, employee resilience, and employee outcomes: Toward common good values. *Human Resource Management*, 62(3), 331–353. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22153>> [Accessed August 26, 2023]

Mandip, G., 2012. Green HRM: People management commitment to environmental sustainability. *Research Journal of Recent Sciences*, 1, 244-252. Available online: <<https://www.isca.in/rjrs/archive/iscsi/38.ISCA-ISC-2011-18CLM-Com-03.pdf> > [Accessed September 10, 2023]

McGregor, D., 1960. *The Human Side of Enterprise*. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York.

Mckinsey, 2017. *Attracting and Retaining the Right Talent*: by Scott Keller, Available online: <<https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/attracting-and-retaining-the-right-talent>> [Accessed August 23, 2023]

McKinsey, 2020. *The ESG Premium, New Perspectives on Value and Performance*. By Delevingne, L., et al. Available online: <<https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/sustainability/our-insights/the-esg-premium-new-perspectives-on-value-and-performance>> [Accessed June 7, 2023]

Meglino, B.M. and Ravlin, E.C., 1998. Individual Values in Organizations: Concepts, Controversies, and Research. *Journal of Management*, 24 (3),351-389. Available online: <[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063\(99\)80065-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(99)80065-8)> [Accessed October 5, 2023]

Nandan, S., and Jyoti, 2020 Organizational Culture Dimensions as Drivers of Employee Engagement for Business Sustainability: Towards a Conceptual Framework. In: Vanka, S., et al., 2020. *Sustainable Human Resource Management Transforming Organizations, Societies and Environment*. pp. 109–132. Springer, Singapore. Available online: <<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-981-15-5656-2>> [Accessed July 10, 2023]

Ng, E.S, and Burke, R.J., 2005. Person-Organization Fit and the War for Talent: Does Diversity Management Make a Difference? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16(7), 1195-1210 Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/253979549>> [Accessed July 23 2023]

Nicolò, G., et al., 2023. Revealing the Corporate Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals through Integrated Reporting: a Worldwide Perspective. *Social Responsibility Journal*, 19 (5), 829-857. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-09-2021-0373>> [Accessed May 29, 2023]

Nilipour Tabatabaei, S. A., et al., 2017. Presenting Sustainable HRM Model Based on Balanced Scorecard in Knowledge-based ICT Companies (The Case of Iran). *Economics and Sociology*. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.107-124.10.14254/2071-789X.2017/10-2/8>> [Accessed March 01, 2023]

Ozili, P.K., 2022. The Acceptable R-square in Empirical Modelling for Social Science Research *Social Research Methodology and Publishing Results*, Available online: <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4128165>> [Accessed October 25, 2023]

Phillips, L., 2007. Go green to gain the edge over rivals. *People Management*, 23 (9).

Philpott, J. and Davies, G., 2007. *Labour Market Outlook* (Quarterly Survey Report, Summer). London: CIPD/KPMG, pp. 1–22.

Porter, M.E., and Kramer, M.R., 2006. Strategy & Society: The Link between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility. *Harvard Business Review*, 84, 78-85.

Pulakos E.D., 2004. *Performance Management: A Roadmap for Developing, Implementing and Evaluating Performance Management Systems*. The SHRM Foundation, USA. Available online: <<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/special-reports-and-expert-views/documents/performance-management.pdf>> [Accessed September 05, 2023]

Randstad, 2023. *Talent Trends Report 2023*. Available online: <[https://digitalcontent.randstad.it/hubfs/Downloadables/talent-trends-2023/talent\\_trends\\_report\\_2023.pdf](https://digitalcontent.randstad.it/hubfs/Downloadables/talent-trends-2023/talent_trends_report_2023.pdf)> [Accessed June 08, 2023]

Rank, S., and Palframan, J., 2021. Internal Corporate Social Responsibility Preferences of Young Job Seekers with Regard to Sustainable HRM: Are These CSR Preferences Related to

Their Personal Value Orientations?. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, 13(4), 34-62. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.2478/JOIM>> [Accessed July 14, 2023]

Renwick, D. W. S., Redman, T., and Maguire, S., 2013. Green Human Resource Management: A Review and Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 15: 1-14. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2011.00328.x>> [Accessed July 05, 2023]

Rudnev, M., Magun, V., and Schwartz, S., 2018. Relations Among Higher Order Values Around the World. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 49(8), 1165-1182 Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.01.001>> [Accessed September 23, 2023]

Rynes, S.L., 1991. Recruitment, job choice, and post-hire consequences: A call for new research directions. In: Highhouse, S., Thornbury, E.E., and Little, I.S., 2007. Social-identity functions of attraction to organizations. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 103(1), 134–146. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.01.001>> [Accessed July 23, 2023]

Sandy, C., et al., 2016. The Development and Validation of Brief and Ultrabrief Measures of Values. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 99, 1-11. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1080/00223891.2016.1231115>> [Accessed September 28, 2023]

Schneider, B., Goldstein, H., and Smith, B., 1995. The ASA Framework: An Update. *Personnel Psychology*. 48. 747 - 773. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1995.tb01780.x>> [Accessed October 04, 2023]

Schnietz, K., and Epstein, M., 2005. Exploring the Financial Value of a Reputation for Corporate Social Responsibility During a Crisis. *Corporate Reputation Review* 7, 327–345. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.crr.1540230>> [Accessed April 15, 2023]

Schuler, R.S., and Jackson, S.E., 2005. A Quarter-Century Review of Human Resource Management in the U.S.: The Growth in Importance of the International Perspective. *Management Revue*, 16, 1, 1 – 25. Available online: <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41782023>> [Accessed August 22, 2023]

Schwartz, S.H., 1992. *Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries*. Editor(s): Zanna M.P., *Advances in Experimental Social*

Psychology, Academic Press, 25, 1-65. Available online: <[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60281-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60281-6)> [Accessed August 18, 2023]

Schwartz, S.H., 2003. *A proposal for measuring value orientations across nations. Questionnaire Package of ESS.* 259-290. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312444842>> [Accessed September 28, 2023]

Schwartz, S.H., 2006. Basic human values: Theory, measurement, and applications. *Revue Francaise de Sociologie.* Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286951722>> [Accessed October 20, 2023]

Schwartz, S.H., 2012. An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1). Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1116>> [Accessed July 23, 2023]

Schwartz, S.H., and Bardi, A., 2001. Value Hierarchies Across Cultures: Taking a Similarities Perspective. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(3), 268-290. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022101032003002>> [Accessed July 23, 2023]

Schwartz, S.H., et al., 2001. Extending the Cross-Cultural Validity of the Theory of Basic Human Values with a Different Method of Measurement. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(5), 519–542. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022101032005001>> [Accessed September 28, 2023]

Scouarnec, A., 2005. Le DRH de Demain: Esquisse d'une Rétro-Prospéctive de la Fonction RH. *Management et Avenir*, 2(4), 111–138. Available online: <<http://dx.doi.org/10.3917/mav.004.011>>

SDA Bocconi School of Management, 2022. *Fostering Sustainability in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.* Sustainability Lab survey, conducted for Generali SME EnterPRIZE. Available online: <<https://www.sme-enterprize.com/white-paper>> [Accessed June 06, 2023]

SHRM: Society for Human Resource Management, 2011. *HR Has Key Role in Sustainability Strategy, Report Finds*, by Bates, S. Available online: <<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/behavioral-competencies/ethical-practice/pages/sustainabilitystrategy.aspx>> [Accessed June 08, 2023]



Smith, G., 2008. *Does Gender Influence Online Survey Participation? A Record-Linkage Analysis of University Faculty Online Survey Response Behavior*. Available online: <<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED501717.pdf>> [Accessed October 10, 2023]

Stankevičiūtė, Ž., and Savanevičienė, A., 2018. Designing Sustainable HRM: The Core Characteristics of Emerging Field. *Sustainability*, 10(12), 4798. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.3390/su10124798>> [Accessed March 24, 2023]

Stahl, G.K., et al., 2020. Enhancing the Role of Human Resource Management in Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility: A Multi-Stakeholder, Multidimensional Approach to HRM. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30 (3). Available online: <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1053482218303796>> [Accessed July 10, 2023]

Stefanelli, N.O., et al., 2020. Environmental training: a systematic review of the state of the art of the theme. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 27(7), 2048-2076. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-12-2018-0449>> [Accessed September 09, 2023]

Stepstone, 2023. *The Stepstone Group study: Three out of four employees would be more likely to apply to sustainable companies*. Available online: <<https://www.thestepstonegroup.com/en/press/press-releases/the-st-group-study-three-out-of-four-employees-would-be-more-likely-to-apply-to-sustainable-companies/>>

Strauss, G., and Sayles, L.R., 1960. *The Human Problems of Management*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.; Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Tajfel, H. and Turner, J.C., 1986. An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In W. G. Austin, & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, 33-37. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Tang, G., et al., 2018. Green Human Resource Management Practices: Scale Development and Validity. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 56, 31-55. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12147>> [Accessed September 09, 2023]

Taylor, S., Beechler, S., and Napier, N., 1996. Toward an Integrative Model of Strategic International Human Resource Management. *The Academy of Management Review*, 21(4), 959–985. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.2307/259160>> [Accessed July 04, 2023]

Taylor, S., and Lewis, C., 2014. Sustainable HRM in the US. In: Ehnert, I., Harry, W., Zink, K. (eds) *Sustainability and Human Resource Management*. CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance, 2014. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.

Tomassetti, A.J., Dalal, R.S., and Kaplan, S.A., 2016. Is Policy Capturing Really More Resistant Than Traditional Self-Report Techniques to Socially Desirable Responding? *Organizational Research Methods*, 19(2), 255–285. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428115627497>> [Accessed September 04, 2023]

Truxillo, D.M., and Fraccaroli F., 2013. Research Themes on Age and Work: Introduction to the Special Issue. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 22(3), 249-252. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2013.786604>> [Accessed August 20, 2023]

Turban, D., and Keon, T., 1993. Organizational Attractiveness: An Interactionist Perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 78. 184-193. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232501400>> [Accessed September 03, 2023].

United Nations General Assembly, 2015. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly A/RES/70/1. Available online: <<https://www.refworld.org/docid/57b6e3e44.html>> [Accessed May 24, 2023]

Wahba, H., 2008. Does the Market Value Corporate Environmental Responsibility? An Empirical Examination. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 15, 89-99. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.153>> [Accessed April 15, 2023]

Walker, J., 1978. Linking Human Resource Planning and Strategic Planning. *Human Resource Planning*, 1, 1–18. New York: McGraw Hill.

Wang, L., and Juslin, H., 2011. The Effects of Value on the Perception of Corporate Social Responsibility Implementation: A Study of Chinese Youth. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 18, 246-262. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.250>> [Accessed July 26, 2023]

Williams, L.J., and Abdi, H., 2010. Fisher’s Least Significant Difference (LSD) Test. In: Neil Salkind (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Available online: <<https://personal.utdallas.edu/~herve/abdi-LSD2010-pretty.pdf>> [Accessed October 26, 2023]

Wikhamn, W., 2019. Innovation, Sustainable HRM and Customer Satisfaction. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 76 (A), 102-110. Available online: <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.04.009>> [Accessed April 15, 2023]

Wright, P.M., Dunford, B.B., and Snell, S.A., 2001. Human Resources and The Resource Based View of the Firm. *Journal of Management*, 27(6), 701–721. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/37149372>> [Accessed August 25, 2023]

Wright, P.M., and McMahan, G.C., 1992. Theoretical Perspectives for Strategic Human Resource Management. *Journal of Management*, 18(2), 295-3. In: App, S., Merk, J., and Büttgen, M., 2012. Employer Branding: Sustainable HRM as a Competitive Advantage in the Market for High-Quality Employees. *Management Revue*, 23 (3), 262-278. Available online: <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41783721>>. [Accessed March 15, 2023]

Zhang, Q., et al., 2019. Effects of Corporate Social Responsibility On Customer Satisfaction And Organizational Attractiveness: A Signaling Perspective. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 29. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335239685>> [Accessed July 23 2023].

Zaugg, R.J., Blum, A., and Thom, N., 2001. *Sustainability in Human Resource Management: Evaluation Report. Survey in European Companies and Institution*. Bern: IOP-Verlag. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276906300>> [Accessed July 04, 2023]

Zaugg, R., and Thom, N., 2002. Excellence through Implicit Competencies: Human Resource Management - Organisational Development - Knowledge Creation. *Journal of Change Management*, 3, 199-211. Available online: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233194316>> [Accessed July 04, 2023]

## LINKS:

1. Sustainability. UnitedNations.org, *Academic Impact*. <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability>
2. The Triple Bottom Line: What it is and Why it is Important. Harvard Business School Online, by Kelsey Miller, 8 December 2020. <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/what-is-the-triple-bottom-line>

3. Climate Change and Sustainability, from the Boston Consulting Group webpage. <https://www.bcg.com/capabilities/climate-change-sustainability>
4. Tackey, N.D, Tamkin, P., and Sheppard, E., 2001. The Problem of Minority Performance in Organizations. *The Institute for Employment Studies*. Available online: <<https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/375.pdf>> [Accessed October 26, 2023]
5. What is the difference between PCA and Factor Analysis? 2020. *Towards Data Science*, by Korstanje, J. <https://towardsdatascience.com/what-is-the-difference-between-pca-and-factor-analysis-5362ef6fa6f9> [Accessed October 15, 2023]
6. STAT 505: Applied Multivariate Statistical Analysis. Penn State Department of Statistics. <https://online.stat.psu.edu/stat505/lesson/14/14.7>
8. Lesson 4: SLR Model Assumptions, from the Pennsylvania State University. <https://online.stat.psu.edu/stat501/book/export/html/910>
7. What are the best methods to assess the normality of residuals? Regression Analysis - Perspectives from experts about the questions that matter in Regression Analysis Retrieved from LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/advice/0/what-best-methods-assess-normality-residuals>
9. The Intuition behind the Assumptions of Linear Regression Algorithm. *Towards Data Science*, 2021. <https://towardsdatascience.com/linear-regression-assumptions-why-is-it-important-af28438a44a1>
10. What is linear regression? SPSS Statistics For Linear Regression, from IBM's website. <https://www.ibm.com/topics/linear-regression>
11. Ward's Method. Retrieved from PennState's Department of Statistics. <https://online.stat.psu.edu/stat505/lesson/14/14.7>
12. K-means Cluster Analysis UC Business Analytics R Programming Guide. [https://uc-r.github.io/kmeans\\_clustering](https://uc-r.github.io/kmeans_clustering)

**ANNEX A**

**Composition of the Questionnaire.**

*Table 20. Practices Presented to Respondents Relating to Sustainable HRM.*

	<b>SOCIAL DIMENSION (S)</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION (E)</b>
<b>ATTRACT AND RETAIN (A)</b>	<p><b>S_A1:</b> The company when hiring considers diversity, grants equal opportunities to everyone and shows to be attentive for inclusion and equality (making no distinction among people of different genders, ethnicities or part of a minority).</p> <p><b>S_A2:</b> The organization provides details on all its socially-responsible activity in the company website. Showing indications of its Corporate Social Performance indexes.</p>	<p><b>E_A1:</b> The company considers individuals' awareness and sensitivity on environmental issues when interviewing candidates to hire. Emphasizing in its recruitment ads and job descriptions the environmental practices it puts in place.</p> <p><b>E_A2:</b> The company website provides details of all environmental activity of the firm, sharing the ecological targets it intends to achieve (such as targets on Co2 reduction, waste-management and green-energy).</p>
<b>MOTIVATE AND MAINTAIN (M)</b>	<p><b>S_M1:</b> The company considers in its compensation systems the ethical and responsible behaviors of employees, rewarding good citizenship and moral behaviour.</p> <p><b>S_M2:</b> The company grants its employees a proper work-life balance (offering flexible working arrangements and distance working options) and offers a wide range of social benefits to support them (such as parental and breastfeeding leaves, aid for disabled children, childcare services, behavioral coaching, counseling and eldercare support, retirement and insurance plans).</p>	<p><b>E_M1:</b> The company bases pay and rewards of its workforce also on environmental performance and workplace green behavior. Rewarding employees that contribute to reach environmental objectives.</p> <p><b>E_M2:</b> The firm encourages those practices in the workplace that reduce the environmental impact of the organization. It does so also by encouraging staff to participate in green activities (such as recycling, video-conferencing, car-sharing and home-working).</p>
<b>DEVELOP AND SKILLS-INVESTING (D)</b>	<p><b>S_D1:</b> The company invests in training workers about on-the-job health and safety, encouraging direct involvement and contribution to solve the relating issues.</p> <p><b>S_D2:</b> The company puts great importance in career-development. Granting equal and non-discriminatory access to professional training, not differentiating between different workers categories (such as men/women, older/younger employees and employees/management).</p>	<p><b>E_D1:</b> The company invests in training workers on climate change and the environmental impact of the organization itself, encouraging employees' contribution and suggestions for any environmental improvements.</p> <p><b>E_D2:</b> The firm educates individuals on eco-friendly practices, such as waste-reduction and waste-collection, encouraging tele/video conferencing, car-sharing and working from home to reduce pollution</p>

**ANNEX A (cont.)**

*Scheme 1. Visual Composition of the Questionnaire Proposed to Respondents.*

Variables	Items		Agreement Scale				
			SD	D	N	A	SA
Education on sustainability issues (EDS)	EDS1: I attended some courses/seminaires on sustainability in the past.						
	EDS2: I consider myself up to date with sustainability issues.						
	EDS3: I am up to speed with practices of sustainability in the workplace (e.g. inclusion and diversity in the workplace, waste-recycling, parental leaves right, equal pays, green practices incentives, etc.).						
Practices of Sustainable HRM (P)	Social Practices (P_S)	P_S_A1	Organizational attraction (OA): “I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics”				
		P_S_A2					
		P_S_M1					
		P_S_M2					
		P_S_D1					
		P_S_D2					
	Environmental Practices (P_E)	P_E_H1	Work Effort (WE): “I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company”				
		P_E_H2					
		P_E_M1					
		P_E_M2					
		P_E_D1					
		P_E_D2					
Individual Values (V)	V_B Benevolence	V_B1 V_B2					
	V_U Universalism	V_U1 V_U2 V_U3					
	V_SD Self-Direction	V_SD1 V_SD2					
	V_ST Stimulation	V_ST1 V_ST2					
	V_H Hedonism	V_H1 V_H2					
	V_A Achievement	V_A1 V_A2					
	V_P Power	V_P1 V_P2					
	V_SE Security	V_SE1 V_SE2					
	V_C Conformity	V_C1 V_C2					
	V_T Tradition	V_T1 V_T2					

**ANNEX A (cont.)**

Values investigation among individuals: sentences presented to respondents, from Schwartz (2003).

<b>Value</b>	<b>Item</b>
<b>BENEVOLENCE (V_B)</b>	V_B1: It's very important to me to help the people around me. I want to care for other people.
	V_B2: It is important to me to be loyal to my friends. I want to devote myself to people close to me.
<b>UNIVERSALISM (V_U)</b>	V_U1: I think it is important that every person in the world is treated equally. I want justice for everybody, even for people I don't know.
	V_U2: It is important to me to listen to people who are different from me. Even when I disagree with them, I still want to understand them.
	V_U3: I strongly believe people should care for nature. Looking after the environment is important to me.
<b>SELF-DIRECTION (V_SD)</b>	V_SD1: Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to me. I like to do things in my own original way.
	V_SD2: It is important to me to make my own decisions about what I do. I like to be free to plan and to choose my activities for myself.
<b>STIMULATION (V_ST)</b>	V_ST1: I like surprises and am always looking for new things to do. I think it is important to do lots of different things in life.
	V_ST2: I look for adventures and like to take risks. I want to have an exciting life.
<b>HEDONISM (V_H)</b>	V_H1: Having a good time is important to me. I like to "spoil" myself.
	V_H2: I seek every chance I can to have fun. It is important to me to do things that give me pleasure.
<b>ACHIEVEMENT (V_A)</b>	V_A1: It is very important to me to show my abilities. I want people to admire what I do.
	V_A2: Being very successful is important to me. I like to impress other people.
<b>POWER (V_P)</b>	V_P1: It is important to me to be rich. I want to have a lot of money and expensive things.
	V_P2: It is important to me to be in charge and tell others what to do. I want people to do what I say.
<b>SECURITY (V_SE)</b>	V_SE1: It is important to me to live in secure surroundings. I avoid anything that might endanger my safety.
	V_SE2: It is very important to me that my country be safe from threats from within and without. I am concerned that social order be protected.
<b>CONFORMITY (V_C)</b>	V_C1: I believe that people should do what they're told. I think people should follow rules at all times, even when no-one is watching.
	V_C2: It is important to me always to behave properly. I want to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong.
<b>TRADITION (V_T)</b>	V_T1: I think it's important not to ask for more than what you have. I believe that people should be satisfied with what they have.
	V_T2: Religious belief is important to me. I try hard to do what my religion requires.

## ANNEX B

## Demographic distribution of the sample.

<i>What do you identify as?</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Female	85	66,4%
Male	42	32,8%
Other	1	0,8%
I'd prefer not to specify	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100%</b>

<i>Have you had any work experience?</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	114	89,1%
No	14	10,9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100%</b>

<i>Which ethnicity best describes you?</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
White/Cucasian	98	76,6%
Black	2	1,6%
Hispanic	2	1,6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	15	11,7%
Multiple ethnicity/Other	4	3,1%
I prefer not to specify	7	5,5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100%</b>

<i>Education level</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Cum. percentage</i>
High School	27	21,1%	21,1%
Bachelor's Degree	48	37,5%	58,6%
Master's Degree	41	32%	90,6%
PhD/Other titles Post-lauream	9	7%	97,7%
Other (Associate's Degree)	3	2,3%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100%</b>	

## Descriptive Statistics of Single Practice Responses

**S\_A1:** The company when hiring considers diversity, grants equal opportunities to everyone and shows to be attentive for inclusion and equality (making no distinction among people of different genders, ethnicities or part of a minority).

<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	2	3	8	51	64	1	4	29	54	40
%	1,6%	2,3%	6,3%	39,8%	50,0%	0,8%	3,1%	22,7%	42,2%	31,3%
Median	4,50					4,00				
Mean	4,34					4,00				
S.D.	,827					,860				

**E\_A1:** The company considers individuals' awareness and sensitivity on environmental issues when interviewing candidates to hire. Emphasizing in its recruitment ads and job descriptions the environmental practices it puts in place.

<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	-	8	32	56	32	-	7	40	52	29
%	-%	6,3%	25%	43,8%	25%	-%	5,5%	31,3%	40,6%	22,7%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	3,88					3,80				
S.D.	,860					,852				



**ANNEX B (cont.)**

**Descriptive Statistics of Single Practice Responses (cont.)**

<b>S_A2:</b> The organization provides details on all its socially-responsible activity in the company website. Showing indications of its Corporate Social Performance indexes.										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	-	3	24	63	38	-	4	40	57	27
%	-%	2,3%	18,8%	49,2%	29,7%	-%	3,1%	31,3%	44,5%	21,1%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	4,06					3,84				
S.D.	,761					,791				
<b>E_A2:</b> The company website provides details of all environmental activity of the firm, sharing the ecological targets it intends to achieve (such as targets on Co2 reduction, waste-management and green-energy).										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	-	3	20	54	51	1	4	28	59	36
%	-%	2,3%	15,6%	42,2%	39,8%	0,8%	3,1%	21,9%	46,1%	28,1%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	4,20					3,98				
S.D.	,784					,837				
<b>S_MI:</b> The company considers in its compensation systems the ethical and responsible behaviors of employees, rewarding good citizenship and moral behaviour.										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	1	4	17	62	44	1	5	24	57	41
%	0,8%	3,1%	13,3%	48,4%	34,4%	0,8%	3,9%	18,8%	44,5%	32%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	4,13					4,03				
S.D.	,813					,860				
<b>E_MI:</b> The company bases pay and rewards of its workforce also on environmental performance and workplace green behavior. Rewarding employees that contribute to reach environmental objectives										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	2	13	19	59	35	-	12	32	51	33
%	1,6%	10,2%	14,8%	46,1%	27,3%	-%	9,4%	25%	39,8%	25,8%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	3,88					3,82				
S.D.	,980					,926				

**ANNEX B (cont.)****Descriptive Statistics of Single Practice Responses (cont.)**

<b>S_M2:</b> The company grants its employees a proper work-life balance (offering flexible working arrangements and distance working options), offering a wide range of social benefits to support them (such as parental and breastfeeding leaves, aid for disabled children, childcare services, behavioral coaching, counseling and eldercare support, retirement and insurance plans).										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	1	2	7	24	94	-	4	11	21	91
%	0,8%	1,6%	5,5%	18,8%	73,3,4%	-%	3%	8,6%	16,4%	71,9%
Median	5,00					5,00				
Mean	4,63					4,57				
S.D.	,732					,781				
<b>E_M2:</b> The firm encourages those practices in the workplace that reduce the environmental impact of the organization. It does so also by encouraging staff to participate in green activities (such as recycling, video-conferencing, car-sharing and home-working).										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	-	5	22	58	43	-	5	25	66	32
%	-%	3,9%	17,2%	45,3%	33,6%	-%	3,9%	19,5%	51,6%	25%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	4,09					3,98				
S.D.	,814					,778				
<b>S_D1:</b> The company invests in training workers about on-the-job health and safety, encouraging direct involvement and contribution to solve the relating issues										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	-	3	16	64	45	-	3	27	63	35
%	-%	2,3%	12,5%	50%	35,2%	-%	2,3%	21,1%	49,2%	27,3%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	4,18					4,02				
S.D.	,736					,763				
<b>E_D1:</b> The company invests in training workers on climate change and the environmental impact of the organization itself, encouraging employees' contribution and suggestions for any environmental improvements.										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	1	7	23	60	37	1	4	37	54	32
%	0,8%	5,5%	18%	46,9%	28,9%	0,8%	3,1%	28,9%	42,2%	25%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	3,98					3,88				
S.D.	,874					,851				

**ANNEX B (cont.)**

**Descriptive Statistics of Single Practice Responses (cont.)**

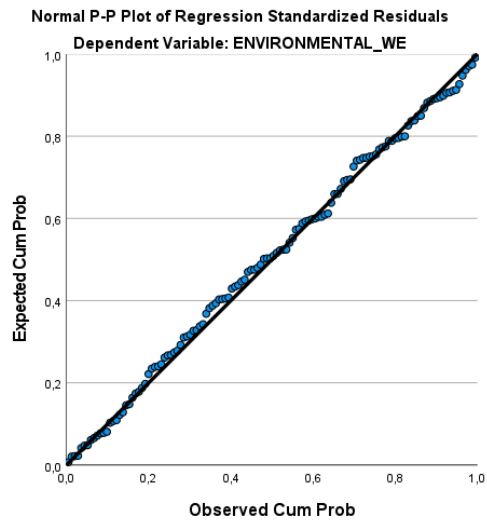
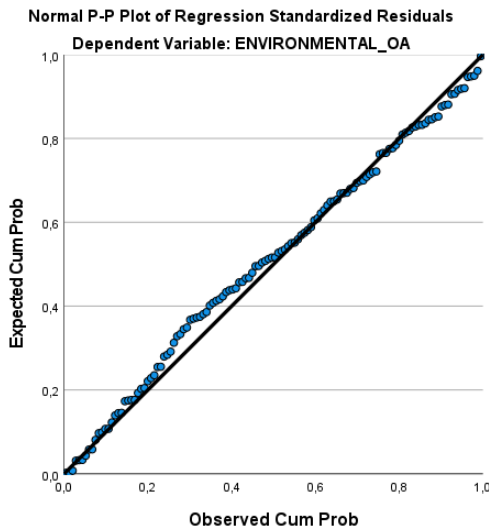
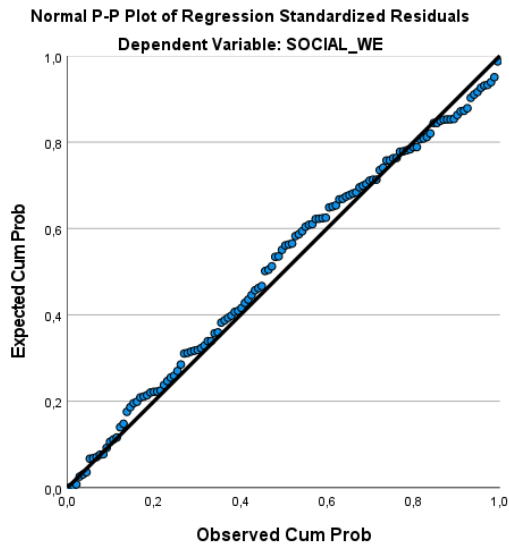
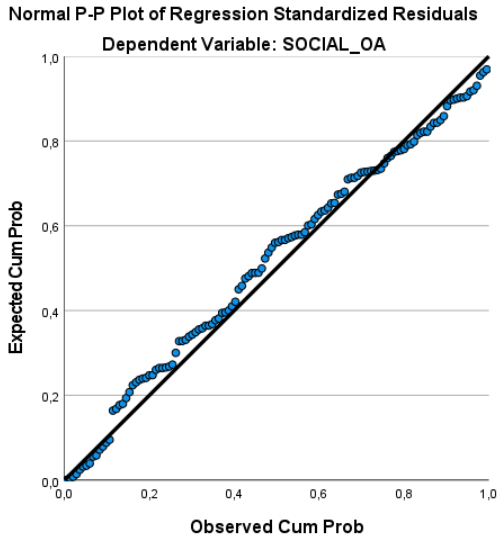
<b>S_D2:</b> The company puts great importance in career-development. Granting equal and non-discriminatory access to professional training, not differentiating between different workers categories (such as men/women, older/younger employees and employees/management).										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	-	3	6	48	71	-	2	10	50	66
%	-%	2,3%	4,7%	37,5%	55,5%	-%	1,6%	7,8%	39,1%	51,6%
Median	5,00					5,00				
Mean	4,46					4,41				
S.D.	,698					,704				
<b>E_D2:</b> The firm commits on educating individuals on eco-friendly practices, such as reduction and collection of waste, distance working and a better energy use to reduce pollution.										
<b>Q:</b>	<b>OA:</b> I would be attracted to an organization with these characteristics.					<b>WE:</b> I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company				
<b>R:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
Frequency	-	6	15	70	37	-	4	35	58	31
%	-%	4,7%	11,7%	54,7%	28,9%	-%	3,1%	27,3%	45,3%	24,2%
Median	4,00					4,00				
Mean	4,08					3,91				
S.D.	,770					,798				

**Note:** N=128

X\_Y\_1 (e.g. E\_H1): practice of reference; SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N = Neither Agree nor Disagree, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree; Q= Question, R= Agreement scale.

**ANNEX C**

**Visual Tests for the Normal Distribution of the Residuals (Graphs 1-4).**



**Tests performed for Homoschedasticity of Residuals**

<b>Breusch-Pagan test for Heteroschedasticity of Residuals</b>		
<b>ANOVA</b>	<i>F test</i>	<i>Sign.</i>
Square of residuals (SOCIAL_OA)	,820	,629
Square of residuals (SOCIAL_WE)	,491	,917
Square of residuals (ENVIR_OA)	,998	,456
Square of residuals (ENVIR_WE)	,515	,902

*Note: For the Breusch-Pagan test, significance values higher than 0,05 accepts the nul hypotesis (H0) of homoschedasticity of data.*

Given all p-values for homoschedasticity of the regressions show values greater than 0,05, the nul hypotesis of homoschedasticity of our data is supported.