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Alcaraz, JM.; Susaeta-Erburu, L.; Suárez-Ruz, ME.; Colón, C.; Gutierrez, I.; Cunha, R.; Leguizamon, F.... (2017). The human resources management contribution to social responsibility and environmental sustainability: explorations from Ibero-America. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1350732>



The final publication is available at

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1350732>

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Article in *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* · July 2017

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The Human Resources Management Contribution to Social Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability: Explorations from Ibero-America

Journal:	<i>The International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>
Manuscript ID	RIJH-2015-0474.R1
Manuscript Type:	Original paper
Keywords:	Value, HRM, Social Responsibility, Environmental Sustainability, Ibero-America

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The Human Resources Management Contribution to Social Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability: Explorations from Ibero-America

Abstract

In this paper we aim to advance the discussion on Human Resources Management's quest to create value around social responsibility and environmental sustainability. We explore the perceptions reported by Human Resource managers in three Ibero-American countries (Spain, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica). We focus on the hospitality sector, one of particular relevancy for these countries and with significant sustainability challenges. Relying on in-depth interviews in twenty-eight organizations and a mixed-methods approach, we examine HR managers' underlying notions around social and environmental issues, stakeholder collaboration, HRM practices, roles and internal organization. Analysis of the interviews suggests varying views on those dimensions, as well as identifies Active and Advanced firms, the latter showing more commitment to sustainability (as part of the organizational culture), usage of HRM practices and engagement with multiple stakeholders. From this empirical exploration and relying on current sustainability developments, we contribute to the literature by outlining an externally-oriented model (centred on corporate priorities, communities' flourishing and ecosystems' resilience) aiming to advance HRM's engagement with sustainability-driven agendas.

Key Words: HRM, social responsibility, environmental sustainability, value creation

Introduction

The last ten years have seen an intense scholarly debate around the contribution that Human Resources Management (HRM) is making or should make towards social responsibility and environmental sustainability (SR/ES) (e.g. Cohen, 2010; Cohen, Taylor, & Muller-Camen, 2012; Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM], 2011; Ehnert, Parsa, Roper, Wagner, & Muller-Camen, 2016; Haddock-Millar, Sanyal, & Muller-Camen, 2016). This work has come under multiple headings, e.g. “responsible human resources” (Shen & Jiuhua, 2011), “responsible international human resources management” (Shen, 2011), “sustainable human resources” (Kramar, 2014), “green HRM” (Renwick, Jabbour, Muller-Camen, Redman, & Wilkinson, 2016) etc.

Some of this literature has a *normative* stance, claiming that HRM needs to reach out to communities and societies (Lee, 2010) and to have a central role in the search for ‘sustainable organizations’ (Jabbour & Santos, 2008a; Wilcox, 2006). Somewhat similarly, other authors (e.g. McGuire, 2010) have claimed that HRM experts need to play an important role in reminding organizations of their social, environmental and moral responsibilities, and in orchestrating related efforts. For others, corporate social responsibility (CSR), environmental sustainability (ES) and HRM have to establish partnerships for advancing ‘responsible’ business practices (Cohen, 2010). Recurrent arguments have revolved around the idea that those in charge of people-management are well positioned to foster sustainability agendas. Empirically, a variety of HRM domains, policies or practices have been examined – showing *mixed* results.

Some authors have reported what they perceive as *disappointing results*, e.g. after finding not so pro-active roles by HRM professionals in the sustainability agendas

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2
3 of their organizations (Wagner, 2011). Other researchers have lamented that “HRM
4
5 practices are not used to a great extent to encourage employees to become more pro-
6
7 environmental” (Zibarras & Coan, 2015). Others identify many opportunities still not
8
9 grasped for HRM managers to be “strategic leaders” on sustainability issues instead of
10
11 “passive observers” (Harris & Tregidga, 2012), or to serve as ethical role-models that
12
13 show “courage to challenge” rather than being mere “bystanders” (Parkes & Davis,
14
15 2013). Guerci and Pedrini (2014) also claim that there is still much work to do to create
16
17 meaningful consensus and synergies between HRM and sustainability managers.
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20
21 Other scholars have reported what perhaps can be seen as more positive
22
23 findings. For example, there is now wide evidence to support claims on the multiple
24
25 positive effects of (socially/environmentally) responsible practices on internal
26
27 employees’ motivation and engagement (Collier & Esteban, 2007; Delmas & Pekovic,
28
29 2013; Martínez-Del-Río, Céspedes-Lorente, & Carmona-Moreno, 2012) and on
30
31 employers’ reputation (Dögl & Holtbrügge, 2014). Some other research has explored
32
33 the potential of training and organizational learning to support environmental agendas
34
35 (Wagner, 2011; Vidal-Salazar, Cordon-Pozo, & Ferrón-Vilchez, 2012; Pless, Maak, &
36
37 Stahl, 2012), the role of sustainability in the design of executive and middle-level
38
39 managers’ compensation schemes (Berrone & Gomez-Mejia, 2009; Merriman & Sen,
40
41 2012), HRM’s potential to target sustainability at the double dimension of work and
42
43 home (Muster & Schrader, 2011), and HRM’s contribution to ‘responsible leadership’
44
45 (Gond, Igalens, Swaen, & El Akremi, 2011). Recent work has also taken an
46
47 international HRM comparative focus, e.g. around reporting practices (Ehnert et al.,
48
49 2016).
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54 Nevertheless, this is a field growing in maturity, as evidenced by multiple
55
56 *integrative* models aiming to offer theoretical insights and conceptual relations which
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3 illuminate the multiple dimensions of HRM and its organizational and wider (societal,
4
5 environmental and business) contexts. These models have aimed not only to open up
6
7 research avenues but also to provide (some) practitioner guidance (see DuBois &
8
9 DuBois, 2012; Cohen, 2010; Cohen et al., 2012; Jabbour & Santos, 2008b; Jackson,
10
11 Schuler, & Jiang, 2014).

12
13
14 Trying to capture and ‘organize’ this abundance of work, several literature
15
16 reviews bring conceptual clarity and outline multiple promising avenues for research
17
18 (e.g. Jackson, Renwick, Jabbour, & Muller-Camen, 2011; Renwick, Redman, &
19
20 McGuire, 2013; Renwick et al., 2016). Among those literature reviews, Kramar (2014)
21
22 adopts the increasingly common term ‘sustainable human resource management’ to
23
24 describe this field of study, and claims that the body of literature can be divided into
25
26 three categories. Within the category of ‘capability reproduction’ we find studies that
27
28 have focused on linking HRM and sustainability practices with internal outcomes, such
29
30 as economic ones or employee betterment conditions (e.g. satisfaction, positive
31
32 psychological orientation, engagement, etc). A second group of studies, which can be
33
34 referred to as ‘promoting social and environmental health’, has an externally-oriented
35
36 focus and has explored the linkage between HRM practices and SR/ES outcomes. A
37
38 third, perhaps more ambitious, group can be named ‘connections’, in which HRM aims
39
40 to support "triple bottom line" approaches (Elkington, 1994) by which firms robustly
41
42 pursue *joint* economic, social and environmental results.
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47 This paper positions itself in the second body of literature, with an *external*
48
49 focus, identified by Kramar (2014) as ‘promoting social and environmental health’, and
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51 it aligns itself with Banerjee’s (2011) concerns to move from input-driven to *output-*
52
53 *focused* sustainability agendas. Our research aim is, therefore, twofold. First, it seeks to
54
55 explore empirically HRM’s engagement with SR/ES in a multi-country context that has
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3 received little scholarly attention. Second, it aims to contribute to the existing efforts to
4 adapt or develop *integrative* models that help *both* the social *and* environmental
5 contributions of HRM. For this purpose we adopt and later develop Ulrich and
6 Brockbank's (2005) HR Value Proposition model, embracing its outside/in focus and
7 introducing two additional components: *communities* and *ecosystems*.
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14 In our approach, Ulrich and Brockbank's (2005) model can be seen as an 'HRM
15 architecture', inviting HRM professionals to understand key social and environmental
16 issues related to the business context, to mobilize multiple (internal and external)
17 stakeholders, to prioritize the HRM practices that can deliver the highest impact, and to
18 adapt accordingly the internal role and organization of HRM. These assumptions guided
19 our empirical exploration, helping us to explore HR managers' perceptions by posing
20 the following research questions: How do HR managers conceive SR/ES? How do they
21 link these to the business challenges? What are the firm's social and environmental
22 initiatives? How do they foster collaboration with other stakeholders? Which HRM
23 practices around "sustainability" do they see as most useful? What roles do they adopt
24 and what internal organization do they put in place?
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39 Our research relies on qualitative, in-depth interviews whose analysis was
40 carried out using a mixed-methods approach. Interviews took place in three Ibero-
41 American countries: Spain, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica. The Ibero-
42 American states (the Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking nations of America and Europe)
43 show significant commonalities in their socio-cultural, institutional, and
44 macroeconomic contexts, fostered through numerous summits, constant political and
45 business collaboration (Gracia, 2013; Vassolo, De Castro, & Gomez-Mejia, 2011), plus
46 growing research ties, as evidenced by the journal and activities of the Iberoamerican
47 Academy of Management (an affiliate of the Academy of Management), in which HRM
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3 scholars are particularly active. Research in the field of SR/ES and HRM is very limited
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5 in this growing region, and our work aims to address this gap.
6

7 We focused on the travel and tourism industry (hospitality sector), of particular
8
9 relevance for these three countries, for which it represents a significant percentage of
10
11 the GDP, national employment etc. (Table 1 shows some key indicators).
12

13
14 [Table 1 near here]
15

16
17
18 At the same time this is an industry with tremendous SR/ES challenges, which
19
20 force corporate leaders and those dealing with people-management practices to pay
21
22 particular attention to both the social and environmental contexts in which businesses
23
24 operate (Mowforth, Charlton, & Munt, 2008), particularly if they are to foster
25
26 responsible practices and create value (Camilleri, 2016).
27
28

29
30 This paper is organized as follows: we first review the literature on (key)
31
32 integrative frameworks that have been crafted around HRM, social responsibility and/or
33
34 environmental sustainability. We then present our slightly adapted model of Ulrich and
35
36 Brockbank's (2005) HR Value Proposition. We then describe our data collection and
37
38 analytical methods. After that we present our findings and discuss them in the light of
39
40 existing literature. This allows us to both present an externally-oriented model (centred
41
42 on corporate priorities, communities' flourishing and ecosystems' resilience) and to
43
44 extract practical implications aiming to advance HRM's quest to create value in
45
46 sustainability-driven agendas.
47
48

49 50 **Integrative frameworks in HRM's agenda around social responsibility and** 51 52 **environmental sustainability** 53 54

55
56 There are now multiple *integrative* models centred on HRM and SR/ES, plus other
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1
2
3 recent HRM strategy models that consider SR/ES as a key dimension (Jackson et al.,
4
5 2014). A brief overview shows that Jabbour and Santos (2008a) already argued for the
6
7 *centrality* of HRM practices in sustainability, by positioning them as enablers of
8
9 ‘environmental, innovation and diversity performance’. Jabbour and Santos (2008b)
10
11 would also include other HRM practices (e.g. recruitment, training, performance
12
13 appraisal, compensation etc.) and would suggest an intuitive implementation process in
14
15 which organizational culture and learning need to be at the centre. In a ‘paradox
16
17 framework’, Ehnert (2009) also provides conceptual clarity around ‘sustainable HRM’,
18
19 including both short-term and long-term effects. Later, Cohen (2010) would emphasize
20
21 the role of HRM, business leadership and strategy in SR/ES agendas, claiming the need
22
23 to facilitate dialogues between businesses and multiple stakeholders, the need to
24
25 consider specific issues regarding materiality, responsibility and transparency, and the
26
27 need to deliver positive impacts on employees - impacts that should also affect the
28
29 external marketplace, environment and communities. Similarly, Cohen et al. (2012)
30
31 offered a “roadmap” emphasizing the need to establish organizational “preconditions”
32
33 (around compliance, governance and ethics), that would nurture *organizational cultures*
34
35 aligned to SR/ES. Other authors (e.g. Fairfield, Harmon, & Behson, 2011; Shen, 2011)
36
37 focus their efforts on exploring linkages between multiple SR/ES determinants, and
38
39 between external influences, enablers, inhibitors, practices and ‘sustainability’
40
41 performance. More recently DuBois and DuBois (2012) in an influential model outlined
42
43 a comprehensive strategic HRM framework (this one centred around ES),
44
45 acknowledging the importance of organizational *contexts* (with increasing instability of
46
47 natural resources, increasing transparency needs, and other expectations from regulators
48
49 and other stakeholders), contexts intimately linked to the firms’ *environment*
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51 (competitive strategy, structure, leadership), where transactional and transformational
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3 HRM practices can act as ‘enablers’. Sharing many of those tenets, Jackson et al.
4
5 (2014), relying on the pioneering work of Jackson and Schuler (1995), conceived an
6
7 ‘aspirational model’, in which HR professionals need to orchestrate the HRM system
8
9 around organizational (internal) dimensions, while considering a changing (external)
10
11 environment and the need to produce outcomes for both internal and external
12
13 stakeholders. More recent models have advanced an empirical understanding of other
14
15 important aspects (e.g. the mediating role of green HRM practices in response to
16
17 stakeholder pressures: Guerci, Longoni, & Luzzini, 2016).
18
19

20
21 A recent trend is also exploring specific industries (e.g. healthcare: Pinzone,
22
23 Guerci, Lettieri, & Redman, 2016), and providing models to integrate ‘green HRM’
24
25 with other business areas (e.g. HRM linkages with supply chain management: Jabbour
26
27 & Jabbour, 2016).
28
29

30 A succinct examination of these integrative models reveals a growing concern to
31
32 move beyond the identification of a few impactful HRM practices to a more holistic
33
34 consideration of such drivers as a whole, as a body of aligned practices, or through a
35
36 systems-thinking perspective (DuBois & DuBois, 2012). At the same time, the focus
37
38 seems to have shifted from an (essentially) internal one, often emphasizing concerns
39
40 around compliance (e.g. Shen, 2011), to one that aims to deal with *both* the internal and
41
42 external *business* context of the firm (DuBois & DuBois, 2012). There is, then, a
43
44 growing interest in engaging with internal and external stakeholders, and in
45
46 understanding their pressures, including growing ones from customers (Guerci et al.,
47
48 2016). Calls to increase efforts around measurement (Cohen, 2010), the crucial
49
50 importance of leadership’s commitment (Cohen et al., 2012; SHRM, 2011; Jackson et
51
52 al., 2014), and the relevancy of *organizational culture* and *organizational learning*
53
54 (Jabbour & Jabbour, 2016), appear as recurrent themes across the literature. There
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3 seems to be consensus about the idea that social and environmental issues need to be
4
5 *embedded* across the firm (Haugh & Talwar, 2010).
6

7
8 Furthermore, much of the ‘sustainable HRM’ literature seems to assume many
9
10 of the tenets found in *strategic HRM* and therefore aims to understand HRM’s potential
11
12 to help the strategic *foci* of the firm and its *competitive advantage* through SR/ES
13
14 (Alcaraz, Hollander, & Navarra, in press; Jackson et al., 2014). However, there has been
15
16 little engagement with influential frameworks around SR/ES, such as Porter and
17
18 Kramer’s (2011) concept of shared value creation, and the conceptual lenses proposed
19
20 by these authors to help organizations *focus on* and identify the social and
21
22 environmental issues closely aligned with the core business of the firm.
23
24

25
26 In recent years, underlying notions of ‘sustainability’ or ‘sustainable
27
28 development’ in these integrative models seem to have gained refinement and depth
29
30 (e.g. DuBois & DuBois, 2012). Some of these efforts have come with a call for HRM
31
32 managers to understand key notions about ‘green competence’ (Subramanian,
33
34 Abdulrahman, Wu, & Nath, 2016), although the field (as with many other disciplines
35
36 within management) seems to be disconnected from important sustainability
37
38 developments from the natural sciences, such as the work on social-ecological systems
39
40 and *ecosystems’ resilience* (Whiteman, Walker, & Perego, 2013), and from more critical
41
42 approaches to growth and ‘*flourishing*’ within ecological limits (Jackson, 2009). What
43
44 these recent developments have in common is that they highlight not merely the
45
46 *biophysical* dependencies of organizations, but also the many *services* (provisioning,
47
48 ecologically-regulating, supporting, and cultural) offered by ecosystems (Walker,
49
50 Holling, Carpenter, & Kinzig, 2004). These developments also emphasize the need to
51
52 understand different (place and time) scales, and the need to allow multiple stakeholders
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3 to benefit from those services - *participating* meaningfully and creatively in the life of
4
5 organizations in less ecologically-demanding ways (Jackson, 2011).
6

7
8 Although the above-mentioned integrative models should certainly be
9
10 welcomed, it is our view that sometimes their complexity (e.g. Jackson et al., 2014) may
11
12 hamper theory translation into action and change. In addition, many of these models
13
14 tend to focus on the social *or* environmental agendas (not both). A modified or
15
16 expanded version of Ulrich and Brockbank's (2005) HR Value Proposition integrative
17
18 model is one that, in our view, can add to those efforts and help advance HRM's SR/ES
19
20 involvement.
21
22

23
24 ***The quest for an HR Value Proposition that advances the social and***
25
26 ***environmental agenda***
27

28
29 The HR Value Proposition has a strategic orientation, and is organized around five key
30
31 factors. It assumes that HRM can only deliver value to organizations (Ulrich &
32
33 Brockbank, 2005) by (factor one) understanding deeply the *external business realities*,
34
35 i.e. the forces (e.g. regulatory, technological and economic) affecting the firm, and
36
37 connecting those 'to the day-to-day work' (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005, p. 11). In this
38
39 outside/in approach, HR professionals (factor two) need to broad the spectrum of
40
41 *stakeholders* with whom to interact in order to deliver clear outcomes in areas that those
42
43 stakeholders value the most (e.g. reputation for investors, customer connectivity for the
44
45 *key* customers of the firm etc.). To this end, HRM professionals need to carefully select
46
47 (factor three) from their broad '*menu*' of *practices*, which for the purpose of synthesis
48
49 may be organized (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005) into four categories: *people* (staffing,
50
51 training, development), *performance* (setting standards, allocating rewards, providing
52
53 feedback), *information* (outside-in and inside-out oriented) and *workflow* (who does the
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3 work, and how and where the work is done). A value-creation agenda, therefore,
4
5 requires *HRM resources* for the HRM organization and strategy (factor four) and *HRM*
6
7 *professionalism*, such as roles, competences and development (factor five), to be
8
9 orchestrated smoothly.
10

11
12 Although neither the original model nor subsequent "developments" are
13
14 particularly centred on SR/ES (which is mentioned only in passing in Ulrich, Allen,
15
16 Brockbank, Younger, & Nyman, 2009; Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010), that work - in its
17
18 elegance, scope and simplicity - contains what we see as powerful conceptual guidance
19
20 to help HRM cope with SR/ES agendas and to continue translating ideas into action and
21
22 change (Ulrich, 2005). In our research we dealt with all five factors in the HR Value
23
24 Proposition, but condensed factors four and five into one that we named '*HRM*
25
26 *organization and roles*' as, in our view, this offers a simpler and more intuitive
27
28 conception. Embracing the outside/in approach of the model, this slightly adapted
29
30 version guided our empirical exploration. Our approach acknowledges the crucial issues
31
32 that exist concerning SR/ES and internal staff (and the mutually reinforcing feedback
33
34 that sustainability agendas may bring, as is now well documented in the literature: see
35
36 Collier & Esteban, 2007). However, as mentioned previously, in this research, we
37
38 explicitly adopted an *external* focus – exploring the managers' accounts concerning the
39
40 mobilization of both internal and external stakeholders, including employees, to provide
41
42 external outcomes. We present our empirical method next.
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48 49 **Empirical and Analytical Approach**

50 51 52 ***Data Collection***

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55 Our empirical data was obtained from qualitative, semi-structured, in-depth interviews
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57 in twenty eight hospitality firms in three countries (Spain, the Dominican Republic and
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1
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3 Costa Rica). Firms were selected for their commitment to SR/ES, as evidenced by their
4
5 annual reports, FTSE Index membership, local press articles and awards, certifications
6
7 (e.g. Green Globe, Right Forest, Earth Check, Biosphere), and activity in sustainability
8
9 networks (e.g. World Business Council for Sustainable Development, United Nations
10
11 Global Compact, International Tourism Partnership). (See sample description in Table
12
13 2, in which names have been anonymized).

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16 [Table 2 near here]
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21 Ours is a purposeful, *non-probability* sampling logic (Glaser & Strauss, 1967;
22
23 Patton, 2002; Gobo, 2004) that, together with *convenience and practicality* (Gobo,
24
25 2004), would allow us to reach this number of organizations. Our research, therefore,
26
27 does not seek *statistical* representativeness or generalizability but, like other research
28
29 with qualitative foundations, it seeks an *in-depth examination* of a relevant phenomenon
30
31 - in this case, the accounts of our interviewees concerning not only the *what* but also the
32
33 *why* and the *how* (Kupers, Revees, & Levinson, 2008) of their SR/ES efforts.

34
35
36 In each of these firms we held several (face to face) interviews, one with the
37
38 most senior manager dealing with HR (twenty six interviews in total) and another with
39
40 the person in charge of social responsibility and/or environmental sustainability (when
41
42 these were not directly the responsibility of the HR staff). A total of *thirty six interviews*
43
44 were held: thirteen in the Dominican Republic, thirteen in Spain and ten in Costa Rica.
45
46 Interviews were all conducted by the authors of this paper located in those three
47
48 countries, during several phases: initially in 2012-2013, and then a second stage in
49
50 2014, which allowed us an opportunity for further enquiry and exploration of key
51
52 issues, as these emerged from the first phase, plus further refinement of our analytical
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54 'lens'.
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3 We obtained the interviewees' written consent to audio-tape the interviews,
4 provided that we maintained anonymity. All interviews lasted between one and two
5 hours, were conducted in Spanish, audio-taped, and transcribed verbatim (the quotes
6 here are translations). The first three authors were involved in random checks to
7 maximize transcript accuracy, and most transcriptions were offered to the interviewees
8 for their "validation". The interview guiding questions were based on our adaptation of
9 Ulrich and Brockbank's (2005) HR Value Proposition model (see Table 3 for our
10 interview guide).

11
12 [Table 3 near here]

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 **Data Analysis**

25
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27 Our analysis relies on a *mixed methods* approach (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner,
28 2007; Molina-Azorín & Font, 2016) as we performed thematic and content analysis of
29 our interview transcripts in addition to a counting and 'rating' exercise, as we explain
30 next.

31
32
33 We first identified themes through the recognition of regularities, consistency
34 and commonalities (following guidelines such as those offered by Guba, 1978; Miles &
35 Huberman, 1984; and Ryan & Bernard, 2003). A template analysis (partially inspired by
36 King, 2004) was used, and three forms were produced in order to code and agglutinate
37 the data into the four key dimensions of our adapted Ulrich and Brockbank (2005)
38 model, to specify the appearances of concrete HRM practices (around people,
39 performance, information and work), and to detect mis/alignments between the HR
40 professional and other interviewees in the organization (if any).

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43 The first three signing authors of this paper read through the transcripts
44 independently and were involved in the analytical exercise. A recursive, iterative,
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3 triangulating process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Molina-Azorín & Font, 2016) allowed us
4
5 to share views, refine topics and subcategories, ensure cohesiveness among the analysts,
6
7 and thereby enhance the validity of inferences or the ‘trustworthiness’ of the findings
8
9 (Denzin, 1978). The first author led the key aspects of the process. An example of our
10
11 coding application (overarching themes, interpretative code and quotes) is offered in
12
13 Table 4.

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16 [Table 4 near here]
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20
21 Inspired by the mixed-methods approach of Gond et al. (2011), we also counted
22
23 the “appearances” of the main activities reported in each interview (in order to infer
24
25 percentages of organizations being involved in those activities), plus we also rated firms
26
27 based on (the first three authors’ assessment of) their apparent ‘sophistication’. This
28
29 resulted in the identification of two broad categories of firms: those who described
30
31 ample, compelling, rich activities in each of the four dimensions, outlining clear HR
32
33 links to business, social and environmental issues, were classified as ‘Advanced’ (seven
34
35 organizations), while the rest were considered ‘Active’ (see Table 5).
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37

38
39 [Table 5 near here]
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43 Ontologically and epistemologically, our approach relies on *Social-*
44
45 *Constructionism*, a perspective that recognizes the social and processual nature of
46
47 human knowledge and its manifestation in *discourses and narratives* as spoken or
48
49 written ‘texts’ (Gergen, 2015) that may shape, translate or influence action (van
50
51 Leeuwen, 2008).
52

53
54 We are obviously aware that crucial socio-cultural, economic, regulatory and
55
56 other *forces*, among others, must be influencing the firms of our study (e.g. European
57
58
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60

1
2
3 and national policies on energy in the case of Spain, the National Strategy for
4
5 Development in the Dominican Republic, or the Costa Rican Sustainability Touristic
6
7 Certificate), as well as regulative, normative and cognitive elements (Palthe, 2014)
8
9 within the organizations themselves.
10

11 We certainly acknowledge that contextual and comparative factors, plus actions
12
13 *beyond* the discourse, also need to be the object of examination. However, we focused
14
15 entirely on the narratives of our participants and did *not* seek to examine *anything*
16
17 *beyond the texts of our participants*. Embracing the key tenets of *social-*
18
19 *constructionism*, we examined those additional factors *only* if they “found their way”
20
21 (Burr, 2003; Gergen, 2015) into the *narratives* of our interviewees. This can be seen as
22
23 a limitation of our study (more positivistic traditions would see it this way), but from a
24
25 social-constructionist perspective interviewees’ accounts are considered as discourse
26
27 elements revealing perceptions and rationales that deserve analytical attention *per se*, as
28
29 they can provide valuable insights.
30
31
32
33

34 The following section presents our main findings.
35
36

37 **Findings**

38
39
40 Education, health and infrastructure-support were the *social* areas on which most of our
41
42 HR managers reported focusing their efforts. Internal employees and other stakeholders
43
44 were mobilized to support the surrounding communities, their schools and hospitals, or
45
46 their local culture (e.g. local craftwork and arts). Recycling and waste management,
47
48 together with energy and water savings, were the *environmental* activities more
49
50 commonly reported. We present our findings next, organizing these around our (slightly
51
52 modified) HR Value Proposition model (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005).
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Dimension I: Approaches to business and social/environmental issues

As shown in Table 4, we identified three essential approaches taken by the managers we interviewed. In the *philanthropic approach*, SR/ES issues were seen by HR managers as relating to altruistic purposes (employees' volunteering for projects, giving goods etc.), and often were pictured as dispersed, isolated initiatives. In a second approach, SR/ES were seen as opportunities to '*maximize efficiency*', and HRM was oriented towards supporting employees in the search for economic savings in the firm's operations (e.g. reducing energy and water consumption). In a third, *strategic orientation*, mostly found within the *Advanced* group of firms, HR managers made frequent linkages between external (social and environmental, and less frequently economic) issues and internal HRM practices. They would refer in depth to the (tourism and hospitality) industry challenges, as well as the key SR/ES issues affecting it (such as the increasing trend in which 'guests select certain hotels to stay at because they are green hotels' (H27). The accounts of the managers in this group often revealed deep concerns regarding the development of nearby communities, elaborated on rising trends, and emphasized the dependence of their businesses on the health of ecosystems, highlighting problems such as 'the increasing coastal erosion and the disappearing coral reefs that have devastating effects on our beaches' (H06).

Dimension II. Collaborating with (internal and external) stakeholders

Our data suggested three main types of interactions between HR managers and several other stakeholders (Figure 1).

[Figure 1 near here]

Materially-based interactions: Hotels offered *economic* support (donations, investments, sponsorships etc.) or tangible *goods* (food, beverages, medicine,

1
2
3 construction materials etc.). Some hotels reported acting as mediators, distributing the
4
5 goods provided (e.g. from customers or the employees themselves) to external
6
7 social/environmental causes.
8

9
10 *Knowledge-based interactions:* Participants reported getting involved with
11
12 several other stakeholders to generate *ideas and solutions*. Some of these interactions
13
14 relied on inter-department committees, and occasionally these involved competitors in
15
16 the industry ('each month the committee meets with HR members of different hotels,
17
18 then we share common and good practices' (H14).
19

20
21 *Action-based interactions:* Participants reported involving internal stakeholders
22
23 (e.g. executives and employees) and external ones (e.g. customers, other hotels,
24
25 foundations, and nearby communities) in multiple externally-oriented programs. These
26
27 ranged from discrete, occasional activities pursuing "one-shot" results, such as
28
29 'organizing a cleaning day with the community and nearby hotels' (H16), to capacity-
30
31 building efforts (e.g. for targeted populations such as young vulnerable women).
32
33

34
35 We found a range of engagement with these three types of interactions. At one
36
37 extreme our participants seemed to interact almost exclusively with employees. At the
38
39 other extreme they reported interacting with a larger group of stakeholders, involving
40
41 social or pro-environmental groups, creating new associations, or championing industry
42
43 forums.
44
45

46 ***Dimension III. Crafting HRM practices***

47
48
49 In this subsection we present our findings regarding what Ulrich and Brockbank (2005)
50
51 describe as a 'menu' of HRM choices concerned with their *people, performance,*
52
53 *information* and *workflow* dimensions.
54
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1
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3 *People*
4

5 *Induction.* Less than thirty per cent of our interviewees reported including
6 explicitly some aspects of SR/ES in their induction initiatives. Intriguingly, on a few
7 occasions, our research questions triggered some reflection about this – ‘now that you
8 ask...I am going to take this as something to introduce in our induction programs’
9
10 (H13).
11
12
13

14
15
16 *Recruitment and Selection.* Similarly, around thirty per cent of our participants
17 mentioned including specific aspects of SR/ES here: ‘we measure the sensibility of the
18 candidate towards social responsibility issues’ (H19).
19
20
21

22
23 *Training.* Around eighty per cent of the participants claimed to have some type
24 of training for SR/ES, often to build employees’ awareness and skills at work, or to
25 facilitate the transfer of such awareness and skills to their ‘homes and at the time of
26 educating their kids’ (H06).
27
28
29
30

31
32 *Performance appraisal.* Less than fifty per cent of our HR participants claimed
33 to have clear, comprehensive, performance-appraisal (individual or group) practices or
34 components tied to SR/ES. Those that were described to us by the participants seemed
35 lightly articulated around the guidelines established by headquarters, tour operators or
36 certifying agencies. They often appeared as “loose” - rather than reflecting clearly set
37 standards woven into employees’ performance appraisal systems. The following
38 sentence reflects what we often encountered: ‘I cannot say yet that we have impact
39 indicators... We are working on that, we are aware that at the end of the day indicators
40 do speak’ (H13).
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51
52 *Compensation Management.* Linking compensation to SR/ES results was
53 reported by just a few participants (all in the *Advanced* category), for whom ‘the
54 performance results [on SR/ES] do affect directly the variable compensation of the
55
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1
2
3 employee' (H11). Usually we were told things along the following lines: 'the results of
4
5 performance assessment are not yet linked to salary (we will do this in the future)'
6
7 (H05).
8

9
10 *Information.* The majority of participants commented on the opportunities
11
12 offered by SR/ES to 'help the firm become a trustable one' (H12). Also, many
13
14 managers commented along the following lines: 'In HR we need to make sure that this
15
16 information reaches people and that everybody understands the same' (H18). In the
17
18 *Advanced* hotels, participants reported using a broader mix of communication tools and
19
20 having a clear aim to 'foster a sense of belonging' (H03) [in the workforce].
21
22

23
24 *Work Design.* Our sample was selected from organizations which had shown
25
26 evidence of having some engagement with SR/ES, so most firms were expected to have
27
28 some relevant internal mechanisms and dedicated items in the organizational and HRM
29
30 processes. These usually related to certifying requirements and, to a lesser extent, to
31
32 strategic plans established by headquarters: 'the strategic plan of social responsibility
33
34 has the purpose to integrate CSR in the group policies and in all levels of decision
35
36 making' (H09). But, notoriously, less than twenty per cent of the HR respondents
37
38 mentioned having fully-dedicated and well-defined budgets to support the SR/ES
39
40 agenda of their firms. As per the participants' accounts, monetary provision appeared to
41
42 be irregular, and very much dependent on occasional projects or the "flavor of the
43
44 year". Only within the *Advanced* hotels group some HR managers reported having
45
46 annual provisions, tied to concrete projects (and less frequently to concrete measurable
47
48 outcomes).
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3 ***Dimension IV. Organization and Roles of HR managers to engage with the***
4
5 ***SR/ES Agenda***
6
7

8 We identified 4 distinctive roles (see Figure 2).
9

10 [Figure 2 near here]
11
12

13
14
15 *Casual.* In this category, observed in just a few firms, HR managers have an
16 irregular participation in the development and day-to-day operationalization of SR/ES,
17 getting involved only when demands arise.
18
19

20
21 *Supporter.* In this category (around 60%), participants reported being involved
22 in the operational and support execution of SR/ES, but with little influence in its
23 shaping. Interestingly, around sixty per cent of our non-HR experts interviewed
24 lamented that HR managers limited themselves to this “supporter” role.
25
26
27

28
29 *Advisor.* Here, the HR management essentially contributes ‘with its own ideas
30 and proposals’ (H21) in the definition and development of the SR/ES agenda, offering
31 orientation to other departments on how to move SR/ES forward (e.g. from the point of
32 view of employee-related issues).
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39
40 *Strategic Ally.* Here HR experts actively participate in key issues around the
41 SR/ES agenda, in its planning, organization, development and implementation. This
42 seemed to be the case in one third of the organizations: ‘because HR is like the guide, is
43 what leads all departments. Depending on their actions, all the staff will be involved’
44 (H28).
45
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51
52 ***Key differences between "Advanced" and "Active" organizations***
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54

55 In the accounts of participants from the group of ‘Advanced’ firms in our sample, most
56 HR managers referred to SR/ES as part of the organization’s *identity*. Their practices
57
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1
2
3 seemed more aligned with SR/ES issues affecting the business, and these managers
4
5 were more frequently formally responsible for CSR initiatives. Also, the roles of
6
7 *Advisor* and *Strategic Ally* were more common. It is in this group that our HR
8
9 participants seemed to exhibit a more nuanced understanding of the environmental (e.g.
10
11 biophysical, ecosystem) *dependencies* of their organizations, as evidenced in their
12
13 accounts concerning invasive species, biodiversity protection and conservation
14
15 programs – ‘we have a strong mangrove-reforestation program in the bay, where we
16
17 offer volunteering activities to expert organizations, guests and groups every year. In
18
19 summer, we receive guests who work as volunteers.’ (H06). Overall, HRM efforts
20
21 seemed more ambitious, e.g. striving to move from "small wins" to larger projects - ‘we
22
23 have created a cultural program to sensitize employees, the notion of commitment to
24
25 work, care and preservation was created here by our HR and then generalized
26
27 everywhere else’ (H07). Some HR managers in this group reported on efforts to help
28
29 “micro-entrepreneurs” and local small businesses (e.g. transportation, furniture and food
30
31 providers), and others commented on their *social funds*. In this group HR managers
32
33 reported being more concerned about the *development* and socio-economic level of the
34
35 locations/regions where their hotels were established, and more intent on “activating”
36
37 employees accordingly.
38
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43 The group of ‘*Active*’ organizations reported a variety of SR/ES initiatives, not
44
45 always clearly linked to business needs, and occasional activities seemed more frequent
46
47 than systematic approaches. Most efforts were internally-focused, while interactions
48
49 with stakeholders were more frequent at the "material" level. Social and environmental
50
51 initiatives were reported as being more dependent on, and subject to, the “economic
52
53 moment” of the firm.
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Key differences between Spain, The Dominican Republic and Costa Rica

As stated previously, our research approach did not seek to move beyond the narratives of our participants. As expected, the accounts of our interviewees in the Dominican Republic, the least developed country among the three (as evidenced in most indicators in Table 1), revealed more concerns around ‘basic necessities’ such as basic education, hygiene, and safety (several participants reported not recommending guests to ‘get out of the hotel’), and the government was sometimes characterized as “erratic” and unsupportive of SR/ES efforts. Energy saving efforts were seen as a priority. Many of our interviewees in the Dominican Republic also complained about the temporary nature of corporate foreign investment and what they saw as prevalent narrow and short-term industry approaches.

In Costa Rica, the accounts of our interviewees seemed more often related to business priorities, and government efforts were seen as a key driver of the Costa Rican ‘success around sustainable development and local competitiveness’ (H03). Internal and external communication with multiple stakeholders was featured with greater frequency and formality. The inclusion of customers in the hotels' initiatives was often described as a ‘prerequisite’: ‘according to our CST [*Certificación de Sostenibilidad Turística*] we have to involve the external customer. He/she needs to experiment and enter in touch with nature, the culture, so that he/she learns (he is not only here merely to relax)’ (H04).

The accounts given by our participants in Spain indicated that they put a stronger emphasis than our other interviewees on the benefit of engaging with SR/ES to foster corporate brand value and to open up new commercial opportunities.

Requirements from certifying agencies seemed to be influential in all three countries and, in larger firms, the central headquarters (particularly in Spain), were

1
2
3 described as having strong power over subsidiaries. Overall, the analysis of the accounts
4
5 of our participants reveals remarkable similarities in HRM's involvement in SR/ES, in
6
7 which *training* and *communication* were seen as the “favourite” HRM tools.
8

9
10 Interestingly, the commitment of the owner or CEO as the key SR/ES driver was
11
12 mentioned with more emphasis in the locally-owned, smaller hotels, where the
13
14 narratives placed more importance on fostering local development - in all three
15
16 countries.
17

18 19 20 **Discussion, a proposed model and practical implications**

21
22 From an *optimistic* perspective, the analysis of the narratives of our participants
23
24 (particularly those of our “advanced” firms) reveals multiple efforts to be celebrated.
25
26 However, from a *critical* perspective, our results seem to coincide with the conclusions
27
28 of Jackson et al. (2011) and Zibarras and Coan (2015), suggesting that HR managers
29
30 may not be deploying the full potential of their expertise and practices (Zappala, 2004)
31
32 to support a SR/ES agenda. It seems that efforts to align HRM practices with SR/ES
33
34 aims are not always clearly articulated, a finding similar to those reported by Jabbour,
35
36 Santos, and Nagano (2010) in their Brazilian study.
37
38
39

40
41 It is worth remarking that the sample of this study was (already) composed of
42
43 firms for which we had some evidence of their SR/ES commitment. However, our
44
45 findings coincide with Jackson et al.'s (2014, p. 40) view that many HR professionals
46
47 seem not to be embracing ‘active roles in companies striving to achieve environmental
48
49 sustainability’. For us, the fact that fewer than twenty per cent of our participants
50
51 mentioned having fully-dedicated and *well-defined budgets* for their SR/ES-related
52
53 initiatives reflects a true challenge for HR professionals’ capacity to become *agents of*
54
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1
2
3 *change* and move beyond casual and supporting roles towards those of advisor or
4
5 strategic ally.
6

7 In our sample, the limited alignment with, and usage of, some HRM practices
8
9 (such as *performance appraisal* and *compensation* and *rewards* management, which
10
11 may be crucial for SR/ES purposes: see Berrone & Gomez-Mejia, 2009) seems to us
12
13 particularly significant. Despite the well-known HR wisdom that maintains that people
14
15 do what they are rewarded for, many of our respondents seem to be trapped in the
16
17 “folly” of ‘hoping for A but rewarding for B’ (Kerr, 1975). In fact, several non-HR
18
19 participants in this study (particularly sustainability managers) vehemently maintained
20
21 the need for HRM professionals to become much more active agents and to include
22
23 sustainability-related criteria in performance and compensation practices for all levels
24
25 of the organization and ‘not just at the executive level’ (H15, sustainability manager).
26
27 Also, explicit efforts to assess SR/ES initiatives were rarely reported, and our findings
28
29 coincide with those of Zibarras and Coan (2015), suggesting that only a very small
30
31 percentage of organizations actually evaluate HRM practices to determine their relative
32
33 success in promoting pro-environmental outcomes.
34
35
36
37

38 Particularly surprisingly was the (overall) limited attention that the role of
39
40 leadership and line-managers received in the narratives of our participants, despite
41
42 evidence of their importance in SR/ES agendas (Alcaraz, Hollander, & Navarra, in
43
44 press). Similarly, a multitude of practices within Ulrich and Brockbank’s (2005) *People*
45
46 dimension (such as coaching, development, and promotion or termination policies) were
47
48 never mentioned by our interviewees, which may indicate untapped opportunities. Other
49
50 practices such as induction and recruitment seemed to be only superficially used,
51
52 despite their value in the sustainability agenda (Subramanian et al., 2016). Also,
53
54
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1
2
3 comprehensive training efforts, beyond the prevalent and frequent aim of “sensitizing”
4
5 employees, were not frequently reported.
6

7 For most of our participants, engagement with stakeholders translated into
8
9 interactions with just *a few* actors. Very rarely would our participants report on
10
11 *systematic* collaborations with a myriad of actors, such as external customers, whose
12
13 role is seen as increasingly important by Ulrich and Brockbank (2005) in helping HRM
14
15 departments to shape *their own* practices, or collaborations with industry associations or
16
17 *clusters* for local development (“non traditional” partnerships including NGOs,
18
19 competitors, social entrepreneurs, governments etc.) whose role in the SR/ES agenda is
20
21 particularly promising (Kramer & Pfitzer, 2016).
22
23

24
25 The use of a limited set of HRM practices, and the moderate engagement with a
26
27 variety of stakeholders, suggest *missed* opportunities. Perhaps more relevant is the fact
28
29 that many HRM efforts seem more isolated or opportunistic than comprehensive, and
30
31 that they sometimes have limited connection to the *core environmental and social*
32
33 *challenges* that are central to the industry and to the regions of our study (Mowforth et
34
35 al., 2008), particularly if these are seen through a long-term lens (Bansal & Knox-
36
37 Hayes, 2013). Overall, the *focus* of the initiatives, and the *strategic* orientation of HRM
38
39 systems to support or foster SR/ES agendas, were not always obvious. A deep
40
41 understanding of social and environmental issues, and a careful prioritization of
42
43 initiatives that would be valued by *external* constituencies or could be translated into
44
45 competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2011), seemed to be rare.
46
47
48
49

50
51 ***An externally-oriented HRM architecture to deliver value for the social and***
52
53 ***environmental agenda***
54

55 In an attempt to contribute to existing theory, and to guide more focused HRM efforts,
56
57 from our analysis of the accounts of our participants and our examination of recent
58
59
60

1
2
3 literature, we propose next an integrative and externally-oriented HRM model. We
4
5 present it here as a conceptual effort aiming to spark further research and scholarly
6
7 discussion (see Figure 3).
8

9
10 [Figure 3 near here]
11

12
13
14 Our model assumes and expands the key tenets of Ulrich and Brockbank's
15
16 (2005) HR Value Proposition. It places particular emphasis on the social and ecological
17
18 trends that may affect the business, and assumes the need to *mobilize* both internal and
19
20 external stakeholders in the search to provide value to external communities, including
21
22 those representing the natural environment (as nature cannot speak for itself). Our
23
24 model proposes an HRM organization that can orchestrate processes and a set of (well-
25
26 prioritized) HRM practices. Expanding on the call of Subramanian et al. (2016) for
27
28 firms and HRM managers to consider ecological knowledge in more comprehensive
29
30 ways, and taking into account Jackson's (2011) understanding of sustainability, our
31
32 model has at its centre three key elements: the *firm's priorities, communities'*
33
34 *flourishing, and ecosystems' resilience*. It embraces the 'triple bottom line' tenets
35
36 (Elkington, 1994), assumes *reinforcing* relations between the three elements, and asserts
37
38 that potential value creation can be fostered *at their intersection*.
39
40
41

42
43 Borrowing the metaphor of 'flourishing' from the influential work of Jackson
44
45 (2011), our model claims that firms *truly* prosper when they nurture *capabilities* that
46
47 allow local societies and nearby communities to develop, have opportunities and find
48
49 meaning and value - within ecological settings and limits. For example, in tourism,
50
51 fostering *inclusive initiatives* can translate into customers receiving meaningful,
52
53 responsible touristic experiences (Camilleri, 2016), along with nearby communities
54
55 getting meaningful opportunities to participate and "have a voice" in organizational
56
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1
2
3 decisions, as well as having economic and employment options, e.g. through small
4
5 businesses - all activities in which HRM's drive can be vital. The metaphor of
6
7 'flourishing' points to more than merely satisfaction (e.g. of customers), and
8
9 transactional or supportive relations with communities. It adds a connotation that is at
10
11 the heart of sustainable development (Jackson, 2011). In this context, HRM managers'
12
13 dialogue with external communities and the understanding of what they see as *value*
14
15 (for them) is a must (Banerjee, 2011).
16
17

18
19 Borrowing from the metaphor that is influencing much recent work on
20
21 sustainability (Whiteman et al., 2013), our model adopts the notion of ecosystems'
22
23 'resilience' (Walker et al., 2004) as their capacity to deal with changes and stress,
24
25 absorb or withstand perturbations, and maintain structure and functions or adapt. The
26
27 nascent research on ecosystems and management (Winn & Pogutz, 2013) reminds us of
28
29 issues concerning organizations' dependence on the biophysical environment, issues
30
31 around biodiversity, and the significance of (time/place) scale: e.g. the small, *local*,
32
33 dimensions of a sandy shore, or the *regional* dimension of a river basin or an estuary.
34
35 More importantly, the research emphasizes the many services that ecosystems provide,
36
37 beyond *goods and services* and *recreational* opportunities (mostly in tourism areas),
38
39 including *supporting* services (e.g. water recycling and water quality) and *regulation*
40
41 services (e.g. climate). In our research, ensuring the resilience of rural ecosystems – e.g.
42
43 forests and coffee plantations in the case of Costa Rica, and coastal ecosystems such as
44
45 coral reefs in Spain and the Dominican Republic - on which tourism activities critically
46
47 depend was seen as vital by several of our participants. The metaphor of 'resilience'
48
49 implies more than simply 'protection of the environment' and brings a much needed
50
51 *systems* perspective, plus a concept that is well known in the domains of HRM
52
53
54
55
56 (Branicki, Steyer, & Sullivan-Taylor, 2016). It also highlights the central role of
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1
2
3 recovery. HRM's dialogue with those representing ecosystems or 'the environment'
4
5 (e.g. NGOs, government departments) is vital here.
6

7
8 The interdependence between ecosystems' and communities' well-being is
9
10 certainly well-documented (Millennium Ecosystems Assessment [MEA], 2005; United
11
12 Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2014). In our study aspects of that
13
14 interdependence were commonly cited by several organizations. For instance, several of
15
16 our respondents pointed out that the protection of mangrove forests in the Dominican
17
18 Republic translates into better coastal protection from erosion and from the effects of
19
20 climate change, more attractive beaches, cleaner water, and richer species habitats, as a
21
22 result of which both nearby fishing communities and tourism itself can flourish.
23

24
25 Aiming organizational efforts *at the intersection* of the three key elements
26
27 mentioned would require HR managers (in any industry) to focus on and identify their
28
29 *firms' priorities in conjunction with* factors that cause *communities to flourish* and
30
31 *ecosystems to be resilient*. We see Figure 3 as an invitation for HR managers to engage
32
33 with these notions so that they can align, *concentrate* and prioritize their SR/ES efforts
34
35 and orchestrate the 'HRM architecture' accordingly. HRM professionals are not alone
36
37 here, and their collaboration with Sustainability managers (Guerci & Pedrini, 2014)
38
39 should be an important item in the coming research agenda.
40
41

42
43 We see these conceptual relations and metaphors as adding to the research
44
45 agenda on HRM's quest to create value around SR/ES, and a contribution to existing
46
47 *integrative* models (e.g. DuBois & DuBois, 2012; Ehnert, 2009; Jackson et al., 2014) in
48
49 their approach to HRM practices, conceived as a necessarily articulated set of *systems*,
50
51 embracing current social/ecological notions, and aiming for a strategic *focus* - efforts
52
53 that should also deal with the (until now only superficially understood) long-term scope
54
55 that should characterize sustainability (Bansal & Knox-Hayes, 2013). We see our
56
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1
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3 contribution as pointing towards the broader ‘shared value creation agenda’ of Porter
4
5 and Kramer (2011), which is still under-researched and in need of further exploration in
6
7 the scholarly literature of HRM.
8

9
10 Practical implications resulting from our research and suggested model may,
11
12 therefore, lead to HR managers dealing with questions such as the following: To what
13
14 extent do we understand the business context of the firm and how social-ecological
15
16 trends may affect it (now and in the future)? To what extent are we mobilizing both
17
18 internal and external stakeholders to engage meaningfully with the social communities
19
20 and ecosystems on which our business may have the greatest dependencies? To what
21
22 extent are our HRM practices and organization targeting efforts that may translate into
23
24 social and environmental value and resilience? How can we prioritize a few, more
25
26 meaningful, initiatives? How can we adopt robust and effective practices (e.g. around
27
28 performance appraisal, rewards and recognition)? How can we assume more pro-active,
29
30 championing roles in this field?
31
32

33 34 35 **Concluding remarks** 36

37
38 In this paper we have aimed to explore the activities reported by HR managers in firms
39
40 with SR/ES agendas, through the lens of a (slightly modified) HR value creation model
41
42 originally outlined by Ulrich and Brockbank (2005). Embracing Banerjee’s (2011)
43
44 concerns to examine not only input-driven but also output-focused sustainability
45
46 agendas, our empirical (mixed-methods) exploration adopted the *external* focus
47
48 identified by Kramar (2014) as ‘promoting social and environmental health’. From our
49
50 findings and the literature, we have engaged in a theoretical exercise, crafting another
51
52 model aiming to help HRM managers in the quest to *focus* efforts on the intersection of
53
54 their firms’ priorities, communities’ flourishing needs, and ecosystems’ resilience.
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3 Our efforts should certainly be complemented with probability samples (Gobo,
4 2004) and should move beyond the discourse of individuals to examine the institutional
5 and organizational characteristics that definitely influence HRM's involvement in
6 SR/ES. But perhaps the biggest limitation of our research is captured in Ulrich's (2005)
7 statement that "value is defined by the receiver more than the giver"; it is the eyes of the
8 beholder which may see (or not) value. On this assumption, further research will need to
9 take into account not merely the (often privileged) voices of managers or executives,
10 but also the views and perceptions of external stakeholders, plus (those representing)
11 concrete ecosystems. In other words, beyond normative claims that HR is central to
12 sustainability (Jabbour & Santos, 2008a), and beyond HR managers' claims, the true
13 value of HRM activities – their impact on social and environmental realms - will be
14 determined by others. This will be crucial to advancing and securing SR/ES agendas.
15 Perhaps this important journey has just started.
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Table 1. Data on the travel, tourism and hospitality industry of Spain, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica

Country Data on Travel and Tourism and Hospitality	Spain	Dominican Republic	Costa Rica
% Travel and Tourism over Total GDP, 2013 (WTTC 2014)	15.7	15.3	12.1
% Tourism Employment over Total Employment 2013 (WTTC,2014)	15.8	14	11.5
International tourist arrivals in 2013 (in thousands) (UNWTO, 2014)	60.661	4.690	2.428
US \$ (millions) generated by international tourists in 2013 (UNWTO, 2014)	60.435	5.065	24.827
Tourism/Visitors as % of Total Exports in 2013 (WTTC, 2014)	13.7	35.3	14.2
Number of hotels (INE, 2013; BCCR, 2013; ICT, 2013)	14.822	700	2.515
Number of rooms (Banca March, 2012, Asonahores 2014, ICT, 2013)	1.800.000	60.000	46.633
Ranking in Environmental Performance Index (Yale University, 2014)	7	75	54
Travel and Tourism Competitive Index (World Economic Forum, 2013)	4	86	47
Corruption Perceptions Index (2014)	37	115	47
Human Development Index ranking (UNDP, 2013)	27	102	68

Table 2. Sample description

Hotel's name	Interviews held in	Firm's origin	Operations	Profiles Interv.	Type	Size	Evidence of SR/ES Commitment
<i>NuevaHosp</i>	Spain	USA	Intl	HR	Urban	<250	Green Key Awards
<i>Paraisos</i>	Spain	Spain	Intl	HR & CSR	Beach-City	> 250	Green Globe & EarthCheck Certification, National Environmental Reward
<i>Bellevs</i>	Costa Rica	USA	Intl	HR	City	<250	Certification Sustainable Tourism, Blue Flag Ecological Program
<i>Uniones</i>	Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Loc	HR	Rural	<50	Certification in Sustainable Tourism, Member of Cayuga Sustainable Luxury Hotels
<i>Carolina</i>	Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Loc	HR & Sust.	Rural	<50	Certification in Sustainable Tourism, Blue Flag Ecological Program
<i>Berrores</i>	Dom. Rep.	Dom. Rep.	Loc	HR & Sust.	Beach	<250	Caribbean Gold Coast Award
<i>Mjis</i>	Dom. Rep.	Spain	Intl	HR & Sust.	Beach	<250	Blue Flag Certification, Crystal Apple & Golden Apple Awards
<i>Doles</i>	Spain	Spain	Intl	HR & Sust.	Beach	> 250	Green Globe Certification, ECPAT & World Code of Ethics of WTO
<i>Nuevo</i>	Spain	Spain	Intl	CSR	Beach	> 250	ISO 14001, Member of Code ECPAT
<i>Viejos</i>	Spain	USA	Intl	HR	City	> 250	ISO 14001:2004, Sustainability Report, Unicef Partner Award
<i>GeneLos</i>	Spain	Spain	Intl	HR	Urban	> 250	ISO 50001 & ISO 14001 Certification, Green Key Certification, GRI A+
<i>Pedrosa</i>	Dom. Rep.	Spain	Intl	HR	Urban	<250	ISO 14001, Biosphere Certification, EMAS European Regulation
<i>Canteras</i>	Dom. Rep.	Dom.	Loc	HR	Beach	>	Partnerships for

			Rep.				250	Social Development Initiatives
	<i>Dorotea</i>	Dom. Rep.	USA	Intl	HR & CSR	City	> 250	LEED, Member of Hospitality Sustainable P. Consortium
	<i>Verdes</i>	Spain	Spain	Intl	HR	Beach-City	> 250	ISO 14001, Biosphere Certification, EMAS European Regulation
	<i>QuintaEs</i>	Dom. Rep.	England	Intl	HR	City	<250	Sustainability Report
	<i>Horas</i>	Spain	Spain	Loc	HR	Beach	> 250	Travelife Gold Award
	<i>Remeros</i>	Costa Rica	USA	Intl	HR & Sust.	City	> 250	Sustainability Report, LEED Certification, Partnerships for Sustainable Development
	<i>Pedrerasa</i>	Dom. Rep.	Spain	Intl	HR	Beach	> 250	Blue Flag & Green Globe Certifications
	<i>Hospitalidades</i>	Costa Rica	USA	Intl	Mkt & Sales	City	<250	Certification in Sustainable Tourism
	<i>Romeros</i>	Spain	USA	Intl	HR & Sust.	City	<250	Sustainability Report, LEED Certification, Partnerships for Sustainable Development
	<i>Azules</i>	Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Loc	HR	Beach	<250	Certification in Sustainable Tourism
	<i>Playas</i>	Costa Rica	USA	Intl	HR	Beach	> 250	ISO 14001:2004, Sustainability Report, Unicef Partner Award
	<i>Dondes</i>	Costa Rica	USA	Intl	HR	Beach	> 250	ISO 14001:2004, Sustainability Report, Unicef Partner Award
	<i>Carabelas</i>	Spain	Spain	Intl	HR	Beach-City	> 250	Green Globe & Blue Flag Certifications
	<i>Dominicos</i>	Dom. Rep.	Spain	Intl	HR	Beach	> 250	Sustainability Report, Great Place to Work
	<i>Guia</i>	Dom. Rep.	USA	Intl	HR	City	> 250	Sustainability Report, ISO 14001 & 50001
	<i>Parques</i>	Dom. Rep.	Spain	Intl	HR	Beach	> 250	Blue Flag Certification

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3 Table 3. Interview protocol and guiding questions
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5 Protocol
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7 Introduction: Participants, research focus, rationale, overview, etc.
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9 Discussion on key research issues (e.g. deliverables)
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11 Ethical issues, permission and context and country issues.
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16 Guiding questions:
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18 How do you *conceive* social responsibility and environmental sustainability? To what
19 extent and how are they relevant for both your industry and your firm?
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22 How is the firm *dealing with issues or priorities* (if any) around social responsibility and
23 environmental sustainability?
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25

26 What is *the role of the HR department* in dealing with social responsibility and
27 environmental sustainability? What are the main efforts, activities, projects...and the main
28 "drivers" for those? (Please describe briefly)
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32 To what extent and how is the HR department engaging with both internal and external
33 *stakeholders* to materialize social and environmental initiatives? What are the main efforts,
34 activities, projects...? (Please describe briefly)
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38 What are the key *HRM practices* used to foster social responsibility and environmental
39 sustainability - e.g. recruitment, induction, training, performance appraisal, compensation,
40 development plans, etc? How are these used, if at all? (please describe briefly each).
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44 In your view, what are the main *positive impacts* up to date?
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48 How do you see the linkage between social responsibility or environmental sustainability,
49 and the *organizational culture* of the firm?
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53 How is the HR department *organizing and resourcing* itself for social responsibility and
54 environmental sustainability?
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What are the *main gaps*, weaknesses ... and where do you see the *highest potential* for HRM to make a meaningful contribution on social and environmental issues?

For Peer Review Only

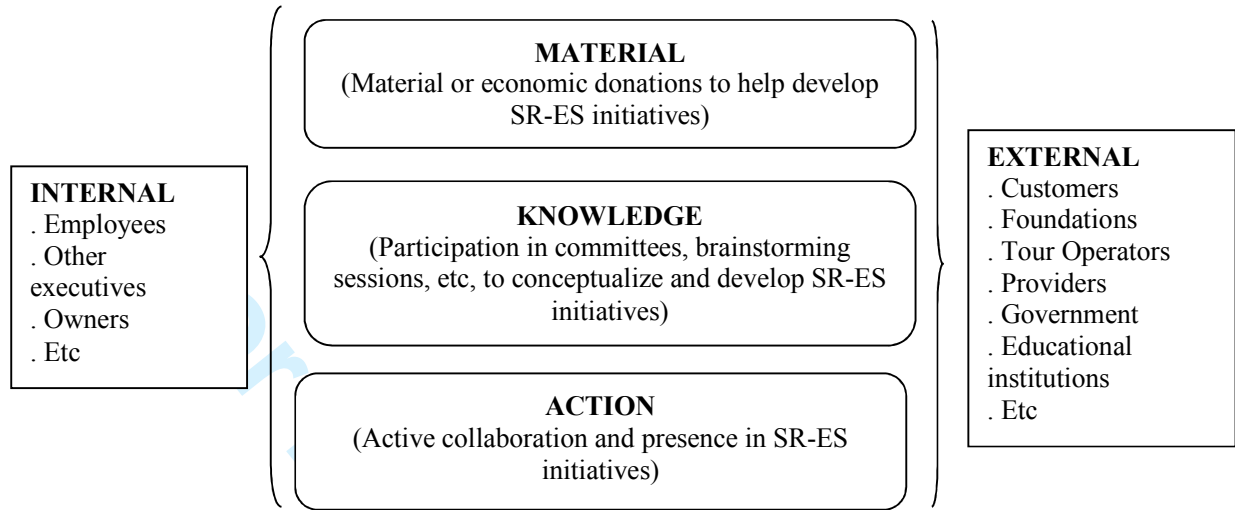
Table 4. Examples of coding application

Overarching theme	Interpretative code	Quote
Dimension I: Approaches to business and social & environmental issues	<i>Approach</i>	
	Philanthropic	‘After the earthquake we sold ice cream in order to obtain money for the community’ (H10) ‘We ask employees to make a donation for UNICEF (...) or for other causes’ (H10)
	Efficiency maximizers	‘Sustainability is all the efforts that the corporation makes for saving resources that, at the end, have an impact on the environment and the surrounding communities.’ (H27)
	Strategic orientation	[SR] ‘constitutes a crucial dimension of the strategy, a central element of our business’ (H03). [SR/ES] ‘it is part of the strategy and mission statement of the company, cascading down to the rest of the hotels in the chain.’ (H01).

Table 5. Firms' distribution by category

Codigo	Category	1 Business and social/environmental Approaches	2. Stakeholders	3. Crafting HR practices	4. Internal Organization and Roles of HR	Mean
H01	Advanced	3.00	4.88	3.83	5.00	4.18
H02	Advanced	4.00	4.13	4.38	4.25	4.19
H03	Advanced	5.00	4.38	4.50	4.75	4.66
H04	Advanced	5.00	4.63	4.83	4.75	4.80
H05	Advanced	4.50	3.88	3.63	5.00	4.25
H06	Advanced	5.00	4.75	3.83	3.75	4.33
H07	Advanced	5.00	4.88	5.00	4.75	4.91
H08	Active	2.75	2.88	1.29	3.25	2.54
H09	Active	1.75	2.75	3.50	2.50	2.63
H10	Active	2.50	2.75	2.42	2.50	2.54
H11	Active	4.00	3.38	3.04	3.75	3.54
H12	Active	3.25	3.25	3.17	3.00	3.17
H13	Active	2.00	3.13	2.88	2.25	2.56
H14	Active	3.25	3.13	3.38	2.75	3.13
H15	Active	4.00	3.17	3.50	3.75	3.60
H16	Active	3.50	2.63	2.88	2.25	2.81
H17	Active	1.00	1.13	1.00	1.00	1.03
H18	Active	2.50	2.00	2.00	2.25	2.19
H19	Active	1.00	2.38	1.00	1.25	1.41
H20	Active	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
H21	Active	2.00	1.88	2.13	1.50	1.88
H22	Active	2.50	2.75	2.96	1.00	2.30
H23	Active	1.50	1.13	2.00	1.00	1.41
H24	Active	1.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.19
H25	Active	1.75	2.50	2.00	1.50	1.94
H26	Active	1.75	2.50	2.50	2.25	2.25
H27	Active	1.75	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.94
H28	Active	1.00	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.38

Figure 1. HR managers' interactions with (internal and external) stakeholders in the SR/ES agenda



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Figure 2. HR managers' roles in the SR-ES agenda.

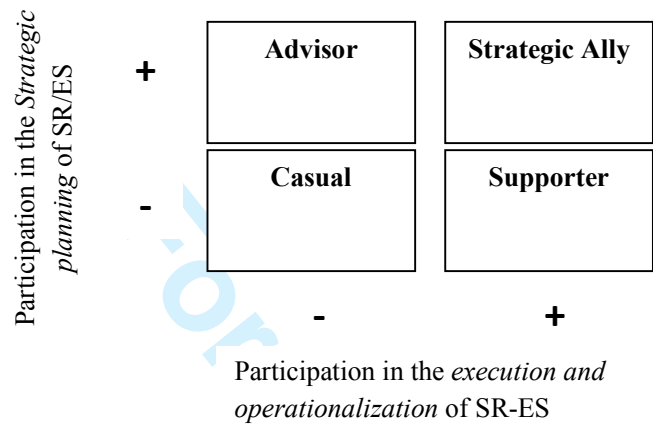
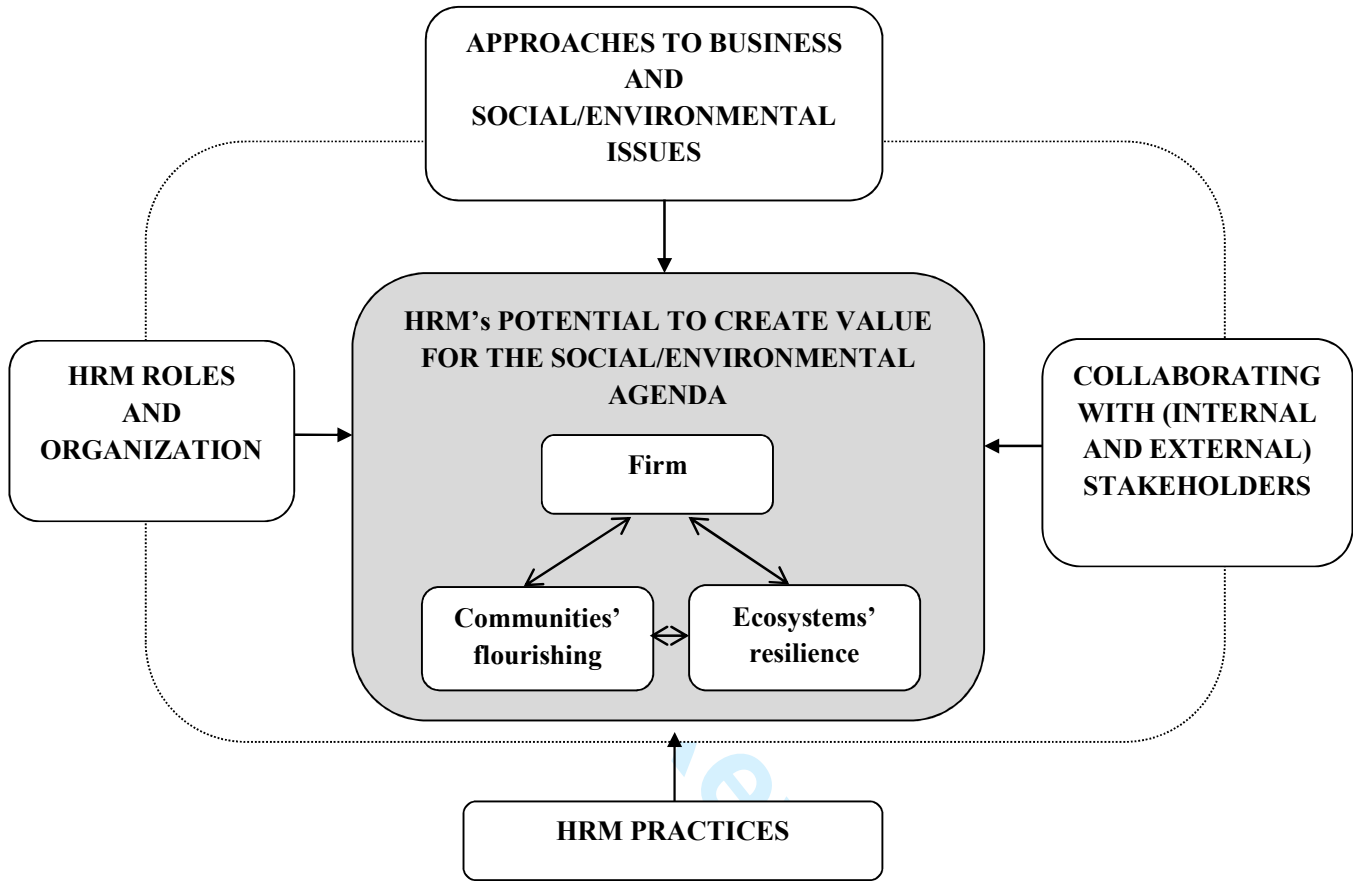


Figure 3. An *externally-oriented* HRM architecture to deliver value for the social and environmental agenda.



(Adapted from Jackson, 2011; Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005; Winn and Pogutz, 2013)