

# THE ROLES OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY: FINDING A BALANCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN NEW ZEALAND

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## Abstract

Sustainable Human Resource Management (S-HRM) refers to the application of sustainability concepts and practices in human resource management functions. It involves multi-dimensions and concepts, multi-stakeholder strategies and engagement, as well as resources required, for promoting sustainability practices within an organisation. S-HRM plays critical roles to support the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that New Zealand adopted in 2015 for implementation between 2020 and 2030. This research attempts to investigate how S-HRM practices may be influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and their implications for managing change and employee wellbeing in New Zealand organisations. To achieve the research objectives, relevant literature published between 2015 and 2021 in major databases were reviewed. Content analysis was employed to examine theoretical and empirical studies of S-HRM. Based on the findings, emerging themes are discussed in this study: 1) the nature and roles of S-HRM, 2) their implications for managing change and employee wellbeing under the COVID-19 Alert System in New Zealand, and 3) the challenges faced by the key stakeholders in implementing S-HRM during this “new normal”. Suggestions for future practices and research are discussed, taking into consideration the needs to balance the roles of S-HRM in managing change and employee wellbeing while achieving the sustainable development goal(s) adopted by an organisation.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 Pandemic, Employee Wellbeing, New Zealand, Organisational Change, Sustainable Human Resource Management.

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