

Organizational Sustainability and TQM in SMEs: A Proposed Model

Hesham Magd^{1*} Henry Karyamsetty²

1. Quality Assurance & Accreditation and Faculty of Business & Economics Head, Modern College of Business & Science (MCBS), Muscat, Oman

2. Transportation, Logistics, and Safety Management Department, Faculty of Business and Economics, Modern College of Business & Science (MCBS), Muscat, Oman

Abstract

Organizational sustainability has become of great interest, and a high priority in today's business environment by practitioners and researchers. Successful implementation of sustainability practices is becoming the cornerstone of organizational survival, success, superior performance, and competitive advantages. For organizations to be sustainable, organizations must determine working models on how to modulate organizational operations, and therefore the purpose of this paper is to critically attempt to offer an insight into the determining factors that influence organization sustainability in SMEs and assess the role of TQM towards achieving business sustenance. In the context of SMEs, they were chosen due to their vital key role in sustainable development and their dominance in any nation's economy and contribution. In achieving the objectives of the study, explorative and descriptive analysis of literature were performed to offer a better understanding and develop a framework for SMEs. The study findings concluded that realizing the benefits of sustainability is dependent on the extent of activities performed by SMEs and the level of employee participation. The study revealed further that there is a significant correlation between TQM and sustainability based on the effective implementation of the proposed model of sustainability dimension.

Keywords: Sustainability, SMEs, TQM, Sustainable practices, Employee participation, Top management commitment.

DOI: 10.7176/EJBM/13-4-09

Publication date: February 28th 2021

1. Introduction

Sustainability is becoming a priority for every organization as a global concern in today's environment (Sancha *et al.* 2016). It's based on the principle of allocating resources wisely for the current and future generations by efficiently managing and conserving them. "sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" according to Brundtland commission (www.iisd.org 2020). Contrarily organizational sustainability is a business strategy mainly focusing to identify resources available and allocating them effectively for the present and future needs for sustainable business growth considering economic, social, and ecological environment setting (Wales 2013). The concept of organizational sustainability is varied with no standard benchmarks and indicators to define sustainability in general across different organizations (Ollala & Palacios 2017).

Correspondingly there is an increased focus globally on organization sustainability envisaging companies to improve their integral capacities by identifying factors that inherently lead to business sustenance and performance (Adebisi & Bakare 2019; Ljunghom 2016). Within the approach of being competitive, organizations are becoming conscious to implement sustainability in their business operations essentially considering a holistic mechanism to business sustainability not restricting to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and public relations (PR) activities. According to UN sustainable development goals, 93% of the world's largest companies are now reporting on sustainability (UN 2020). However, to drive organizations towards sustainability in business, it is vitally essential to identify factors and dimensions that influence and managing them effectively towards organizational goals. Further organizational sustainability depends on sustainable development practices proportionate to firms' size, business level, organization structure, and strategic planning involving the three sustainable dimensions (Batista & Francisco 2018).

Given limited research studies and availability of standard working models on how to modulate organization operations to achieve business sustenance and continuity, this paper therefore critically attempts to understand the determining factors through empirical studies that influence organization sustainability in SMEs and also reviews previous studies on the role of Total Quality Management (TQM) towards achieving business sustenance.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Empirical studies of TQM in SMEs

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are important for developing countries as they form a major share of global business establishments providing tremendous scope for employment opportunities for the growing population

while sustaining them will contribute to more than 50% of global GDP (Gherghina *et al.* 2020; Magd & Karyamsetty 2020). SMEs' success contributes to the development of a nation's economy through the creation of employment opportunities, wealth, social and economic development (Muller *et al.* 2017; Omri *et al.* 2015). Therefore, it is clear that SMEs can be classified as the backbone of any nation's economy (Adebisi & Bakare 2019).

The growth and development of SMEs are intricate to the sustainability of these organizations over the long term by employing efficient management of resources possibly by adopting total quality management (TQM) as a management approach (Sahoo & Yadav 2018) and to remain competitive in the global market among larger firms. TQM can be defined as a holistic management philosophy that strives for continuous improvement in all functions of an organization, and it can be achieved only if the total quality concept is utilized from the acquisition of resources to customer service after the sale (Kaynak, 2003: 406). Earlier studies reveal that SMEs are far more flexible in conducting business operations, but the growing industrialization, globalization, and technological development continue to impinge these firms in terms of business continuity and sustenance with larger firms (Yoshino & Hesary 2016).

SMEs have to strategically adopt mechanisms that will facilitate them to overcome the specific challenges limiting their business performance regardless of empirical studies by various researches emphasize implementing TQM widely in many SMEs across different sectors maintains stability, improves business performance, and achieve competitive advantage (Kiselakova *et al.* 2020; Kutnjak *et al.* 2019; Sahoo & Yadav 2018; Basu & Bhola 2015), improve on SMEs innovations (Yunoh & Ali 2015; Garcia-Bernal & Garcia-Casarejos 2014; Kober *et al.* 2012) and improves customer and employee satisfaction (Kaur & Sharma 2014).

Thus, it's worth considering TQM as a long-term strategy for competitiveness Nasr *et al.* (2019; Mitreva *et al.* (2019); Domanska-Szaruga (2020) and achieving organizational sustainability in these firms. Beheshti & Lollar (2003) reported that TQM practicing firms presented higher performance than non-TQM firms through their study on two principle SMEs in the US, confirming to similar studies from Chileshe & Watson 2003 in SMEs in UK construction firms, despite this importance, SMEs are slow to implement TQM effectively in a range of firms due to recurring challenges (Ghobadian & Galleary 1996).

Empirical studies on the relationship between TQM and organization performance reveals that the extent of TQM practices in organizations specifically in SMEs justifies a positive relationship within the two variables assuring that TQM implementation in SMEs considerably improves product quality and business sustenance (Hilman *et al.* 2020; Kutnjak *et al.* 2019). Herzallah *et al.* (2014) from their study on Palestinian SMEs stated the significant influence of implementing quality management practices on organization performance which invariably enables SMEs to survive competition with larger firms to retain business continuity that is consistent with studies done by Mahmud & Hilmi 2014; Jabeen *et al.* 2014; Imran *et al.* 2018.

2.2 Organization Sustainability in SMEs

Sustainability is an important concept gaining much significance to every organization especially to SMEs in the current global market situation. Practically sustainability in organizations implies retaining business in the long term marginalizing the resources that largely depend on the onset of sustainable practices implemented by the firms, those oriented towards three dimensions of sustainability (Batista & Francisco 2018). Studies by Darcy *et al.* (2014) reviewed organizational sustainability through a resources-based dimension focusing on Carson's models in SMEs sustainability. Das *et al.* (2020) reported that corporate sustainability is well-practiced in large organizations while SMEs have neglected the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability impacting the business of these firms in a long term. Conversely, the report by Johnson (2015) concluded that to achieve sustainability in organizations, SMEs must implement a range of management tools as an innovative mechanism to understand the extent of incorporating the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Accordingly, researchers Lalangui *et al.* (2018); Kiesener & Baumgartner (2019) studied sustainable practices in SMEs from Ecuador and Austria and Schmidt *et al.* (2018) conducted studies on evaluation of these practices with SMEs in Brazil discussed the organizational sustainability outcomes from the overall level of awareness the employees and the management have in implementing the practices. Researchers Mustapha *et al.* (2017); Lozano (2018) have proposed frameworks such as sustainable green management systems and integrated management framework as a mechanism to draw business focus towards sustainability in organizations, which became crucial due to the Increasing awareness of climate change and environmental protection globally.

3. Methodology

The study uses explorative and descriptive analysis of literature extensively reviewed by the authors to develop a research design based on the understanding of organizational sustainability in SMEs. A wide range of research articles was referred to on two principal aspects of the present study in different regions and organizational settings to achieve the objectives. While the focus of the study is on SMEs, within that approach of analysis hypotheses were set from the empirical studies from the previous work published by various researchers to evaluate the factors

that are significant to sustainability in SMEs. Substantial research studies cited in the literature section do indicate the view of sustainable practices adoption that leads to improving the performance of large, medium, and small organizations, that correspondingly depend on the type of practices that suit the nature of business operations.

3.1 Developing hypothesis from empirical studies

Reasonable studies on organizational sustainability have highlighted a range of sustainable practices as indicators for attaining improved performance and sustainability in both large firms and SMEs in different settings. [Batista & Francisco \(2018\)](#) emphasized organizational sustainable practices in corporate firms analogous to [Gadenne et al. \(2012\)](#) contemplating sustainable performance indicators in achieving business improvement which is central to evaluating organizational sustainability. From the empirical studies published by various researchers, the following hypothesis is framed to analyze and reach a better understanding of organizational sustainability in SMEs.

H1: Sustainable practices implementation to attain organizational sustainability in SMEs

H2: Identify specific practices that are indicators of organizational sustainability in SMEs.

H3: What factors will influence organizations in achieving sustainability in both large firms and SMEs.

H4: Is there any significant relationship between TQM implementation and organizational sustainability in SMEs.

3.2 Analysis of hypothesis

As a result of limitations existing in the present context in surveying the region to test the hypothesis, the authors have primarily referred to empirical studies on organizational sustainability in SMEs globally and outcomes from the hypothesis are analyzed to conclude the findings. A thorough and extensive literature analysis was conducted to understand the extent of research done concerning validating the hypothetical questions in this study and those observations are conceptualized by the authors to prepare a working model that would provide a pathway for SMEs in attaining organizational sustainability.

4. Discussion

The sustainability concept is becoming profoundly heard in organizations in either large firms or SMEs as a sign of environmental consciousness and awareness of consumers towards product quality. Inevitably, under the sustainable ideology consumers are gaining more focus and interest to understand the organization's role and participation in achieving sustainability in their business operations. Besides, that there have been specific amendments in the national, international, and local legislation to adopt sustainable practices in production, processing, and consumption in every sector towards meeting the goal. The concept of corporate sustainable practices (CSP) which is synonymous with corporate social responsibility (CSR) has come to the forefront of implementation in both large and SMEs as indicators influencing organizational performance.

H1: Sustainable practices implementation to attain organizational sustainability in SMEs

Further to that development, analysis of empirical studies published by various researchers on sustainable practices in organization extensively to validate the *H1* hypothesis statement are judgmental to the findings. Studies by [Akadiri & Fadiya 2013](#) highlighted the importance of sustainable practices in construction industries in the UK, essentially interpreting the need for adopting them as determinants for improvement in business and organization performance. Sustainability activities expected to bring certain advantages such as cut costs through a better understanding of business operations; build a good reputation and obtain marketing advantages over competitors; employee morale and retention will improve; improve organizational image which in turn will help in attracting funding; help in achieving a leadership position in the market ([Mahmood et al. 2017](#); [Stubbs et al. 2013](#); [Searcy & Buslovich 2014](#); [Higgins et al. 2015](#)), and financial performance ([Khattak et al. 2018](#); [Malesios et al. 2018](#)).

[Choi & Yu \(2014\)](#) categorized a set of corporate sustainable practices perceived to have a positive impact on the organizational citizenship behavior that in turn mediates the relationship between the CSP and organizational performance, concurrence to the studies by [Das et al. \(2020\)](#) on the emergence of corporate sustainability (CS) concept and influence of those practices towards organizations performance in SMEs specifically. Particularly in SMEs organizational structure, CS has not gained much familiarity as a concept over larger firms where sustainability is viewed as a mechanism to maintain the balance between the three dimensions.

In line with this understanding, organizational sustainability encompasses managing social, environmental, and economic aspects effectively to ensure that magnitude of business operations necessarily considers the triple dimension. On the other hand, research studies by [Johnson \(2015\)](#) have referred to sustainable management tools implementation and level of awareness among employees in SMEs are significant to organizational sustainability. Concurrent to this view, sustainable practices categorized into three-dimensional approaches have varying levels of implementations in SMEs from studies done by [Lalangui et al. \(2018\)](#), confirming that such practices can significantly contribute to organizational improvement. Further, results from studies by [Maletic et al. \(2015 &](#)

2016) affirm that sustainable practices primarily lead to financial and market performance as a result of increased innovation performance in organizations.

In conclusion, the empirical studies analyzed by the authors decisively justify the hypothesis stated in *H1* indicating that organization sustainability invariably is influenced by the level and extent of sustainable practices implemented that are independent to every organization however, to maintain business consistency and improved organization performance, SMEs have to strategically manage the challenges they encounter over larger firms.

H2: Identify specific practices that are indicators of organizational sustainability in SMEs.

Organizational sustainability especially in SMEs is largely accrued through implementing practices that act as indicators of organization performance and improvement whereby many institutional factors do play a signifying role in these smaller firms in the global market. Empirical study reports analyzed by authors point towards organizational culture and exposure to competitive forces that are presuming factors that can guide these smaller firms towards sustainability. On the contrary, adapting to the changing environment and market situation through constant innovation will provide better opportunities for SMEs to stabilize during economic fluctuations and ultimately sustain their business growth in the long run (Natarajan & Wyrick 2011). Validating supportive evidence for the above hypothesis, Akadiri & Fadiya (2013) expressed critical practices that exhibit top management commitment, enforcement of government regulations and pressures from construction stakeholders act as indicators that determine the adoption of sustainable practices in SMEs substantiating to studies from Zakuan *et al.* (2010). Consistent with the ideas expressed by many researchers on sustainable practices, Batista & Francisco (2018) viewed sustainable practices at a three-dimensional level- environmental, economic, and social aspects and implementing the practices consistently to maintain the balance between the three elements intricately determines the organizational sustainability.

Categorically implementing a set of practices within each dimensional level draws organizations closer to the reality of achieving sustainable goals in every organization however to realize these potential substantial efforts are needed from top management and employee participation enforcement through managers. Schiopoiu & Mihai (2019) have stressed upon CSR, innovation, and training that are positively correlated and implementation of these in SMEs as sustainable practices can yield profit, employee benefit, reduced total expenditure on business operations that act as indicators for organizational sustainability altogether creating a competitive advantage over larger firms in the market. Tan *et al.* (2015) suggested categorizing the indicators of organizational sustainability into four dimensions that critically reflect various practices through the subcategories under each dimension, while these indicators which are environmental protection, economic growth, social well-being, and performance management provide significant measurements to implement sustainable practices in SMEs.

Suriyankaitkaewa & Avery (2015) concluded that the orientation of employee satisfaction an indicator of organizational sustainability. Their study proves that the hypothetical statements on the level and extent of sustainable leadership practices on employee satisfaction mediates organizations to achieve improved performance and sustainable growth that is consistent with the findings reported by other researchers described in this paper. Sundin *et al.* (2015) highlighted findings from empirical studies on indicators of environmental sustainability referred by different researchers in their work, however, sustainability holistically in an organization cannot be achieved through a contribution from a single dimension but is attributed from all the three elements.

Given the varying levels of sustainable practices implementation in organizations, Schmidt *et al.* (2018) observed that environmental practices had a low rate of adoption in SMEs due to the less significant size and nature of business operation however findings from Lalangui *et al.* (2018) on SMEs in Ecuador shows medium to a high level of implementation in all the three sustainable dimensions conforming to the findings of Batista & Francisco (2018), thus justifying an understanding that sustainable practices are specific to the nature, size and organization structure of every business. Therefore, analysis from the empirical studies sufficiently establishes that the range of sustainable practices implemented does lead to sustainability in SMEs which can be comprehended through their indicators henceforth validating the hypothesis *H2* in this study.

H3: What factors will influence organizations in achieving sustainability in both large firms and SMEs.

Sustainability is built on the concept of the three dimensions environment, economic and social aspects, maintaining a balance between these entities consistently will influence the organizations to achieve sustainability primarily, on the contrary, empirical studies on factors that influence SMEs to achieve sustainability through the *H3* hypothesis is tested to validate the findings reported by various researchers. Extensive studies by Das *et al.* (2020) revealed that collaborative work, facilitating government policies, supporting organization culture are factors that principally influence SMEs to achieve sustainability.

Without regard to the above conception, there are exhaustive factors influencing organizations towards sustainable performance studied in the context of different countries reported through empirical evidence. Those factors that contribute to sustainability through the adoption of government regulatory practices are reported in SMEs studied in UK, Spain, Norway, and Romania, referred by Fitjar (2011); Sima & Gheorghe (2011); Andres *et al.* (2011); Quader *et al.* (2016) (cited in Das *et al.* 2020). In conjunction with the studies published on this subject, subsidiary reports indicate CSR activities comprehensively concedes all the factors that influence

organizations towards sustainability.

Thematic analysis studies by [Yadav et al. \(2018\)](#) reveals external and internal factors as driving forces for sustainability in SMEs, where the culmination of both are essential to attain improvement in business performance. However, in absence of either of the factors would prove inefficiencies in the organization to achieve sustainable goals. [Aboelmaged \(2018\)](#) from his study proposed technology, organizational and environmental drivers (TOE) initially developed by [DePietro et al. \(1990\)](#) as approaches that contribute indirectly towards sustainability in SMEs. Analysis of the literature from the empirical studies reported by various researchers substantially denotes the range of factors particularly that is not limited to the observations made by the authors, hence proving the hypothesis statement *H3* in this study.

H4: Is there any significant relationship between TQM implementation and organizational sustainability in SMEs.

Total quality management (TQM) is a management approach towards achieving long-term success principally integrating customer and employee involvement in the business operation. TQM has taken roots through the simple principles of scientific management from the 1920s to a comprehensive management system that is practiced currently in the modern world. During this phase, TQM has progressively gained more prominence and importance to both large and small firms widely and turned out as a benchmark for quality, organizational sustainability, and improved business performance. The concept of TQM is also widely studied by researchers in manufacturing and non-manufacturing firms and the results are consistent regardless of the nature of the business operation ([Walley 2012](#)). In addition to the proposition empirical studies also substantially justify the relationship between TQM implementation in SMEs results in performance improvement leading to sustainable business ([Al Harbi et al. 2016](#)), to a greater extent and increased profitability and competitive advantage over larger firms to a lesser extent ([Beheshti & Lollar 2003](#)), while [Herzallah et al. \(2014\)](#) concluded that TQM practices show a positive and significant relationship with financial performance in SMEs.

Further studies by [Robson et al. \(2002\)](#) established that organizational performance is indicative to the extent of TQM initiatives implemented in firms and proportional to the constructs such as top management commitment, employee involvement, information and involvement, and strategic quality management analyzed through studies from [Dow et al. \(1999\)](#); [Hassan & Kerr \(2003\)](#); [Pambreni et al. \(2000\)](#). Despite differences existing in the level of implementation and the challenges TQM exhibit in SMEs, certain TQM characteristics such as effective communication, teamwork, employee awareness when implemented effectively would lead to positive results owing to the integrated nature of the business network in smaller firms ([Ghobadian & Gallear 1996](#)). Confirming the perception, empirical evidence through literature however support the relationship of TQM implementation with organizational sustainability especially in SMEs perceived through studies from [Hilman et al. \(2020\)](#); [Imran et al. \(2018\)](#) that TQM implementation can increase export performance in SMEs, bringing significant improvement in business performance ([Jabeen et al. 2014](#)), further confirming to [Sahoo and Yadav \(2018\)](#). Besides, wide studies are done by [Beheshti & Lollar \(2003\)](#); [Chileshe & Watson \(2003\)](#) with relation to TQM implementation in SMEs in different geographical settings in the US, UK to understand the performance of these firms from adopting TQM.

In conclusion, various empirical findings analyzed relative to the *H4* hypothesis sufficiently validates the association of TQM implementation in SMEs as significant to organizational sustainability thus proving that TQM practices implementation tend to lead organizations towards better firm performance, improved productivity, and maintaining stability in business growth.

Consolidating the observations arrived through the empirical findings, the literature studies referred from various researchers thoroughly validate the four-hypothesis framed by the authors in the study while the conclusions of the study are not only confined to prove the hypothesis through empirical analysis, but also to propose a model for achieving sustainability in SMEs from the theoretical and practical concepts of TQM and organizational sustainability. In pursuit of proposing the model, the authors considered the TQM characteristics and implementation for organizational sustainability in SMEs that are aligned with the objectives of this study. However, the model supposedly provides a framework to guide SMEs (manufacturing, non-manufacturing, and service sectors) towards achieving sustainability in business operation. Following the review from the empirical studies, a conceptual framework in Figure 1 is designed to illustrate the role of TQM in organizational sustainability in SMEs supporting the *H4* hypothetical analysis of the study.

According to the framework, TQM implementation through the three prominent practices comparative to the TQM constructs would lead organizations towards sustainability specific to the current study on SMEs. The framework proposed would serve the purpose of guiding all kinds of SMEs including manufacturing, non-manufacturing, and sectors that adopt TQM practices to the extent that the three practices are involved in the approach to organizational sustainability. The proposed framework will provide a pathway for managers and decision-makers to effectively plan, prepare and execute tasks regarding implementing the TQM concept for achieving sustainability in SMEs. Further extending the framework, the authors propose a model that focuses on the two-dimensional approach to sustainability in SMEs about the hypothesis developed to validate the empirical

studies.

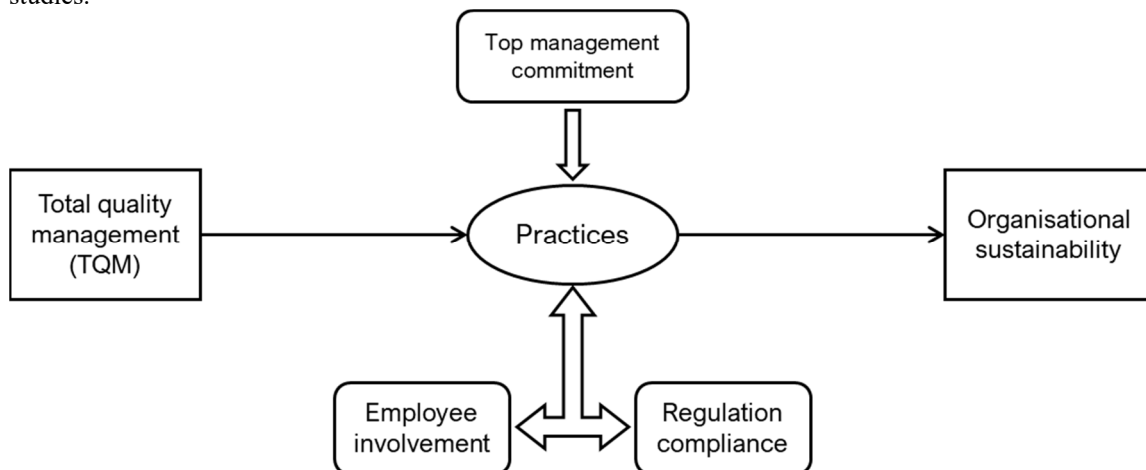


Figure 1. Conceptual framework showing TQM role towards organizational sustainability in SMEs

The proposed model Figure 2 suggested through this study offers a pathway for achieving sustainability in organizations especially in the context of SMEs and provides preliminary understanding and guidance to business establishment managers, decision-makers, and stakeholders, independent of the nature of business and operating structure in the organization. The proposed model is developed considering the validation of the hypothesis revealing that organizational sustainability is a combined input of TQM and sustainable dimensions in the organization, while each of the inputs internally is operated by indicators, internal factors that will influence the overall achievement of the sustainable goal. According to the model TQM implementation of practices are guided through external and internal drivers that are specific to every organization, those again depend on nature, size, business level, and organization structure combining with sustainability dimensions through the three levels together ultimately leading to achieving sustainability in the organization. Organizations that are marked sustainable are known to show consistent firm performance in design, product, quality, and customer satisfaction enhancing financial performance and improved business prospects among other business players in the market.

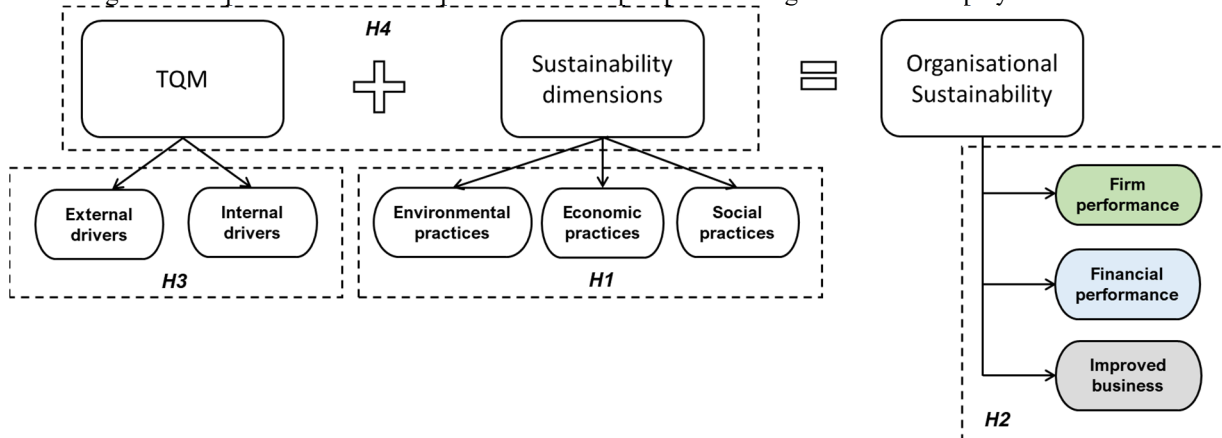


Figure 2. The proposed model was developed through the hypothetical analysis from empirical studies on organizational sustainability.

5. Conclusion

This paper analyzed the empirical studies done by various researchers on the concept of TQM and organizational sustainability specifically in the context of SMEs. The study revealed some interesting and significant observations made by the authors from the analysis of literature that led to the framing of the hypothesis to test and validate the empirical findings.

Examining the studies published, organizational sustainability is perceived differently by various SMEs mainly because of the level of awareness and orientation given by the top management to the employees. While the effectiveness of an organization in realizing the benefits of sustainability depends on the extent of practices, presumed to result in achieving sustainability notwithstanding the level of employee participation in the overall operating structure. On the other hand, many SMEs to meet the sustainable goals have developed and practiced different conceptual approaches such as corporate social responsibility, corporate sustainability, corporate sustainable practices, etc., all synonymous with the sustainable ideology, which depend on the nature of the business, size and geographical context.

The results emphasize that TQM implementation in SMEs is an additional instrument to enhance and catalyze the organizations' efforts to plan, prepare and execute the practices functional to sustainability. Contrary to this principle empirical studies also prove otherwise that organizations without TQM practices adopted have attained stability in business performance and showed improvement on par with TQM firms, therefore, confirming that organizational sustainability does not depend on the implementation of the practices alone, on the other hand, should be reinforced with employee involvement and top management commitment towards achieving the objective.

In conclusion, the practical implications from the study indicate sustainable practices, those particularly that act as indicators and factors are essential to influence organizations to attain sustainability in either large or small firms, and therefore a significant correlation exists between TQM implementation and sustainability in SMEs, thus reminds of an integrated two-dimensional approach to organizational sustainability that is proposed through the model in the study.

References

- Aboelmagd, M. (2018), "The drivers of sustainable manufacturing practices in Egyptian SMEs and their impact on competitive capabilities: A PLS-SEM model", *Journal of Cleaner Production* **145**, 207-221.
- Adebisi, A. S. & Bakare, A. N. (2019), "Survival strategies and sustainability of small and medium enterprises in a volatile environment", *Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy* **7**(4), 553-569.
- Akadiri, P. O. & Fadiya, O. O. (2013), "Empirical Analysis of The Determinants of Environmentally Sustainable Practices in the UK Construction Industry", *Construction Innovation* **13**(4), 352-373.
- Al Harbi, K., Al Matari, E. M. & Yusoff, R. Z. (2016), "The Impact of Total Quality Management (TQM) on Organizational Sustainability: The Case of the Hotel Industry in Saudi Arabia: Empirical Study", *The Social Sciences* **11**(14), 3468-3473.
- Andres, E.F., Perez, M.E.L., Polo, I.M. & Carrasco, R.V. (2011), "Company Image and Corporate Social Responsibility: Reflecting with SMEs' Managers", *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, **30**(2), 266-280.
- Basu, R. & Bhola, P. (2015), "Exploring quality management practices and its pattern analysis in Indian service SMEs", *Journal of Enterprising Culture* **23**(2), 199-235.
- Batista, A. A. Da Silva. & Francisco, A. C. De. (2018), "Organisational Sustainability Practices: A Study of the Firms Listed by the Corporate Sustainability Index", *Sustainability* **10**(1), 226.
- Beheshti, H. M. & Lollar, J. G. (2003), "An Empirical Study of US SMEs Using TQM", *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence* **14**(8), 839-847.
- Chileshe, N. & Watson, P. (2003), "A Survey of TQM Implementation within UK Construction SME's", Second International Conference on Construction in the 21st Century (CITC-II), Sustainability and Innovation in Management and Technology 10-12 December, Hong Kong.
- Choi, Y. & Yu, Y. (2014), "The Influence of Perceived Corporate Sustainability Practices on Employees and Organizational Performance", *Sustainability* **6**(1), 348-364.
- Darcy, C., Hill, J., McCabe, T. J. & McGovern, P. (2014), "A consideration of organizational sustainability in the SME context A resource-based view and composite model", *European Journal of Training and Development* **38**(5), 398-414.
- Das, M., Rangarajan, K., Dutta, G. (2020), "Corporate sustainability in SMEs: an Asian perspective", *Journal of Asia Business Studies* **14**(1), 109-138.
- DePietro, R., Wiarda, E. & Fleischer, M. (1990), The Context for Change: Organization, technology and environment. In: Tornatzky, L.G., Fleischer, M. (Eds.), The Processes of Technological Innovation. Lexington Books, Lexington, MA., 151-175.
- Domaniska-Szaruga, B. (2020), "Maturity of risk management culture", *Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues* **7**(3), 2060-2078.
- Dow, D., Samson, D. & Ford, S. (1999), "Exploding the myth: do all quality management practices contribute to superior quality performance", *Production and Operations Management*, **8**(1), 1-27
- Fitjar, R.D. (2011), "Little big firms? Corporate Social Responsibility in Small Businesses That Do Not Compete Against Big Ones", *Business Ethics: A European Review* **20**(1), 30-44.
- Gadenne, D., Mia, L., Sands, J., Winata, L. & Hooi, G. (2012), "The influence of sustainability performance management practices on organizational sustainability performance", *Journal of Accounting and Organizational Change* **8**(2), 210-235.
- Garcia-Bernal, J. & Garcia-Casarejos, N. (2014), "Economics analysis of TQM adoption in the construction sector", *Total Quality Management* **25**(3), 209-221.
- Ghergina, S. C., Botezatu, M. A., Hosszu, A. & Simionescu, L. N. (2020), "Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs): The Engine of Economic Growth through Investments and Innovation", *Sustainability* **12**(1), 347.
- Ghobadian, A. & Gallear, DN. (1996), "Total Quality Management in SMEs", *Omega, Int. J. Mgmt Sci.* **24**(1), 83-106.

- Hassan, M. & Kerr, R. M. (2003), "The relationship between total quality management practices and organizational performance in service organizations", *The TQM Magazine*, **15**(4), 286-29.
- Herzallah, M. A., Gutierrez-Gutierrez, L. & Rosas, M. F. J. (2014), "Total quality management practices, competitive strategies and financial performance: the case of the Palestinian industrial SMEs", *Total Quality Management* **25**(6), 635-649.
- Higgins, C., Milne, M. J. & Van Gramberg, B. (2015), "The uptake of sustainability reporting in Australia", *Journal of Business Ethics* **129**(2), 445-468.
- Hilman, H., Ali, G. A. & Gorondutse, A. H. (2020), "The relationship between TQM and SMEs' performance the mediating role of organizational culture", *International Journal of Productivity and Performance* **69**(1), 61-84.
- Imran, M., Hamid, S. N. B. A. & Aziz, A. B. (2018), "The influence of TQM on Export Performance of SMEs: Empirical Evidence from Manufacturing Sector in Pakistan Using PLS-SEM", *Management Science Letters* **8**, 483-496.
- International Institute for sustainable development (2020), The knowledge to act. <https://www.iisd.org/topic/sustainable-development>
- Jabeen, R., Shehu, A. M., Mahmood, R. & Mata, B. A. K. (2014), "TQM and Knowledge Management Impacts on SME Performance", *International Postgraduate Business Journal* **6**(2), 23-43.
- Johnson, M. P. (2015), "Sustainability Management and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises: Managers' Awareness and Implementation of Innovative Tools", *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* **22**, 271-285.
- Kaur, P. & Sharma, K. S. (2014), "Evaluating the relationship and influence of critical success factors of TQM on business performance: Evidence from SMEs of manufacturing sector", *The IUP Journal of Operations Management* **13**(4), 17-30.
- Kaynak, H. (2003), "The relationship between total quality management practices and their effects on firm performance", *Journal of Operations Management* **21**, 405-435.
- Khattak, R. S., Saeed, I. & Tariq, B. (2018), "Corporate sustainability practices and organizational economic performance", *Global Social Sciences Review* **3**(4), 343-355.
- Kiesnere, A. L. & Baumgartner, R. L. (2019), "Sustainability Management in Practice: Organizational Change for Sustainability in Smaller Large-Sized Companies in Austria", *Sustainability* **11**(3), 572.
- Kiselakova, D., Hairul, G. P., Cabinova, V. & Onuferova, E. (2020), "Total quality management as managerial tool of competitiveness in enterprises worldwide", *Polish Journal of Management Studies* **21**(2), 195-209.
- Kober, R., Subraamanniam, T. & Watson, J. (2012), "The impact of total quality management adoption on small and medium enterprises financial performance", *Accounting and Finance* **52**, 421-438,
- Kutnjak, G., Miljenovic, D. & Mirkovic, A. (2019), "Improving Competitiveness of Small and medium-sized enterprises with the application of quality management system", *Scientific Journal of Maritime Research* **33**, 11-21.
- Lalangui, P. S., Garcia, J. A. & Rio-Rama, M. de La, Cruz. (2018), "Sustainable Practices in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Ecuador", *Sustainability* **10**(6), 2105.
- Ljungholm, P. D. (2016), "Sustainability implementation and organizational performance", *Review of Contemporary Philosophy*, Vol. 15, pp. 139-145.
- Lozano, R. (2018), "Proposing a Definition and a Framework of Organizational Sustainability: A Review of Efforts and a Survey of Approaches to Change", *Sustainability* **10**(4), 1157.
- Magd, H. & Karyamsetty, H. (2020), "Integrated Management System Implementation in SMEs: A Proposed Model for Organizational Performance and Sustainability", *International Journal of Business and Management Review* **8**(4), 58-77.
- Mahmood, Z., Kouser, R., Hasan, I. & Iqbal, Z. (2017), "Why Pakistani small and medium enterprises are not reporting on sustainability practices?", *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences* **11**(1), 488-504.
- Mahmud, N. & Hilmi, M. F. (2014), "TQM and Malaysian SMEs Performance: The Mediating Roles of Organization Learning", *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* **130**, 216-225.
- Malesios, C., Skouloudis, A., Dey, K. P., Abdelaziz, B. F., Kantartzis, A. & Evangelinos, K. (2018), "Impact of small and medium sized enterprises sustainability practices and performance on economic growth from a managerial perspective: Modelling considerations and empirical analysis results", *Business Strategy and the Environment* **27**, 960-972.
- Maletic, M., Maletic, D., Dahlgaard, J. J., Park, S. M. D. & Gomiseck, B. (2015), "Do Corporate Sustainability Practices Enhance Organizational Economic Performance?", *International Journal of Quality and Services Sciences* **7**(2/3), 184-200.
- Maletic, M., Maletic, D., Dahlgaard, J. J., Park, S. M. D. & Gomiseck, B. (2016), "Effect of Sustainability-Oriented Innovation Practices on the Overall Organizational Performance: An Empirical Examination", *Total Quality Management* **27**(10), 1171-1190.

- Mitreva, E., Tashkova, S. & Gjorshervski, H. (2019), "Optimization of business process in a transport company in the republic of North Macedonia", *TEM Journal* **8**(3), 879-887.
- Muller, P., Herr, D., McKiernan, S., Peycheva, V., Hope, K., Koch, L. & Julius, J. (2017), Annual report on European SMEs: Focus on self-employment, London: European Commission.
- Mustapha, M. A. & Manan, Z. A. (2017), "Sustainable Green Management System (SGMS) - An Integrated Approach Towards Organizational Sustainability", *Journal of Cleaner Production* **146**, 158-172.
- Mustapha, M. A., Manan, Z. A. & Alwi, S. R. W. (2017). "Sustainable Green Management Systems (SGMS)- Approach Towards Organizational Sustainability", *Journal of Cleaner Production* **146**, 158-172.
- Nasr, A. K., Alaei, S., Bakhshi, F., Rasoulyan, F., Tayaran, H. & Farahi, M. (2019), "How enterprise risk management (erm) can effect on short term and long term firm performance: evidence from the Iranian banking system", *Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues* **7**(2), 1387-1403.
- Natarajan, G. S. & Wyrick D. A. (2011), "Framework for Implementing Sustainable Practices in SMEs in the United States", *Proceedings of the World Congress on Engineering* **1**, July 6 - 8, London, UK.
- Olalla, A. R. & Palacios, C. A. (2017), "Integrating Sustainability in Organizations: An Activity-Based Sustainability Model", *Sustainability* **9**(6), 1072.
- Omri, A., Ayadi-Frikha, M. & Bouraoui, A. M. (2015), "An empirical investigation of factors affecting small business success", *Journal of Management Development* **34**, 1073-1093.
- Pambreni, Y. Khatibi, A. Azam, S. M. F. & Tham, J. (2019), "The Influence of Total Quality Management Toward Organization Performance", *Management Science Letters* **9**, 1397-1406.
- Quader, M.S., Kamal, M.M. and Hassan, A.B.M.E. (2016), "Sustainability of Positive Relationship Between Environmental Performance and Profitability of SMEs: A Case Study in the UK", *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy* **10**(2), 138-163.
- Robson, A., Prabhu, V. B. & Mitchell, Ed. (2002), "TQM enablers and business sustainability: an empirical study of the service sector in the North East of England", *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, **19**(5), 610-632.
- Sahoo, S. & Yadav, S. (2018), "Total Quality Management in Indian Manufacturing Industries", 15th Global Conference on Sustainable Manufacturing, *Procedia Manufacturing* **21**, 541-548.
- Sancha, C., Wong, C. W. Y. & Gimenez-Thomsen, C. (2016), "Buyer – supplier relationships on environmental issues: A contingency perspective", *Journal of Cleaner Production* **112**, 1849-1860.
- Schmidt, F. C., Zanini, R. R., Korzenowski, A. L., Junior, R. S. & do Nascimento, K. B. X. (2018), "Evaluation of Sustainability Practices in Small and Medium-Sized Manufacturing Enterprises in Southern Brazil", *Sustainability* **10**(7), 2460.
- Schiopoiu, A. B. & Mihai, L. S. (2019), "An Integrated Framework on the Sustainability of SMEs", *Sustainability* **11**(21), 6026.
- Searcy, C. & Buslovich, R. (2014), "Corporate perspectives on the development and use of sustainability reports", *Journal of Business Ethics* **121**(2), 149-169.
- Sima, V. and Gheorghe, I.G. (2011), "Social responsibility and SMEs in Romania", *Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti Bulletin* **63**(1), 92-100.
- Stubbs, W., Higgins, C. & Milne, M. (2013), "Why do companies not produce sustainability reports", *Business Strategy and the Environment* **22**(7), 456-470.
- Sundin, E., Nasslander, E. & Lelah, A. (2015), "sustainability Indicators for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Transition to Provide Product Service Systems (PSS)", 7th Industrial Product-Service System Conference- PSS Industry Transformation for Sustainability and Business", *Procedia CIRP* **30**, 149-154.
- Suriyankietkaew, S. & Avery, G. C. (2014), "Employee Satisfaction and Sustainable Leadership Practices in Thai SMEs", *Journal of Global Responsibility* **5**(1), 160-173.
- Tan, H. X., Yeo, Z., Ruisheng, Ng., Tjandra, T. B. & Song, B. (2015), "A Sustainability Indicator Framework for Singapore Small and Medium-Sized Manufacturing Enterprises", *The 22nd CIRP Conference on Life Cycle Engineering- Procedia CIRP* **29**, 132-137.
- United Nations. (2020), Sustainable development goals report. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-consumption-production/>
- Walley, K. (2012), "TQM in Non-Manufacturing SMEs: Evidence from the UK Farming Sector", *International Small Business Journal* **18**(4), 46-61.
- Yadav, N., Gupta, K., Rani, L. & Rawat, D. (2018), "Drivers of Sustainability Practices and SMEs: A Systematic Literature Review", *European Journal of Sustainable Development* **7**(4), 531-544.
- Yonoh, M. and Ali, K. (2015), "Total quality management approach for Malaysian SMEs: Conceptual framework", *International Journal of Business and Social Science* **6**(1), 152-161.
- Yoshino, K. & Hesary, F. T. (2016), "Major Challenges Facing Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Asia and Solutions for Mitigating Them", ADBI Working Paper **564**, Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute.
- Zakuan, N.M., Yusof, S.M., Laosirihongthong, T. & Shaharoun, A.M. (2010), "Proposed relationship of TQM and

organizational performance using structured equation modeling”, *Total Quality Management and Business Excellence* **21**(2), 185-203.

Hesham Magd, a Former University Vice-Chancellor, and Business college Dean is highly committed to building a student-centered and entrepreneurial mind with a focus on organizational excellence through learning and growth, lifelong learning, and my passion for effective and ethical leadership. An Active, creative, and dynamic faculty, entrepreneurial leader, organizational excellence professional, educator, and researcher. Hesham has more than twenty-five years of combined experience in traditional and nontraditional higher education teaching, training, consultancy, community development, academic administration, curricula design, organizational change and development, distinguished research, and scholarly writing, resulting in Honors, awards, and recognition for academic excellence and outstanding achievement. Hesham is currently heavily involved in International accreditation and reshaping the aviation education in Oman and offer strategic direction on the direction of the sector. In his previous appointments throughout the world in British, European, and American oriented Curriculum (Middle East, USA, and UK), he has been the driving force behind strategic institutional development during the time of profound change in the Higher Education in the Middle East. Additionally, He has broad knowledge of the UK, USA, Middle East University Systems, Quality and accreditation systems (AACSB, AABI, OAAA, NCAAA...), Budget control, faculty development and significant experience of University senior management and a public profile at senior academic level within the sector and also experienced in practical business through his involvement with business ownership, start up and organizational presidency board members and vice president position, university Vice Chancellor, and business college dean.

Henry Karyamsetty, currently assistant professor with additional roles in collaborative research, international accreditation and contributing to curriculum development at institutional level. Is specialized in diversified health, safety and environmental applications with expertise in biodiversity conservation. Has a total work experience of more than 18 years combining academic and industrial sectors. Has professional levels courses in health, safety and environmental management and holds certification from IOSH NEBOSH, OHSA. Contributed and published more than 36 research articles in journals, book chapters, conference proceedings and presentation. An active reviewer for 5 international journals and has reviewed more than 50 research articles in diversified topics. Has knowledge and understanding on academic quality assurance and accreditation policies and procedures. Worked previously with two WORLD BANK projects in livelihoods and poverty reduction programs.