

Achieving Sustainable Excellence in Saudi Arabia: Strategies for Business Resilience and Environmental Responsibility

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Introduction

Research Problem

The aim of this paper is to discuss the strategies that companies in Saudi Arabia can adopt to achieve sustainable excellence. In this context, businesses are expected to properly manage the external environment by emphasizing the principles of business resilience and environmental responsibility (Sony, 2019). From this perspective, it is important to understand how organizations can develop business resilience while making a substantial difference in relation to their sustainability orientation (Akanmu & Mohamad, 2021).

Achieving sustainable excellence is a systematic process of increasing awareness about the importance of improving companies' corporate social responsibility and stakeholder value (Fan & Chang, 2021). In order to better manage the external environment, businesses need to recognize all factors and potential constraints that may impede their progress to achieving sustainable excellence.

Moreover, it is important to take into consideration how to develop an effective environmental management system in economic establishments. A similar system is vital for improving organizations' sustainability because the focus is on addressing specific regulatory requirements in a systematic and cost-efficient way (Fan & Chang, 2021). It is fundamental for organizations to remain proactive in pursuing different strategies to improve their performance on different sustainability indicators.

In the context of achieving sustainable excellence in Saudi Arabia, key stakeholders should carry out a comprehensive analysis of the marketing environment. As the marketing environment tends to be quite volatile and uncertain, identifying and analyzing different trends is an ongoing process of determining companies' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Sony, 2019). This suggests a better overview of the challenges that organizations need to address to ensure sustainable excellence. In the post-COVID-19 business world, companies have recognized the importance of being highly responsive to any changes emerging in their marketing environment (Manresa & Rivera, 2021). Therefore, it is vital that organizations develop effective strategic plans that could enable them to handle any unforeseen challenges.

In relation to sustainability and climate change issues, companies apparently encounter persistent environmental challenges. As environmental challenges represent major disruptions in the normal function of ecosystems, government and non-government organizations need to take a proactive approach to minimize those issues and achieve uniform standards in sustainability (Akanmu & Mohamad, 2021; Sony, 2019). Better governance mechanisms should be used to decrease the intensity of such environmental challenges (Manresa & Rivera, 2021). Organizational leaders should be committed to making sustainable decisions by ensuring a high level of environmental compliance.

Another important component of this research is associated with the link between sustainability and business resilience. During periods of disruption, sustainable companies tend to be more resilient or adequately prepared to respond to any vulnerabilities or risks emerging in their external environment (Anninos & Chytiris, 2012). Therefore, the relationship between sustainability and business resilience is reflected in companies' strategic readiness to reinvent and refine their existing business models and practices (Sony, 2019). Organizations need to be able to adapt to changing customer expectations or any market fluctuations that may impact their future revenue.

It is also important to consider that achieving sustainable excellence is closely linked to the concept of innovation. Therefore, sustainable excellence may be identified as sustainable innovation in terms of making a series of intentional changes to an organization's products and services (Fan & Chang, 2021). In order to better understand how sustainability is related to innovation, it is essential to note that organizations always search for distinct ways to sustain their continuous improvement (Sony, 2019). In turn, companies can achieve a significant competitive advantage and increase their market share.

A relevant aspect that will be also introduced in this research is that Saudi Arabian companies are expected to demonstrate a high level of environmental responsibility. Organizations need to undertake relevant measures to improve their commitment to the environment in the context of climate change issues (Almulhim et al., 2020). Along with clearly identified corporate social responsibility initiatives, companies in Saudi Arabia can pursue sustainable supply chain management operations (Manresa & Rivera, 2021). The focus in companies' strategic actions should be on decreasing their environmental impact while trying to create positive social change.

The Importance of the Research

The importance of the research lies in the critical exploration of organizations' potential to achieve sustainable excellence. In this way, numerous strategies for improving business resilience and environmental responsibility will be examined, as the need for transforming organizations into sustainable business entities is on the rise (Almulhim et al., 2020). The present research will provide relevant insights into the state of sustainable excellence in Saudi Arabia's business context. As a result, key stakeholders in Saudi Arabian organizations will be better prepared to develop optimal strategic plans that could increase sustainable excellence, which will further improve public trust and confidence scores (Manresa & Rivera, 2021). At the same time, the conclusions that will be outlined in this research will enrich the literature on corporate social responsibility in Saudi Arabian companies.

Research Hypotheses

Two major research hypotheses will be formed in this research. They are closely related to the aim of the project to outline the specific ways in which Saudi Arabian organizations can achieve sustainable excellence. The hypotheses are provided below:

Research Hypothesis 1 (RH1): Business resilience is positively correlated with sustainable excellence.

Research Hypothesis 2 (RH2): Environmental responsibility is positively correlated with sustainable excellence.

Literature Review

Sustainability is a crucial part of the performance of any organization, as it has a significant impact on different key stakeholders including leaders, employees, customers, and investors. Organizational leaders who take sustainable excellence seriously set their

companies for long-term success and resilience (Marchese et al., 2018). Achieving sustainable excellence reflects organizations' responsibility to understand and address the most prevailing sustainability issues pertaining to their external marketing environment. In this way, organizational leaders need to be able to communicate the importance of such sustainability issues to different audiences (Fan & Chang, 2021; Manresa & Rivera, 2021). Also, achieving sustainable excellence implies the ability of organizational leaders to evaluate various sustainability risks, which can better prepare them for the development of efficient mitigation strategies.

As illustrated in the literature, achieving sustainable excellence is linked to the adoption of strategies that can ensure adequate business resilience. While sustainability refers to organizations' focus on continue performing their important functions during periods of disruption, without compromising their quality, business resilience is the ability to thrive during those periods (Fan & Chang, 2021; Sony, 2019). Therefore, the link between sustainable excellence and business resilience is clearly represented by organizations' determination to improve their performance (Manresa & Rivera, 2021). Through presenting a comprehensive literature review, Marchese et al. (2018) pay attention to the similarities and differences of sustainability and resilience by focusing on environmental management applications. It has been concluded that the implementation of organizational frameworks based on sustainable excellence and business resilience results in the generation of common goals to provide benefits to people and the environment.

In relation to environmental responsibility, it has been observed that sustainable organizations aim at ensuring a sufficient balance between economic, social, and environmental factors. The utmost goal of such sustainable organizations is to create a more equitable future through the efficient utilization of available resources (Edgeman, 2015). Companies experiment with different strategies to ensure their environmental responsibility,

which implies the importance of creativity and innovation in developing certain approaches to deal with uncertainties or market fluctuations (Fan & Chang, 2021). Some of those strategies are usually related to the implementation of recycling programs, developing energy-efficient solutions, educating the public to follow sustainable practices, investing in renewable energy sources, and promoting environmentally friendly products (Edgeman, 2015). All those strategies are intended to increase the sustainable profile of organizations toward achieving greater excellence.

In the context of Saudi Arabia, it is essential to indicate that the country's economy has been in a period of substantial transformation and diversification. In line with the objectives developed in Vision 2030, the Saudi government has been committed to decreasing the national economy's dependence on oil (Almulhim et al., 2020). In fact, the focus on achieving sustainable excellence has been directly linked to Saudi Arabia's ambitions to develop a highly modernized economy, which is comparable to the advancements made in other developed countries.

Research Methodology

The research methodology that will be used in this study will comprise both primary and secondary research. Primary research will be conducted to gain more substantial details about the views of organizational leaders in Saudi Arabian companies regarding sustainability practices. Therefore, using quantitative research will be considered a feasible option since the emphasis will be on the collection and analysis of a significant amount of numerical data (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001). For instance, such numerical information will be used to find relevant patterns and averages within the quantitative dataset (Harkiolakis, 2017). Also, it will be possible to make predictions about the research phenomenon that will be investigated in this study. Causal relationships will be tested to determine whether the specified research hypotheses will be confirmed or rejected. At the same time, the

quantitative research results that will be generated in the study will be generalized to the wider population.

As quantitative research methodology will be employed in this study, the data collection method will be an online questionnaire that will be administered to a sample of 250 participants. These participants will be selected from a population of organizational leaders in different Saudi Arabian companies. The questionnaire will consist of closed-ended and multiple-choice questions related to the research problem identified in this study.

From the perspective of conducting secondary research, it is important to mention that a similar method will strengthen the conclusions based on primary research. Such secondary research will be in the form of a systematic literature review on specific topics pertaining to the research problem identified in this study (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001). The information gathered from secondary research will be used for comparison with the primary research findings to find certain common points that will further increase the generalizability of the results.

Research Structure

The research process will be presented in several important steps. First, a thorough literature review will be conducted on the topics of sustainability and environmental responsibility in the business context of Saudi Arabia. The second step will be to collect important primary information from the identified sample of 250 participants. Once all the necessary information is collected, the next steps of the research process will be to analyze and interpret the data and writing the final report. The data analysis method that will be used in this study is descriptive statistics (Harkiolakis, 2017). This method is described as a set of different descriptive coefficients that will summarize the quantitative research findings generated from the questionnaire with the selected number of participants (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001). Some of these coefficients will be identified as central tendency, particularly

mean and median scores, with the purpose to present more substantial details about the typical value in the quantitative dataset. Moreover, specific recommendations will be provided to stakeholders in Saudi Arabian companies to enable them to improve their sustainable practices.

Research Limits

One of the research limits in this study is that the context of the research phenomenon may not be adequately understood. As quantitative research involves numerical information, such details may be insufficient to explain complex relationships. At the same time, the use of quantitative research methodology may prevent the researcher from gaining an in-depth knowledge about the research problem. In other words, quantitative research may not properly capture the complexity and diversity in the perspectives on sustainable excellence in the business context of Saudi Arabia.

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