

The Mediating Effect of Stakeholder Trust between Total Quality Management Practices and the Sustainable Performance among Non-Profit Organizations in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

Non-Profit Organizations are under increasing pressure to demonstrate accountability, service quality, and long-term value in response to evolving societal needs. While Total Quality Management (TQM) practices are known to enhance organizational performance, the mediating role of Stakeholder Trust in promoting Sustainability Performance remains underexplored. This study examines how TQM practices influence Sustainability Performance through Stakeholder Trust in 152 Saudi non-profit organizations. Data were collected via random sampling and analysed using Structural Equation Modelling with Smart PLS 4. Findings indicate that Stakeholder Trust significantly mediates the effect of TQM practices on Sustainability Performance, underscoring its essential role in organizational improvement. The study contributes empirically to the literature by demonstrating how quality management and trust-building mechanisms jointly enhance sustainable outcomes. Practical implications include strategies for nonprofit leaders and policymakers to strengthen governance, accountability, and both financial and non-financial sustainability in the sector.

Keywords: Sustainability Performance, Total Quality Management Practices, Stakeholder Trust, Non-Profit Organizations, Saudi

Introduction

Nonprofit organizations play a vital role in identifying social problems, providing solutions, and achieving sustainable community development, a role that neither government nor the private sector can fulfill alone (King Khalid Foundation, 2021; Abiddin, Ibrahim, & Aziz, 2022).

Over the past decade, research has increasingly highlighted the importance of adopting systematic management practices, including Total Quality Management (TQM), stakeholder engagement, and trust-building mechanisms, to enhance organizational effectiveness and sustainability in nonprofit settings (Acquah, Quaicoe, & Arhin, 2022; Aboramadan, Dahleez, Farao, & Alshurafa, 2021; Sin, Jusoh, & Sim, 2022a).

Despite these advances, existing studies have primarily focused on for-profit sectors or public organizations, leaving a critical gap in understanding how TQM practices and stakeholder trust jointly influence sustainability performance in nonprofit organizations, particularly in the context of rapid social and regulatory transformations in Saudi Arabia (Al-Qahtani, 2022; Alshourah, 2021; Mohamed & Hussein, 2023). Furthermore, while some research has examined individual factors such as customer focus, human capital development, or process management, few studies have investigated the integrated effect of these practices on nonprofit performance outcomes or the mediating role of stakeholder trust (Bridoux, 2016; Kim & Jeong, 2022; Lee & Hwang, 2022).

Therefore, this study aims to fill these gaps by exploring the relationship between Total Quality Management practices and sustainability performance in Saudi nonprofit organizations, with a particular focus on the mediating role of stakeholder trust. The scope of this research includes six dimensions of organizational sustainability: financial, human capital, social, environmental, operational, and performance outcomes. By addressing these dimensions, the study provides insights into how nonprofits can strategically leverage TQM practices and stakeholder relationships to adapt to ongoing social transformations while achieving sustainable performance.

Research Background

Problem Statement

Non-profit organizations (NPOs) play a central role in identifying societal needs, addressing social challenges, and contributing to sustainable community development—functions that neither the government nor the private sector can fully accomplish alone (King Khalid Foundation, 2021). To maximize their impact, NPOs are increasingly required to adopt evidence-based monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the effectiveness of their programs and strategies in advancing sustainable development (Abiddin et al., 2022). Recent empirical studies further emphasize that effective evaluation mechanisms significantly enhance organizational learning and improve strategic decision-making in NPOs (Alshammari & Khan, 2021; Greene, 2023).

Globally, the non-profit sector has become a vital component of national economies and is increasingly recognized as the third pillar of sustainable development alongside the public and private sectors (Bartosova & Podhorska, 2021). Recent international research highlights the expanding economic and social contributions of NPOs, especially in areas related to social innovation and community resilience (Meyer et al., 2022; Tarsilla, 2024).

In Saudi Arabia, the launch of Vision 2030 and the establishment of the National Center for the Non-Profit Sector under Cabinet Resolution No. 459 in 2019 marked a major milestone in strengthening, regulating, and empowering the sector (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2019). The Center provides oversight, licensing, governance enhancement, and capacity-building

initiatives designed to improve the administrative and financial efficiency of NPOs and support their alignment with national development goals (National Transformation Program, 2018). Recent empirical work in the Saudi context indicates that improved governance mechanisms and regulatory clarity have significantly contributed to the sector's growth and operational maturity (Al-Qahtani, 2022; Almutairi & Rahman, 2023).

Achieving Vision 2030 requires NPOs to continuously improve work processes, administrative practices, communication mechanisms, and decision-making systems to deliver high-quality services and create long-term societal value. As public engagement with the sector increases, NPOs are expected to evaluate their sustainability performance and consider the social, economic, environmental, and cultural implications of their activities on target groups (Jones & Mucha, 2014). Recent studies show that strengthening sustainability performance has become essential for enhancing organizational resilience and public value creation in the non-profit sector (Pérez-Esparrells et al., 2021; Mohamed & Hussein, 2023).

Stakeholders, including individuals, communities, governments, donors, and partner organizations play a pivotal role in shaping the mission, legitimacy, and overall success of NPOs (Zimek & Baumgartner, 2017). Becker (2023) underscores the importance of building and maintaining public trust in charitable organizations and encourages nonprofit leaders to implement targeted strategies to enhance stakeholder confidence. Empirical evidence further demonstrates that stakeholder trust significantly affects funding stability, volunteer engagement, and long-term organizational survival (Kim & Jeong, 2021; Salamon & Haddad, 2024). As Total Quality Management (TQM) has been shown to improve organizational and operational performance, stakeholder trust becomes a crucial mechanism through which TQM practices translate into sustainable performance outcomes (Álvarez-González et al., 2017; Mahmud & Idris, 2022).

Total Quality Management in Npo

Previous research has identified a clear empirical gap concerning the limited availability of studies examining the impact of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices on sustainability performance within non-profit organizations (NPOs) (AL-Tabbaa et al., 2014). While management practices and their influence on performance and sustainability have been extensively studied in for-profit organizations (Acquah et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2019; Nguyen & Mohamed, 2021; Patyal & Koilakuntla, 2017; Sin et al., 2022a; Yas et al., 2021), recent evidence indicates that the nonprofit context remains underexplored. New empirical studies emphasize that management and quality improvement mechanisms may produce different outcomes in mission-driven organizations, especially those operating in resource-constrained environments (Bellucci et al., 2021; Rahman & Idris, 2023; Omar et al., 2024).

Previous literature has proposed several organizational frameworks—including transparency and disclosure mechanisms, supply chain management, financial systems, capacity building, organizational characteristics, and collaborative partnerships—as determinants of organizational success and sustainability. However, these frameworks have not been widely adopted or empirically validated in nonprofit settings, and recent studies suggest that NPOs continue to lack structured quality management approaches aligned with their mission-driven nature (Sharma & Gupta, 2022; Al-Mutairi & Karim, 2023). Consequently, consensus has not

yet emerged regarding the role of TQM in shaping sustainability performance within nonprofit organizations.

Despite the contributions of the existing TQM literature, which provides diverse insights into managerial practices and quality improvement (Ali & Kaur Johl, 2022), no empirical study to date has directly examined the impact of TQM practices on NPO performance. Implementing TQM in NPOs presents several challenges due to their unique characteristics. Unlike for-profit entities, NPOs prioritize mission achievement and social value creation over revenue generation, making traditional financial metrics inadequate for assessing organizational performance. Recent empirical work highlights that nonprofit performance measurement systems must incorporate social impact indicators to capture mission fulfillment (Teelken & Lethbridge, 2021; Cabrera et al., 2023).

Resource constraints also represent a major barrier. Many NPOs operate with limited financial and human resources, making it difficult to sustain long-term TQM initiatives that require continuous investment in training, systems, and organizational capabilities. Additionally, NPOs serve multiple stakeholder groups—donors, beneficiaries, volunteers, regulators, and communities—whose expectations often conflict. This multi-stakeholder complexity has been identified in recent studies as a key challenge that differentiates NPO quality management from that of the for-profit sector (Mariani & Baggio, 2022; Hassan & AlDossari, 2024).

Moreover, measuring outcomes in nonprofits is inherently complex. While TQM emphasizes quantifiable results and continuous improvement, nonprofit outcomes often relate to intangible and long-term social changes, such as community empowerment and well-being. Recent studies confirm that the difficulty in quantifying social impact limits nonprofit adoption of standardized TQM models (Tremblay et al., 2023).

Consequently, a significant empirical gap remains. Although previous studies (e.g., Kinnunen et al., 2022) have shown that various TQM-related practices support sustainability performance in for-profit settings, their applicability within nonprofit environments remains unclear due to a lack of rigorous empirical investigation. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap by examining the mediating role of stakeholder trust in the relationship between TQM practices and sustainability performance in nonprofit organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

While Total Quality Management (TQM) practices have been widely examined in nonprofit organizations, the specific mediating role of stakeholder trust in linking these practices to sustainable performance remains underexplored. This paper focuses specifically on this mediating effect among nonprofit organizations in Saudi Arabia, highlighting how stakeholder trust can influence the effectiveness of selected TQM practices. By concentrating on this relationship, the study offers novel insights without replicating the broader scope of prior doctoral research..

Using Stakeholders Trust as an Influential Mediator in Sustainability of Performance

Stakeholder trust is a critical factor for nonprofit organizations (NPOs) because it directly influences their ability to secure resources, build partnerships, and achieve their missions. Unlike for-profit organizations—which rely on market mechanisms and financial

performance—nonprofits depend on the confidence that stakeholders place in their transparency, accountability, and mission-driven results (Ebrahim et al., 2014). Sargeant (2017) emphasizes that nonprofits rely heavily on voluntary donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations, making trust indispensable for financial continuity. Recent empirical studies also confirm that donor trust significantly improves funding stability and long-term commitment (Kim & Jeong, 2022; Becker, 2023).

Trust is equally important for attracting and retaining volunteers, who provide time and effort without monetary compensation. Their willingness to continue supporting the organization is influenced by their perception of the nonprofit's integrity and social impact (Nguyen et al., 2021). Additionally, government agencies and international donors must trust that nonprofits will use allocated funds responsibly to achieve project goals—a requirement that has become even more critical in the post-COVID-19 funding environment (Alves & Ferreira, 2022).

NPOs also face heightened expectations of transparency and accountability, as their activities are closely monitored by donors, beneficiaries, regulators, and the public (Kramer, 2016). Recent studies demonstrate that trust strengthens external relationships, enhances collaboration, and improves organizational legitimacy (Lopez & Martinez, 2023). In other sectors, trust has been associated with improved organizational performance through increased loyalty, reputation, and stakeholder engagement (Maier et al., 2016). Similarly, in the nonprofit sector, trust enhances financial stability, volunteer participation, and long-term performance outcomes (Gibbs, 2019; Rahman & Idris, 2023).

Recent literature also highlights an emerging empirical gap regarding the mediating role of stakeholder trust in nonprofit performance. Aboramadan et al. (2021) found that stakeholder trust significantly mediates the relationship between performance measurement and organizational effectiveness. Kujala et al. (2022) argue that involving stakeholders in decision-making reduces resistance and increases organizational success. Studies in the corporate sector further demonstrate that stakeholder trust acts as a mediator that strengthens performance outcomes (Baah et al., 2022). In the nonprofit context, stakeholder engagement is particularly valuable in overcoming resource constraints by creating collaborative opportunities that enhance collective impact (Woo et al., 2023; Hassan & AlDossari, 2024).

Moreover, nonprofits rely heavily on trust and perceived competence to maintain legitimacy, especially because they depend on public funding and voluntary support (Poister, 2003). Leadership and boards therefore play a central role in cultivating internal trust to enhance organizational effectiveness (Soelton, 2021). Performance reporting to both internal and external stakeholders has also been shown to support long-term sustainability performance (Masruki et al., 2022; Cabrera et al., 2023).

Despite these insights, no research has specifically examined how stakeholder trust mediates the relationship between TQM practices and sustainability performance within nonprofit organizations. This reveals a significant empirical gap in literature. While existing studies highlight the importance of stakeholder trust in nonprofit effectiveness, its influence on the TQM–sustainability performance relationship remains unclear. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by investigating the mediating effect of stakeholder trust on the sustainability performance of nonprofit organizations

The Objective of this Paper

The objective of this paper is to investigate the mediating effect of stakeholder trust between TQM and sustainability performance in non-profit organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Understanding this mediating effect is critical for enhancing organizational effectiveness and sustainability in Saudi nonprofit organizations

Scope of the Study

The study targets managers and CEOs, who are usually the decision-makers and have the most insight into the future of their organizations and strategies for sustainable performance. This paper focuses on 152 non-profit organizations selected from the Makkah Al-Mukaromah region in Saudi Arabia. Leadership is a crucial factor in decision-making within nonprofit organizations. The main unit of analysis for collecting quantitative data is the organization itself.

Research Gap and Contribution

Despite the increasing interest in Total Quality Management (TQM) practices and sustainability performance in organizations, empirical studies examining the mediating role of stakeholder trust in nonprofit organizations (NPOs) remain scarce, particularly in the Saudi Arabian context. Most existing research focuses on for-profit or industrial sectors (Evren Subasi, 2021; Iyer, 2018), leaving a significant gap in understanding how TQM practices influence sustainability performance through stakeholder trust in nonprofit settings. Furthermore, while studies have acknowledged the importance of leadership, customer focus, and human capital development in enhancing organizational performance (Acquah et al., 2022; Alshourah, 2021; Sin et al., 2022), there is limited evidence on how these TQM components interact with stakeholder trust to drive sustainable outcomes in NPOs.

Additionally, the existing literature often relies on Western or non-Saudi contexts, which may not fully reflect the cultural, social, and economic characteristics unique to Saudi Arabia (Bridoux, 2016; Vensson, 2018). In particular, the influence of Islamic principles, such as zakat (charitable giving), on fostering stakeholder trust has been underexplored. This paper addresses four specific gaps identified in prior studies: (1) understanding trust dynamics among different stakeholder groups (donors, beneficiaries, employees, volunteers) within Saudi NPOs, (2) examining applied TQM practices in the nonprofit context, (3) exploring the connection between TQM practices, stakeholder trust, and sustainability performance, and (4) assessing how TQM practices influence trust across diverse stakeholder groups.

By addressing these gaps, the present study provides a context-specific analysis that bridges theoretical and empirical shortcomings, offering valuable insights into how nonprofit organizations in Saudi Arabia can leverage TQM practices and stakeholder trust to enhance their sustainable performance. This focus informs the study's objectives, which aim to investigate the mediating effect of stakeholder trust between TQM practices and sustainability performance, and guides the scope of the study, which targets nonprofit organizations in the Makkah region, with organizational leaders as the main unit of analysis

Literature Review

Nonprofit Organization

The non-profit sector is an important aspect of Saudi Arabia and is considered the third pillar of sustainable economic development, along with the public and private sectors. Developed countries have long been interested in this sector, and Saudi Arabia has set within the goals of Vision 2030 a clear goal, which is to increase the contribution of the non-profit sector to GDP from 0.03% to 5%. Since the non-profit sector is a vital and important sector in the development and solidarity of any society, the Kingdom's Vision 2030 three strategic goals are jointly achieved by various parties: supporting the growth of the nonprofit sector, enabling nonprofits to achieve a deeper impact, and encouraging volunteerism (National Transformation Program, 2018).

Sustainable Performance in Nonprofit Organization

Nonprofits are vital in addressing social, environmental, and economic challenges. However, they often face significant obstacles in achieving and maintaining sustainability. One key challenge is balancing their mission-driven goals with financial stability. Unlike for-profit entities, nonprofits rely heavily on donations, grants, and government funding, which can be unpredictable and vulnerable to external economic conditions. This reliance can hinder their ability to plan long-term and invest in sustainable practices (Bennett, 2019) Another challenge is the limited resources available to implement sustainability initiatives. Nonprofits often operate on constrained budgets, making it difficult to allocate funds to sustainability projects or invest in necessary infrastructure and technology. Additionally, there may be a need for more expertise or knowledge regarding sustainability best practices within the organization, which can further hinder progress. Furthermore, nonprofits face the challenge of measuring and demonstrating their sustainability performance. Stakeholders, donors, beneficiaries, and regulatory bodies increasingly demand transparency and accountability regarding organizations' environmental, social, and governance impacts (Clark, 2020)

Nonprofit organizations are generally slow to adopt sustainability practices even though sustainability assessment and reporting can potentially improve the accountability and performance of organizations in all areas of concern, including the often-overlooked categories of environmental and social performance (Jones & Mucha, 2014). Consensus remains elusive for researchers on how to conceptually define and measure the performance of nonprofit organizations (Boateng et al., 2016).

Sustainability performance refers to a company's economic, environmental, and social performance (Zimek & Baumgartner, 2017). Therefore, SP must be integrated into businesses that seek to enhance companies' contribution to global sustainable development and competitive advantage (Morioka & de Carvalho, 2016).

Total Quality Management and the Main Principles of TQM Practices

TQM is a management approach that is used to seek for sources of continuous improvement to deliver high-quality products and services to clients or customers. TQM enhances organizational effectiveness by enhancing stakeholder satisfaction, pursuing continuous improvement, and promoting proactive leadership (Nawelwa et al., 2015). Iyer (2018) a systematic activity carried out by an institution to achieve institutional goals efficiently to the satisfaction of beneficiaries in a timely manner and at a reasonable price.

TQM can be a comprehensive and structured approach to achieving total quality. Evren Subasi (2021) believed that it a process in which every department and employee in the organization participates, where all requirements are implemented by the management to obtain optimal service and production and provide high-quality goods and services. It is a management system that seeks customer satisfaction requirements, employee requirements, and organizational benefits. TQM emphasizes customer satisfaction, employee involvement, and systematic, integrated efforts to achieve long-term success by reducing defects, enhancing performance, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

In this research, the operational definition of TQM practices is a comprehensive, contemporary, and long-term management approach that leads an organization to satisfy customers and obtain results that exceed their expectations.

Leadership Practices

As featured in the study of Acquah et al., (2022); Alshourah, (2021); Okour, (2020); Saud, (2019); Sin et al., (2022)), strategic planning is an activity that should be undertaken by top management. This is to spread the culture of quality service policy through implementing the quality policy. It is assumed that senior management determines customer requirements (all their needs and desires) by reviewing the needs of beneficiaries, studying needs, and conducting continuous opinion surveys.

As a result of the scarcity of studies in the non-profit sector on leadership practices, in this research the three practices of total quality management (leadership, strategic planning, and administrative commitment) related to management and leadership were adopted as leadership practices for TQM in nonprofit organizations. This is because, without leadership, strategic plans will not be developed. Without imposing administrative commitment, these plans will not be implemented, and thus the organizations and their goals will not be achieved. The nonprofit sector will not achieve sustainable development, as it counts on the 5% contribution to increase the GDP of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Customer Focus

Customer focus is the essence of growth and competitive advantage for organizations; hence, a key role of TQM is highlighted through the monitoring of customer reactions and requirements (Yas et al., 2021, Aletaiby, 2021, Delduarte, 2021). As pointed out by Sin et al., (2022) Managing customer relationships, taking care of them, meeting their desires, and exceeding their expectations will lead to satisfactory results for the organization and contribute to the sustainability of its performance. To get satisfactory results, there must be a focused plan for customer care. Emphasis must also be placed on periodic and continuous evaluation. Bosses are also often concerned with direct supervision and solving customer problems. Therefore, improving customer-focused processes will contribute to achieving a high degree of satisfaction. Due to the weakness of studies in non-profit organizations to use the practice of focusing on the client based on the latest term of the European Quality Foundation, as it is a more comprehensive term that expresses all the clients of the organization and includes managing the relationship with them and caring for them in a non-profit organization. In this paper, term "customer focus" was used as a total quality practice in non-profit organizations.

Human Capital Development

As noted by past researchers (Acquah et al., 2022; Alshourah, 2021; Talib & Wassan et al., 2022), motivation and teamwork have a significant impact on the performance of different organizations and are especially important for employee engagement as an essential element in work as a practice of TQM. According to Alshourah, (2021), “[a] hospital management that clearly understands the value of training, participation, motivation, and employee partnership achieves high levels of quality performance.” Hence, training, and continuing education will lead to high success in sustaining performance (Aletaiby, 2021) and is considered one of the basic practices that have the most impact on organizational performance (Wassan et al., 2022).

On the other hand, workforce management significantly impacts an organization's performance. Based on the study by Saud (2019), the participation of competent employees at all levels that leads to their empowerment and involvement helps to further achieve the goal of comprehensive quality, which then enhances the organization's performance. Since maintaining a loyal workforce is a prerequisite for implementing TQM (Farzi et al. 2021), personnel management or human resources is concerned with caring for and managing the workforce starting from recruitment until the end of the service to improve an organization's reputation and contribute to its sustainability (Sin et al., 2022). Due to the lack of interest in human resources, especially in non-profit organizations. The National Centre for the Development of the Non-Profit Sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted human capital development in its objectives to address all processes and procedures concerned with the comprehensive management of human resources, whether for employees or volunteers. As there are weak studies in this field, the term “human capital practices” was adopted in this paper to address all processes related to human resources, as indicated by previous research on sustainability of performance.

Stakeholder Trust in Nonprofit Organizations (NPOS)

Stakeholder trust is essential for the success and sustainability of nonprofit organizations (NPOs). NPOs depend on the trust of donors, beneficiaries, volunteers, and employees to secure resources and support for their missions. Building trust involves maintaining transparency, accountability, and ethical practices. With trust, NPOs may be able to attract support and achieve their goals, making it crucial for their long-term effectiveness (Lee, 2022).

(Bridoux, (2016); vensson, (2018) they address that stakeholder trust in nonprofit organizations within Saudi Arabia. Much of the existing literature on nonprofits and stakeholder trust is derived from studies in Western or other non-Saudi contexts, which need to fully account for the unique cultural, social, and economic characteristics of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, there is a need for context-specific studies to understand better how cultural and religious values, as well as the social and political environment in Saudi Arabia, shape stakeholder trust in nonprofit organizations. This includes exploring the role of Islamic principles, such as zakat (charitable giving), in fostering trust. There are four of evidence to support this.

First, Understanding Trust Dynamics Among Stakeholder Groups: There is a lack of research on how trust dynamics differ among various stakeholder groups (e.g., donors,

beneficiaries, employees, and volunteers) within Saudi Arabian nonprofit organizations. Trust levels can vary significantly based on the unique interests, expectations, and interactions of each group with the organization. To address this gap, studies must investigate how trust is developed, sustained, or diminished among different stakeholder groups in Saudi nonprofits and which factors contribute to trust or distrust in these relationships.

Second, Applied Studies in the Nonprofit Context: Most research on Total Quality Management (TQM) practices is concentrated in the private or industrial sectors, leaving a gap in studies that explore their impact on nonprofit organizations. Even when these studies include nonprofits, they must demonstrate how TQM practices can build stakeholder trust within this context. Therefore, more applied research is needed to understand how TQM practices such as continuous improvement, employee engagement, and data analysis can foster stakeholder trust in nonprofit organizations.

Third, there needs to be a significant gap in understanding the connection between TQM practices and long-term performance sustainability in nonprofit organizations through stakeholder trust as a mediating effect. Additionally, more research is needed on how trust, enhanced through TQM practices, affects performance sustainability. Studies that explicitly link TQM practices to sustainability in nonprofits, focusing on how these practices impact stakeholder trust and, consequently, sustainability performance, are clearly needed.

Fourth, Impact of TQM Practices on Various Stakeholder Groups: There is a noticeable empirical gap in research examining the influence of TQM practices on trust among different stakeholder groups (e.g., donors, beneficiaries, employees, and volunteers) in nonprofit organizations. To fill this gap, studies exploring how TQM practices can enhance trust among each stakeholder group and determining which practices are most effective in building trust are essential.

In summary, there is a significant need for further research exploring the relationship between TQM practices, stakeholder trust, and sustainability in nonprofit organizations, particularly in specific cultural contexts like Saudi Arabia. Expanding research to include these aspects will provide valuable insights into strengthening trust and ensuring sustainable performance in nonprofit organizations. This paper aims to fill this gap by examining the mediating role of stakeholder trust between TQM practices and sustainable performance in nonprofit organizations in Saudi Arabia.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

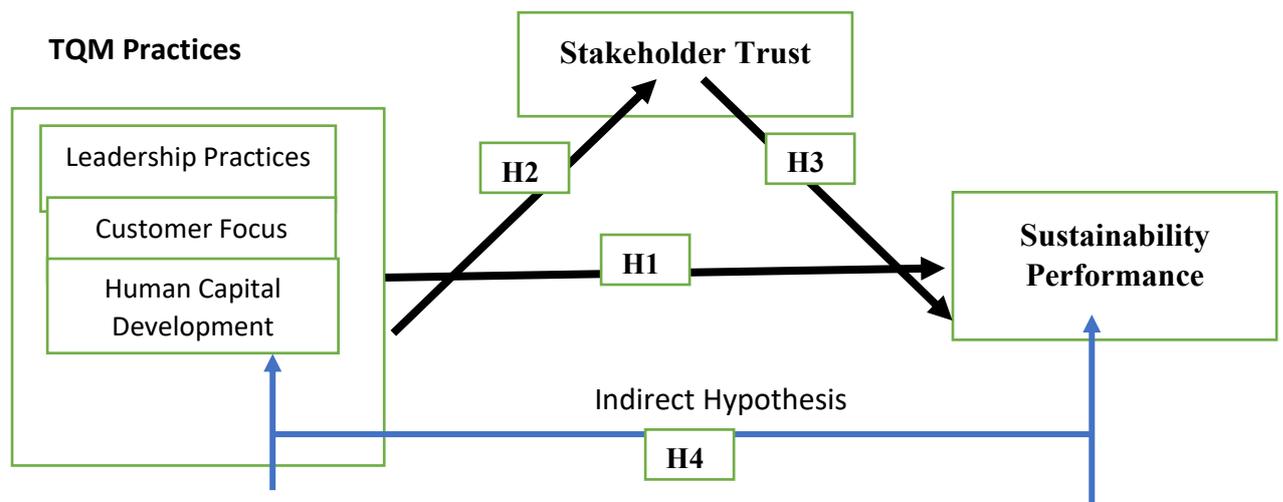


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

Hypotheses Development

H1: Total Quality Management is positively significant influence on Sustainability Performance

H2: Total Quality Management is positively significant influence on Stakeholder Trust

H3: Stakeholder Trust is positively significant influence on Sustainability Performance

H4: Stakeholder Trust moderates between Total Quality Management and Sustainability Performance

Methodology and Data Collection

Research Method

This study utilized a quantitative method for collecting and analysing the data of the study as it is useful for examining the impact of total quality management practices on the sustainable performance via stakeholder trust as mediator among non-profit organizations in the Makkah region. Such an approach assists in achieving the objectives of the study.

Population and Sampling

Non-profit organizations have selected by referring to databases of nonprofit organizations in The National Center of Nonprofit Sector Development in KSA. The survey method was carried out among the non-profit organizations in KSA. The respondents included in the survey method are the non-profit organizations and counted to a total number of 152 organizations.

In this study, data have collected via a self-administered survey using stratified random sampling method. The sampling frame is the official listed list published by The National Center of Nonprofit Sector Development in KSA.

This division is called stratified sample which is the most probable sampling design because the stratification provides the researchers more information with a given sample size (Sekaran, 2003). Furthermore, stratified random sampling method increases the accuracy of the results, reduces the cost and time required to conduct the research and contributes to represent the different groups in sample regularly.

The unit of analysis will then be at the organization level and stratified random sampling was be useful through random selection from each stratum. In this study, the researcher has contacted The National Center of Nonprofit Sector Development to request assistance to reach the largest number of nonprofit organizations

Questionnaire Design

This study used the survey method to collect the primary data. Questionnaire is designed to include two parts. The first part includes demographic information about the respondents, including gender, age, qualification, position, experience and It also includes some characteristics on nonprofit organizations (NPO) such as type of age of NPO, size of NPO and formality of TQM practices. The second part will ask the respondents about the variables of interest in the study, which are (1) sustainability performance, (2) stakeholder trust, (3) including three dimensions: leadership practices, customer focus and human capital development. The first factor is endogenous variable and second factor is mediator as well as the third factor is exogenous variable.

Variables Measurement

The survey measures six variables, all the variables that made up the constructs were adapted from previous studies to ensure content validity.

Sustainability performance as a dependent variable is measured by six items adapted from (Eskandari et al., 2022; Kinnunen et al., 2022; Ielasi et al., 2023; Fulzele & Shankar, 2022).

Total quality management practices as independent variable is measured by three dimensions consisting of leadership practices (5 items) adapted from (Alshourah, 2021a; Okour, 2020; Saud, 2019b; Sin et al., 2022a). Customer focus (6 items) adapted from (Acquah et al., 2022; Alshourah, 2021a; Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., 2023; Okour, 2020) and human capital development (10 items) adapted from (Talib & Rahman, 2012). Furthermore, stakeholder trust as mediator variable is measured by five items adapted from (Aboramadan et al., 2021; Helmold, 2021; Masruki et al., 2022)

Data Analysis and Results

For quantitative data analysis, the researcher employed PLS-SEM, for this exploratory study, which focuses on prediction, relationship analysis, hypotheses testing. PLS-SEM can handle both formative and reflective models effectively and quite flexible. This paper targets 152 non-profit organizations selected in KSA, which is appropriate for analysing.

Test of Normality

The guidelines of Hair et al. (2014) have been utilized in the current study to take the cut-off critical value of ± 2.58 into consideration. It is clear from Table 1 that each construct's skewness and kurtosis values fell within the specified range (± 2.58). The descriptive analysis illustrates that almost normal distribution with mean skewness ranged between 0.155 (SP) and -1.194 (HCD). On the other hand, the results showed kurtosis values ranged between -.003 (TQMP) and 0.952 (HCD) as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1

Kurtosis and Skewness Test

Variable	Code	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Leadership Practices	LP	-.430	.337	-.280	.662
Customer Focus	CF	-.706	.337	-.478	.662
Human Capital Development	HCD	-1.194	.337	.952	.662
Stakeholder Trust	ST	-.674	.337	.115	.662
Sustainability Performance	SP	.155	.383	.466	.750
Total Quality Management Practices	TQMP	-.476	.337	-.003	.662

Source: Prepared by researcher using SPSS

Histogram Test

The most significant and popular distribution in statistics is the normal distribution. Although the tonal properties of a bell would not be particularly appealing, it is occasionally referred to as the "bell curve." In honor of mathematician Karl Friedrich Gauss, it is frequently referred to as the "Gaussian curve" (Hair et al., 2013). The standard deviation serves as a gauge for how dispersed a set of data with a normally distributed distribution is. It quantitatively reveals to researchers how close all of the data set's instances cluster the mean. The standard deviation and mean are what determine how a normal distribution looks. Figure 2 displays the standard deviation, which is (0.993) and close to one.

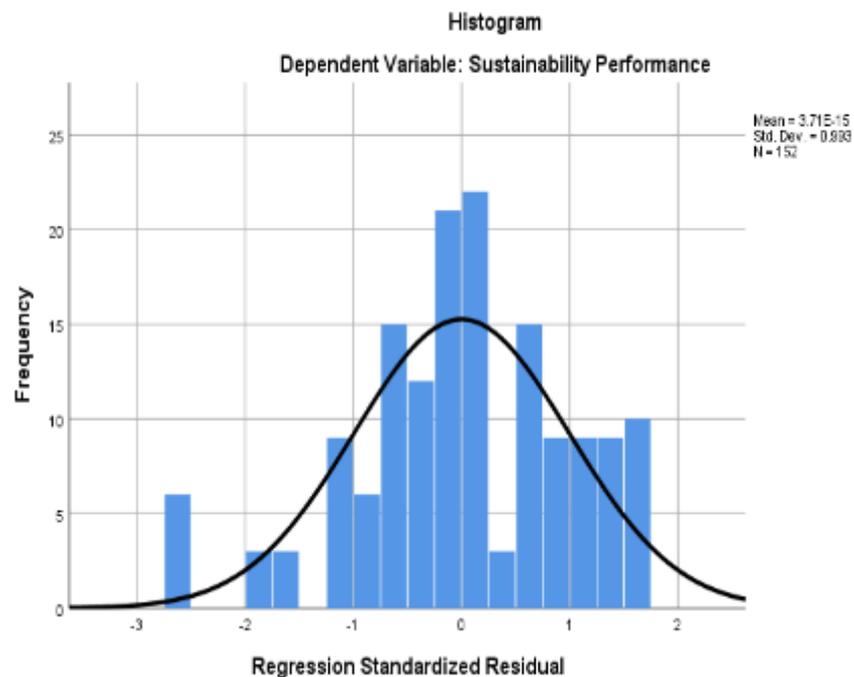


Figure 2: Error Normality Test

Descriptive Statistics for the Variables

The descriptive statistics for the variable in this paper are shown in Table 3. It is clear that the highest mean score found for stakeholder trust with 4.348 out of a maximum of 5 making up 86.96%. Followed by, human capital development and customer focus were 4.23 and 4.15 respectively which makes 84.7% and 0.83% . On the other hand, Sustainability Performance

was the lowest mean score at 3.889 or 77.7% and overall, of mean score was 4.13 (82.63%) which is more than 3 (Hair, et al., 2013). It can be seen that almost 82% of non-profit organizations in KSA agreed with the importance of stakeholder trust, TQM practices and sustainability performance in their organizations.

. Also, the computed standard deviation for every variable in this study ranged between 0.487 and 0.756, showed that the data set included a level of variability that was both acceptable and significant.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Variables

Variable	No. Items	Min.	Max.	Mean	%	Std. Deviation
Leadership Practices	4	2.75	5.00	4.1075	82.15	.64187
Customer Focus	6	2.50	5.00	4.1500	83	.75687
Human Capital Development	9	2.40	5.00	4.2380	84.76	.68210
Stakeholder Trust	4	2.80	5.00	4.3480	86.96	.57826
Sustainability Performance	6	2.86	5.00	3.8897	77.79	.48762
Total Quality Management Practices		2.74	5.00	4.0563	81.12	.59485
Overall	29	2.67	5.00	4.1315	82.63	.56840

Assessment of Measurement Model

In the first run of initial measurement model (IMM), the output of Smart-PLS4 results (3) items still have low outer loadings (less than 0.60) should be deleted from the scale with the condition the removed item does not decrease the average variance extracted (AVE) value (Hair et al., 2019; Ozturk et al. 2019).

In the final or revised measurement model, (3) items have been deleted from the initial measurement model due to the value of loadings were less than 0.60; these items including (PL2, HCD3 and TRU1). Therefore, 29 items were retained out of 32 items in Initial Measurement Model (IMM). In the final measurement model, all items had outer loadings greater than 0.60 and ranged between (0.659) for SP5 and (0.933) for CF2 (See Figure 3 and Table 3).

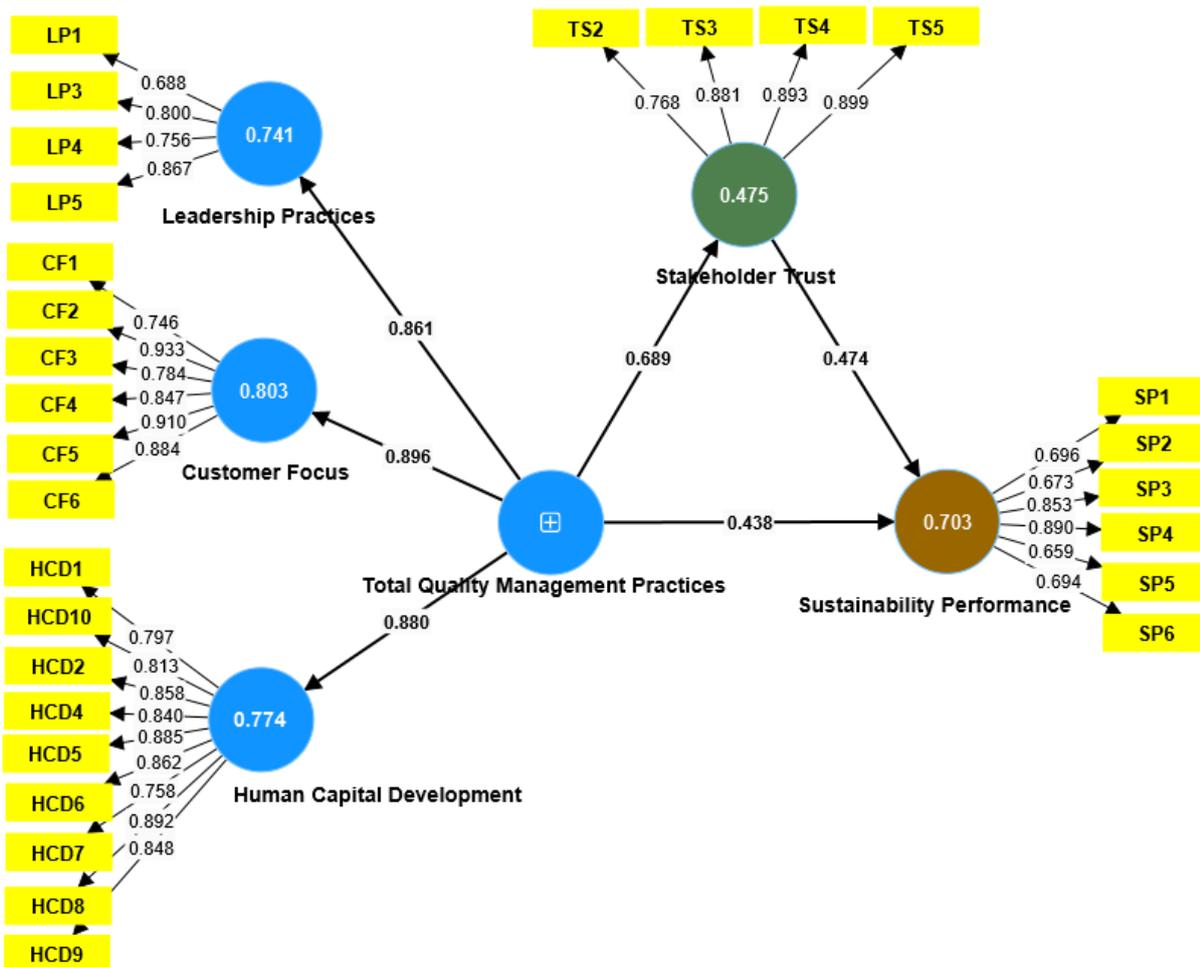


Figure 3: Measurement Model/ Outer loading (Algorithm)

Assessment of Reliability (Cronbach Alpha) and Composite Reliability

The current paper indicates the reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) values ranged between (0.786) leadership practices and (0.948) human capital development, while composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0. 0.861 to 0.950 for the same variables as shown in Table 3. Therefore, all values for reliability and composite reliability constructs were greater than the recommended value of above 0.70 (Hair, et al., 2019).

Assessment of Validity Test

Convergent Validity

Given that the study sample is 152 Non-Profit Organizations, as shown by the fact that the items factor loading in this paper is more than 0.5, it is supported as suggested by (Hair et al., 2019). In fact, where the factor loading range occurs between SP5 (0.659) and CF2 (0.933), this is ample proof of convergent validity. Consequently, there is sufficient evidence for the convergent validity of the method utilized in this paper because all of the indicators in it are related to their respective variables.

Eventually, all variables met the minimum estimation standards for measurement values, which are 0.70 for Cronbach Alpha and 0.70 for Composite Reliability (Hair et al., 2019). The Table 3 displays the values of item loading, Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability.

Table 3

Items loading, Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)
Leadership Practices	LP1	0.688	0.786	0.861
	LP3	0.800		
	LP4	0.756		
	LP5	0.867		
Customer Focus	CF1	0.746	0.924	0.941
	CF2	0.933		
	CF3	0.784		
	CF4	0.847		
	CF5	0.910		
	CF6	0.884		
Human Capital Development	HCD1	0.797	0.948	0.950
	HCD2	0.858		
	HCD4	0.840		
	HCD5	0.885		
	HCD6	0.862		
	HCD7	0.758		
	HCD8	0.892		
	HCD9	0.848		
	HCD10	0.813		
	Stakeholder Trust	TS2		
TS3		0.881		
TS4		0.893		
TS5		0.899		
Sustainability Performance	SP1	0.696	0.841	0.884
	SP2	0.673		
	SP3	0.853		
	SP4	0.890		
	SP5	0.659		
	SP6	0.694		

Source: Prepared by researcher using output of Smart-PLS4 (Measurement Model).

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

For each set of constructs in this paper, the values of AVE are greater than the squared of correlations. Also, for any given variable, the AVE square root was bigger than the correlation square's absolute value with any other variable in Table 6. Constructs have an average variance extracted (AVE) of at least 0.5 and ranged from 0.530 to 0.732, as shown in Table 4. Consequently, there is sufficient evidence for the convergent validity of the method utilized in this paper because all of the indicators in it are related to their respective variables.

Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity is presented in Table 4. As indicated by, the discriminant validity indicates how the paper variables differ from other variables (Hair et al., 2010). An important statistical test known as Average Variance Extracted (AVE) can be utilized to assess the discriminant validity of each variable, which may be greater than the correlation between other variables (Fronell & Larcker, 1981).

Hair et al. (2013) and Fornell and Larcker (1981) proposed a measure to look at the discriminant validity. If the diagonal elements are being viewed as higher than the elements in other off-diagonal in their related columns and rows then we can make the comparison and assume the discriminant validity.

Table 4

Discriminant Validity for (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)

	AVE	FC	HCD	LP	ST	SP
FC	0.728	0.853				
HCD	0.706	0.660	0.840			
LP	0.609	0.647	0.698	0.780		
TRU	0.742	0.509	0.834	0.504	0.861	
SP	0.562	0.611	0.799	0.618	0.776	0.750

Source: Prepared by researcher using output of Smart-PLs (Measurement Model)

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

The HTMT is defined as the mean of the value of the item correlation across constructs relative to the (geometric) mean the average correlation for items measuring the same construct. Discriminant Validity problems are present when HTMT values are high (Henseler et al, 2015) In addition to these guidelines, bootstrapping can be applied to test whether the HTMT value is significantly different from 1 or lower threshold value such as 0.85 or 0.90 which should be defined based on the study context (Franke and Sarstedt, 2019). In this study, HTMT values are lower than 0.90 and ranged between 0.553 and 0.898 suggesting adequate discriminant validity as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5

Shows Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

	FC	HCD	LP	ST	SP
FC					
HCD	0.691				
LP	0.722	0.778			
ST	0.553	0.898	0.585		
SP	0.665	0.881	0.741	0.875	

Assessment of the Structural Model

This part presents the results of the structural model and test of hypotheses. Specifically, the section is concerned with the testing of hypotheses related to moderating and mediating effects. the next step in PLS-SEM path modeling was to test the hypothesized relationships. To do so, this study utilized the PLS algorithm and the standard bootstrapping procedure with a number of 5000 bootstrap samples and 50 cases to examine the path coefficients significance (Hair et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2011; Hair et al., 2012; Henseler et al., 2009). Standard assessment criteria, which should be considered, include the coefficient of determination (R^2), the blindfolding-based cross validated redundancy measure (Q^2) and effect size (f^2) to explain the statistical significance and relevance of the path coefficients.

Etermination Coefficient for R² (Squared Multiple Correlation)

The (R²) value reveals the variance of the dependent variable, which is explained by the independent variables. In this study, the R² structural model on sustainability performance was 0.703. Therefore, the finding indicated the independent variables: TQM Practices and stakeholder trust explained 70.3% of the variance in sustainability performance among non-profit organizations in KSA. Meanwhile, TQM Practices explained 47.5% of the variance in stakeholder trust as indicated in Figure 4.

Assessment of Effect Size (F²)

Accordingly, Hair et al. (2019), an effect size of 0.02 is small, 0.15 is medium, and greater than 0.35 is large. The results showed that Total Quality Management had large effect size of the predictive variable on sustainability performance at .906>0.35 and also, stakeholder trust had large effect size on sustainability performance at 0.397. On the other hand, TQM Practices was medium effect size on the sustainable performance at 0.34 as indicated in Table 6 and Figure 4.

Table 6
Effect Size of predictive Variables

Variable	Effect size (f ²)	
	Sustainability Performance	Stakeholder Trust
Total Quality Management	0.340	0.906
Stakeholder Trust	0.397	-----

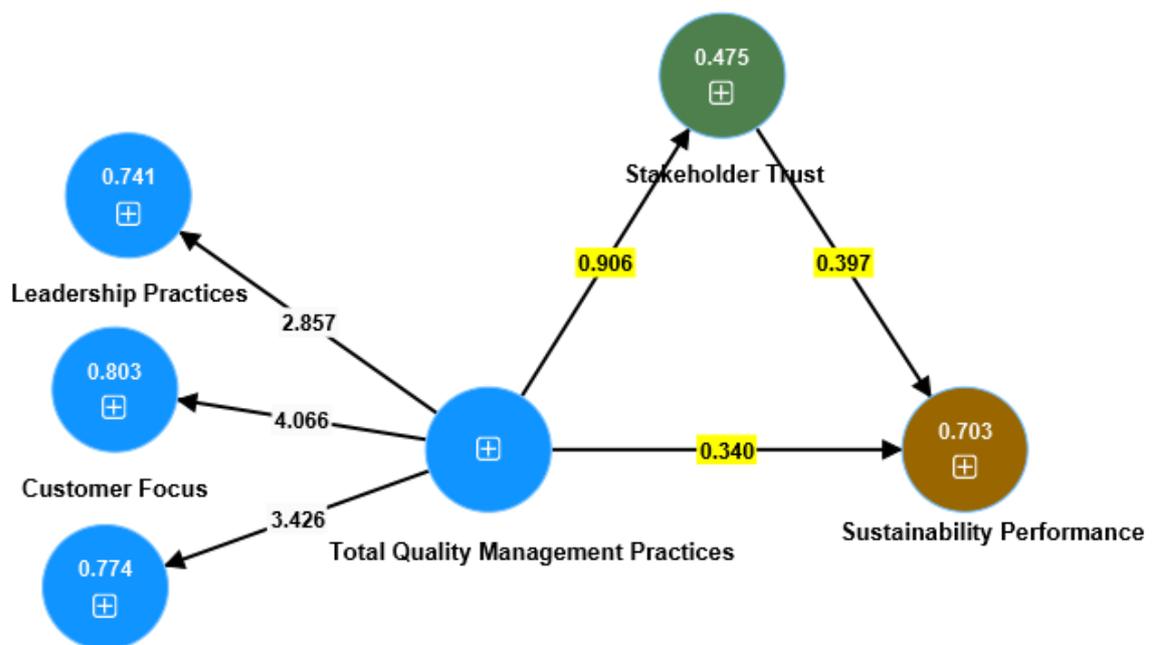


Figure 4: Measurement Model with (f²) and (R²) for main variables

Predictive Relevance (Q²)

The Q² is a criterion for measuring how well a model predicts the data of omitted case (Hair, et al., 2014). A research model with Q² statistics greater than zero is considered to have predictive relevance. Table below indicated the cross-validation redundancy measure Q² for

two dependent variables: sustainability performance and stakeholder trust were above zero at 0.378 and 0.341 respectively as indicated in Table 7 and Figure 5. In this case, the model had predictive relevance (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 7
Construct Cross validated Redundancy

	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)
Customer Focus	912.000	394.439	0.568
Human Capital Development	1368.000	637.510	0.534
Leadership Practices	608.000	342.567	0.437
Stakeholder Trust	608.000	400.606	0.341
Sustainability Performance	912.000	567.407	0.378
Total Quality Management Practices	456.000	456.000	0.000

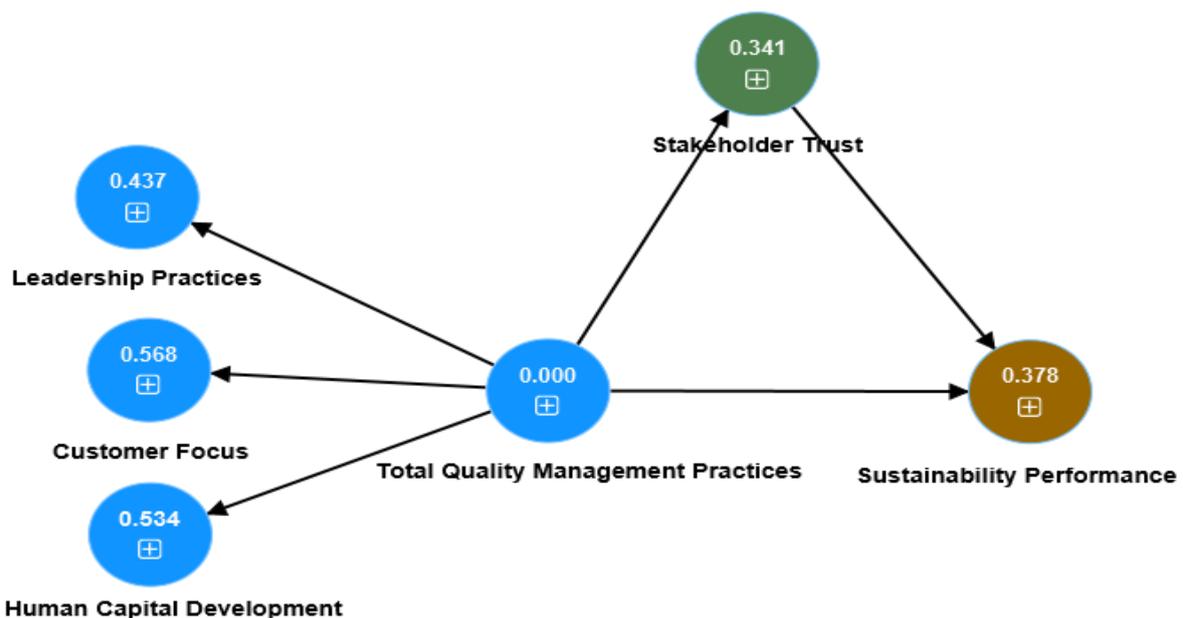


Figure 5: Predictive Relevance (Q²)

Goodness of Fit (GOF) of the Model

A global fit measure (GoF) for PLS path modelling can be defined as the geometric mean of the average variance extracted (AVE) and average R² for the dependent variable: sustainability performance (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013).

The main purpose of the goodness of fit measure is to explain the variance extracted by both the measurement model and structure model (Chin, 2010). The GoF can be calculated by the following formula:

$$Gof = \sqrt{(R^2 \times AVE)}$$

In this study, the GoF value of the model was (0.628) which had been obtained as follows:

$$Gof = \sqrt{(0.703 \times 0.562)} = \sqrt{0.395} = 0.628$$

To compare the GoF value of this study with the threshold values of GoF proposed by Wetzels *et al.* (2009) (0.10 represents small, 0.25 represents medium, 0.36 represents large), it can be concluded that the model's GoF was (0.628) suggesting an adequate of the global PLS model validity.

Direct Hypotheses Results

The results indicated that total quality management practices had statistically significant and positive influence on sustainability performance and stakeholder trust ($\beta = 0.438$; $t = 5.995$; $p < 0.001$) and ($\beta = 0.689$; $t = 14.573$; $p < 0.001$) respectively as shown in Table 8 and Figure 6. Thus, the hypotheses (H1) and (H2) are supported. Furthermore, stakeholder trust had a significant and positively influence on sustainability performance among non-profit organizations in the KSA ($\beta = 0.474$; $t = 6.642$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, the hypothesis (H3) is supported.

Table 8

Results of Direct Hypotheses

H	Exogenous Variables	Endogenous Variables	(path coefficient) (β)	S.D	C.R (t-value)	P-value	Hypothesis Result
H1	Total Quality Management	Sustainability Performance	0.438	0.073	5.995	0.000	Supported
H2	Total Quality Management	Stakeholder Trust	0.689	0.047	14.573	0.000	Supported
H3	Stakeholder Trust	Sustainability Performance	0.474	0.071	6.642	0.000	Supported

Source: Prepared by researcher using output of PLS-SEM (Structural Model)

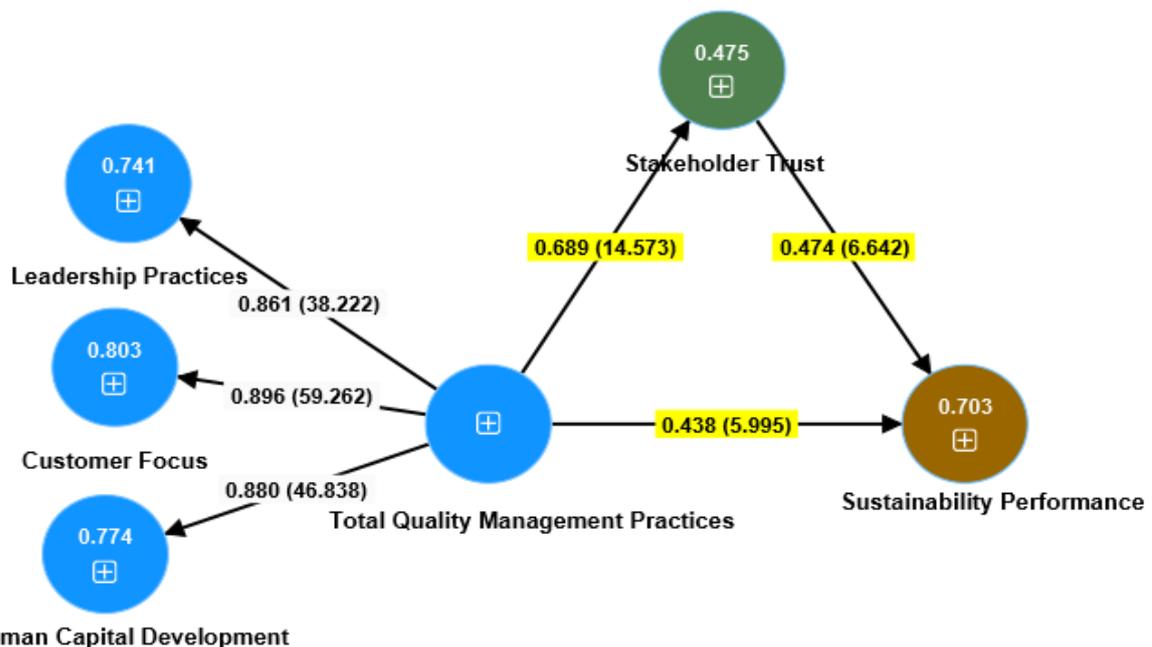


Figure 6: Structural Model with -Hypotheses results (Bootstrapping)

Results of Mediating Effect (Indirect Hypotheses Result)

The study examined the mediating role of stakeholder trust between the TQM Practices and sustainability performance using (PLS-SEM).

In this paper, the mediation test was based on the bootstrapping approach and the PLS-SEM technique as they are increasing popularity and being accepted by management leadership, human sciences and marketing researcher (Hiu Fai, Wong & Lau, 2014). Table 9 shows that

stakeholder trust (TRU) could mediate the correlation between total quality management practices and sustainability performance among non-profit organizations in KSA. ($\beta = 0.327$, $t = 6.621$, $P < 0.001$). Therefore, TQM practices had positively significant influence on sustainability performance via stakeholder trust as a mediator. Therefore, the indirect hypothesis (H4) is supported.

Table 9

Indirect Hypothesis Result (Mediating Effect)

Hyp.	Relation	Path (β)	(STDEV)	T-value	P Value	Result
H4	TQM -> ST -> SP	0.327	0.049	6.621	0.000	Supported

Source: Prepared by researcher using output of PLS-SEM (Structural Model)

Note: TQM: Total Quality Management, ST: Stakeholder Trust, SP: Sustainability Performance.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of the paper is to investigate the mediating effect of stakeholder trust between TQM and sustainability performance in non-profit organizations in the KSA. The results of this paper showed TQM practices was significant and positively influence on sustainability performance and stakeholder trust. The findings of this study are supported by a number of past studies which assert the significant impact of TQM and stakeholder trust on sustainable performance (Acquah et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2019; Nguyen et al., 2018; Patyal & Koilakuntla, 2017; Sin et al., 2022; Wassan et al., 2022). Additionally, the study' finding indicated that stakeholder trust was positively impact on sustainability performance among non-profit organizations in the KSA. The result is consistent with the findings reported in previous studies ((Zimek & Baumgartner, 2017; Ebrahim et al., 2014; Becker, 2023).

Moreover, stakeholder trust was mediation effect between total quality management practices and sustainability performance. The results of this study are similar with the findings of previous studies (Sargeant & John Wiley & Sons, 2017; Maier et al., 2016; Aboramadan et al., 2021).

The paper is significant because of its implication in the overall TQM practices and stakeholder trust of non-profit organizations in Saudi Arabia which can be based on comparative performance of the organization on a global scale.

A noted from this finding, stakeholder trust is one of the determinants in increasing levels of sustainability performance, because the views of stakeholders reflect and influence the activities conducted in the nonprofit sector, most of whom are vitally interested in the mission of the nonprofit organization and influencing its success. According to the findings of this paper, the importance of stakeholder trust in charities and advise using the findings to provide nonprofit managers with more specific recommendations to improve public trust in nonprofits. Furthermore, the major contribution of this paper is statistically validating the factors influencing on sustainability performance by non-profit organizations in KSA. Thus, it can be predicted that non-profit organizations with greater stakeholder trust strong mediation between TQM practices and sustainability performance.

On the other side, the success of the combined model of TQM practices consisting of leadership practices, customer focus and human capital development with a mediating effect of stakeholders' trust between TQM practices and sustainable performance in non-profit organizations. Therefore, piloting this model by working on organization-level practices may be required for sustainable organization performance of NPOs. Hence, to improve business performance and sustainability.

In addition, piloting the conceptual model of the current research would expand the scope of empirical research to understand the factors that can create superior competitive advantage and sustainable performance outcomes for nonprofit organizations in Saudi Arabia.

Besides, the results of this paper can be used to modify a better policy to activate TQM practices to ensure sustainable performance in non-profit organizations. These practices can be added to the governance standards for non-profit organizations adopted by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development to ensure sustainable performance. It should be noted that TQM improves performance operational, and all stakeholders share the benefits of this improvement must therefore gain trust of stakeholders to achieve sustainable performance. In addition, this paper could contribute by examining the TQM practices and stakeholder trust role in bringing sustainability performance in the organizations in general and non-profits organizations in particular to ensure the success of the National Transformation Program and achieve the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Moreover, the paper's findings establish a new model for increasing the TQM practices to improve sustainability performance through stakeholder trust as a mediator.

This paper expands the existing knowledge of leaders, executives, supervisory and oversight bodies of nonprofit organizations by understanding the core attributes of sustainable performance in non-profit organizations implementing total quality practices and stakeholder trust, which influence the measurement of sustainability of economic, social, and environmental performance, technology performance, operations, and governance.

Moreover, this paper can prove to be a big help for policy makers in The National Center for the Development of the Non-Profit Sector of Saudi Arabi to require all affiliated organizations to report on governance, through which the sustainability of the organization's financial and non-financial performance is measured through several criteria.

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