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Influence of Human Capability on the Sustainability of Consumer Electronics Retail Firms in Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine influence of human capability on the sustainability of consumer electronics retail firms in Kenya. The study sought to examine the extent to which human capability influences the sustainability of consumer electronics retail firms in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the study was guided by three theories namely the Resource Based View Theory, the Sustainability Theory and the Organizational capability Theory. The study adopted a positivism research philosophy utilizing mixed method design with both cross-sectional quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Using Slovin's formula, a sample size of 207 respondents was determined from a target population of 431 consumer electronics retail firms in Kenya. Stratified sampling was done so that the responses' representation was proper across the country. Of the total administered questionnaires,200 (96.6%) response rate was obtained. The analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 25.0; and expressed in form of frequencies, percentages and narratives and presented in tables. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The findings of the study revealed a positive and significant relationship between human capability and sustainability, with a mean rating of 4.08 and standard deviation of 1.16 in regards to its descriptive statistics results. For inferential statistics, the result depicted; r (200) = .962, $p < .05$. Results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed that human capability significantly predicted sustainability, $R2 = .972$, F (200) = 6929.76, $p < .05$; β =. 986, $p < .05$. Consequently, the null hypothesis that human capability has no significance influence on the sustainability of consumer electronic retail firms in Kenya was rejected.

Key Words: Human Capability, Sustainability, Consumer Electronics Retail Firms, Organizational Capability, Resource-Based View Theory.

Introduction

The sustainability of retail firms in the consumer electronics sector encompasses the triple bottom line: economic, social and environmental aspects. As a result, they implement energy-efficient operations, proper e-waste disposal and fair labor practices, which enable them to balance their profit-making activities with social responsibilities and ecological conservation intended for long-term survival (Jabbour et al., 2020). Sustainability has a crucial position because it not only increases a company's respect but also helps to establish strong relationships with customers and ultimately leads to cutting down of expenses through proper utilization of resources and lessening of wastes (Agyemang et al., 2020; Lee, 2021). Besides, the worldwide regulatory climate is getting harder and hence the factors concerning sustainability are being regarded as indispensable for the legal and operational continuity of businesses (Kiron et al., 2019). In order to bridge the research gap, the current study focused on influence on sustainability of consumer electronics retail firms in terms of people (social), profit (economic) and planet (environmental).

On the global front, human capability in an organization is a vital aspect of consumer electronics retail business sustainability, which is more pronounced in terms of its dependence on human capital capabilities. To this end, electronic firms should build and implement their staff's abilities and wisdom to promote sustainability. What stands out is the fact that, worldwide, organizational capabilities are increasingly identified as critical to sustainability. In 2021, a McKinsey survey found that 70% of companies said organizational capabilities were key to human capital, adaptive learning and strategic alignment in meeting targets for sustainability across industries pressed by technological changes and environmental policies (McKinsey, 2021). In 2022, the World Economic Forum also estimated that the Fortune 500 companies that focused on sustainability outperformed others by an average of 12% in return on investment over five years, mainly due to strong innovation capabilities, efficiency in systems and employee engagement (World Economic Forum, 2022).

Companies, such as Apple and Dell in the developed economies use organizational capabilities in strategic alignment and development of human capital to attain sustainability. Specifically, it was reported that, in renewable energy investment and closed-loop supply chains, there was a reduction in carbon emissions by 78% in 2023 by Apple (Apple, 2023). This is also along the lines of the greater trend of sustainability within consumer electronics, and innovation with resource management and energy efficiency providing significant impact based on competitive advantages (Barney, 2023). According to Porter and Kramer (2019), strategic alignment, process efficiency and human capital have also been identified to help promote sustainability for both sectors.

Firms in the United States of America (USA) like Google have various training and development plans that aim at improving employee competence in sustainable technologies and practices at exorbitant costs. According to Marr (2021), such investments not only enhance operational efficiency but also promote an innovation culture that is key to sustainability. In the case of Germany, business corporations such as Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) invest in the development of the workforce and make the staff take part in environmental projects which results in the company's lower carbon footprint and the earth's getting healthier in the long run (SAP, 2022). Likewise, Samsung Electronics from South Korea emphasizes human capital development through elaborate studies on environmental management and sustainable product design to match employee abilities with the enterprise's sustainability targets (Samsung Electronics, 2023). In order to bridge the research gap on influence of human capital capabilities as a variable of organizational capabilities, the study focused on employee skill levels, employee retention rates, employee productivity and employee engagement.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, sustainability among consumer electronics firms is on the rise, though there are still some major hindrances. This is due to the limited capabilities and resources inherent within organizations, in view of the fact that only 35 percent of the firms in the region have instituted strong sustainability programs (KPMG, 2022). Indeed, firms with more developed capabilities in human capital and process systems have proven to adapt to regulatory shifts; evidence from Nigeria and South Africa indicates that sustainable practices are able to cut operational costs by as high as 20 percent (PwC, 2021). Besides, initiatives in these countries have demonstrated how such adaptation and strategic alignment could even allow firms to rise beyond some of the complexities of rapidly changing markets (Agyemang et al., 2020).

In Africa, human capital capability significantly influences consumer electronic retail firms' organizational capabilities. A company that does not change with time has a risk of failing due to its stagnant operations in a dynamic environment (Mu, 2017). Therefore, for these firms, human capital capability is critical because of its direct impact on production and innovation. For example, Nigerian companies such as Konga have shown that training and development of employees can improve their competitiveness in the fast-growing e-commerce sector (Adeniyi, 2021). By concentrating on enhancing their workers' technical and managerial skills, Konga encourages a culture of constant learning which helps it to better adapt to technical improvements as well as changing market demands. In order to bridge the research gap on influence of human capital capabilities as a variable of organizational capabilities, the study current study focused on employee skill levels, employee retention rate. employee productivity and employee engagement.

In Kenya, the human capabilities of consumer electronics retail firms are greatly dictated by human capital capability, for the sustainability of these firms. Safaricom has demonstrated that investing in employee training and development enhances productivity and innovation. Focus on continuous learning and professional growth for its employees has been the pillar of Safaricom's leadership position in the consumer electronic retail sector within Kenya. By equipping their staff with improved technical and managerial skills, these companies can more easily align themselves with new technologies and changing consumer preferences example being M-Kopa mobile phones and other products including television sets and lighting products using solar panels (Munjuri & K'Obonyo, 2019). This explains why organizational culture may be considered a moderating factor of organizational capabilities. This study, though not objectively highlights aspects of organizational culture including; innovation culture, communication openness, values alignment and coordination mechanisms.

Problem Statement

Growth in consumer electronics retail sector in Kenya has been fast over the past few years due to the surge in demand of digital devices, rise in internet penetration, urbanization and the rise of middle-income population. The forecasts show that the industry will keep growing, with envisioned massive revenue growth, upsurge in online sales and product volumes, which will be indicative of the magnitude and the potential of the industry. Nevertheless, even along this positive track, the sustainability of consumer electronics retail companies is in doubt. The industry has also been challenged by the same structural factors which entail poor profit margins, ineffective supply chains, inability to access capital and the inability to match the accelerated technological change. The restrictions prevent the capability of firms in terms of investing in innovation, adopting effective operations strategies and deploying sustainable business practices. Also, the lack of proper infrastructure in the logistics system, a low level of green technologies use, insufficient customer interaction, and the existence of obsolete business models also contribute to the vulnerability of companies, casting doubt on their future sustainability in an ever more competitive and green-conscious market.

While organizational capabilities particularly human capability in areas such as innovation, adaptability, skills development, and strategic decision-making is increasingly recognized as critical drivers of firm sustainability, there is limited empirical evidence on how these capabilities influence sustainability outcomes within Kenya's context of consumer electronics retail. The available literature in Kenya has concentrated more on other industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, and the general retail industry without necessarily relating human capability to sustainability performance in electronic retailing industry. Furthermore, some of the theoretical frameworks like the Resource-Based View and the Dynamic Capabilities Theory though highlighting on the significance of organizational competencies lack contextualization information on the specific role of human capability in ensuring sustainable performance within retail settings. Such empirical and context-specific knowledge gap restricts the capacity of the managers and policymakers to come up with specific strategies to improve the sustainability. This research, therefore, aimed to fill this gap by studying how human capability determines the sustainability of consumer electronics retail companies in Kenya, in a bid to produce useful and policy-relevant information that would help sustain the competitiveness of the sector in the long run. The main research question of the study was: To what extent does human capability influence the sustainability of consumer electronics retail firms in Kenya?

Methodology

The study used positivism philosophy. The entire research progresses through the use of determining of hypothesis and using deductions (Park et al, 2020). The concepts and variables were operationalized and measured through the use of determining of hypothesis and using deductions. The philosophy is considered ideal in objectively analyzing the relationship between human capability and sustainability in Consumer Electronics Retail Firms. The current study utilized mixed method with both cross-sectional quantitative and qualitative research techniques to increase the breadth of analysis. It seeks to examine the influence of human capability (as the independent variable) on sustainability in Consumer Electronics Retail Firms (as the dependent variable). The design enables establishing of the relationship between variables without manipulating the variables (Saro et al, 2023). It provides valuable insights into the influence of human capability on sustainability in Consumer Electronics Retail Firms.

For this research, the target demographic was all of consumer electronics retail industries. The unit of observation in this research for each retail firm comprised branch managers from 431 consumer electronics retail firms registered with RETRAK in Kenya's Ministry of Trade and Investment (2025) choosing one respondent from each firm. These economic hubs host the highest number of consumer electronics retail firms (431) making them critical focal point for understanding urban market dynamics and organizational practices. Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru and Eldoret have fewer firms that is 300, 57, 21, 25 and 28 respectively. The study adopted stratified, purposive and simple random sampling. This method involved dividing the whole population is into homogeneous strata or subgroups according a common factor (Elfil & Negida, 2017). It allows researchers to obtain an effect size from each stratum separately, as if it was a different study (Mulissa, 2022). The quantitative part of the study utilized stratified sampling whereas its qualitative component utilized purposive sampling. The grouping of the population was done by strata according to the variables like firm size, geographic location, and operational history. The random choice from every stratum increases the generalizability of findings since all relevant subgroups are included in it. On the qualitative side, key informants such as senior managers and sustainability officers who can give in-depth information about their companies' capabilities and practices related to sustainability was chosen through a purposive sampling technique. This mixed strategy helped to achieve strong and intricate research outcomes by combining probability and non-probability sampling methods thus facilitating thorough data collection activities. Slovin's method was used to calculate the sample size for the study since it gave the researcher the appropriate level of accuracy (Stephanie, 2013).

The sample size for the current study was therefore 207 consumer electronics firms selected randomly from all the consumer electronic firms from a target population of 431 consumer electronics firms from the 5 selected cities and then distributed proportionately. In the study, a wide approach was adopted, which involved the use of both primary and secondary data. The primary data was the dominant form of data in the study, which was gathered through diverse methods. In addition, secondary data was gathered through pre-existing data associated with the study. Semi-structured questionnaires formed the primary methodology for the conduct of the empirical study (Yutang & Yusuf, 2021). By adopting this methodology, it was possible to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, thus becoming the best approach for the collection of subjective data that forms an essential part of understanding the organizational capacity and the challenges that firms face in aligning their strategies with sustainability objectives. The flexibility of semi-structured questionnaires allowed respondents to provide in-depth insights while still ensuring consistency across key areas of inquiry. The target population of 207 was sampled through a simple random sampling method. Thus, 10% of 207 was 21 respondents with replacement. Data collection for this study was done using a holistic approach aimed at covering all the targeted retail firms in Kenya. To begin with, hard copies of the questionnaire are first distributed to each of the targeted retail firms. This will be physically lodged to the companies, making sure that every firm stands an equal chance of being represented in this study. Both validity and reliability of research instruments were tested.

In terms of data analysis, the study employed measures of central tendency in form of mean and distribution which included standard deviation as dispersion measures for descriptive statistics. Summarized data was presented in form of frequency distribution tables and figures. For inferential statistics, the study used correlation analysis, logistic and linear regression analysis.

Results

Demographic information

For demographic profile of the respondents who took part in the study, the data recorded includes gender, age, firm occupation or department, highest educational qualification received and number of years with experience in consumer electronics retail business. Understanding these demographic facts is helpful contextual knowledge for interpreting the findings of a study in that they provide insight into background, diversity and working life of the individuals whose perceptions made up the data.

Table 1

Demographic Information

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Gender	Male	150	75.0
	Female	50	25.0
Age of Respondents	18–25 Years	74	37.0
	25–34 Years	88	44.0
	35–44 Years	28	14.0
	45–54 Years	6	3.0
	55 Years and Above	4	2.0
Occupations/Departments	Sales and Marketing	102	51.0
	After Sales Support	31	15.5
	Supply Chain and Logistics	25	12.5
	Finance and Accounting	19	9.5
	Human Resources	10	5.0
	Information Technology	9	4.5
	Product Management	2	1.0
	Legal & Compliance	2	1.0
Highest Academic Qualification	Diploma	70	35.0
	Bachelor's Degree	87	43.5
	Master's Degree	37	18.5
	Doctorate Degree	6	3.0
Years of Experience	Less than 1 Year	10	5.0
	1–3 Years	26	13.0
	4–6 Years	73	36.5
	7–10 Years	66	33.0
	Over 10 Years	25	12.5
Total Respondents = 200			

As shown in Table 1, the gender distribution of the respondents revealed 150 (75.0%) as male and 50 (25.0%) as female. This indicates that the Kenyan consumer electronics retail market is dominated by males. In Table 1, age distribution of the respondents indicates that the majority of the respondents felt within the age bracket of 25–34 years, with 88 respondents (44.0%), followed by 18–25 years old with 74 respondents (37.0%). These two comprised a total of 81% of all the respondents, which clearly proves that the consumer electronics retail market in Kenya is controlled by a working youth population. Respondents aged 35–44 years accounted for 14.0%, while those aged 45–54 and 55 years and above accounted for a paltry 3.0% and 2.0% respectively.

Observations of the respondents according to the Departments showed shown in Table 1 that the highest possible number was Sales and Marketing which recorded 102 respondents (51.0%). The second was After Sales Support at 15.5 and third was Supply Chain and Logistics at 12.5. The other departments had less representations, and these are Finance and Accounting (9.5%), Human Resources (5.0%), Information Technology (4.5%), and Product Management and Legal & Compliance which had a representation of 1.0 each. Highest level of education obtained by the respondents analyzed shows that most of them had a bachelor's degree, totaling 87 respondents (43.5%). The second were those holding a diploma and consisting of 70 respondents (35.0%), third were master's degree holders at 37 (18.5%), while a small percentage were with doctorate degrees at 6 (3.0%).The outcome of experience years in the consumer electronics retail sector by respondents is that the most occupied category, 73 respondents (36.5%), is for 4 to 6 years of experience, followed by 7 to 10 years of experience at 66 respondents (33.0%). The 1 to 3 years of experience category accounted for 13.0%, and 12.5% had over 10 years of experience. Only 5.0% of the respondents had less than one year of experience as shown in Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics of Human capability

Mean and Standard Deviation of Human capability

The findings of the frequency distribution in Table 2 provide insight into the views of respondents on various dimensions of human capability in consumer electronics retail firms in Kenya and their potential impact on sustainability. Overall, the responses exhibit a high positive skew towards the presence and operation of human capability factors, as a majority of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statements presented. An overwhelming majority of the respondents 53.5% strongly agreed that their employees possess the skills necessary to meet the demands of their work, while another 27.5% agreed. This suggests that most of the companies have a skilled workforce, which is essential in order to keep abreast of technological changes, providing quality customer service, and supporting long-term sustainability goals. Similarly, high employee retention was confirmed by 90.5% of the respondents (46.5% agreed, 44.0% strongly agreed), which means that businesses are able to hold on to a stable workforce a key indicator of organizational resilience and continuity of knowledge.

Productivity levels also received positive reviews, with 71.5% of the respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that their employees are highly productive. This is a pointer to effective human resource utilization, a key motivator of operational and financial sustainability. Besides, 53.5% of the subjects were strong in agreement that there is a high level of employee engagement in their firms, as opposed to 37.0% who were neutral. Strong agreement would equate to a highly motivated and goal-directed workforce toward the firms' goals, and that equals improved performance and innovation.

Investment in skill development and employee development was also highly rated with 63.0% of the sample strongly agreeing that firms invest heavily in skill development, indicating planning orientation in building long-term sustainability capability. A further 71.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that organizations possess effective high performer retention strategies, further entrenching organizational stability's focus on human capital. Lastly, staff motivation and commitment had more than a majority of the respondents 53.5% strongly agreeing, followed by 27.5% agreeing, indicating the presence of motivated and committed staff. Overall, cumulative frequencies indicate that about half 49.9 per cent of the total answers strongly agreed to human capability statements and another 24.5 per cent agreed which reflects very positive perception of human capability practices. It affirms the hypothesis that strong human forces, that is, skills, involvement, productivity and staff retention has made substantial contribution in determining the viability of consumer electronics retail firms in Kenya. Table 4.2 presents the findings where 1 denoted strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 denoted neutral, 4 agree and 5 denoted strongly agree.

Table 2

Influence of Human Capabilities Sustainability

Human Capabilities	1	2	3	4	5
Our employees possess the necessary skills to meet the demands of their roles.	19 (9.5%)		19 (9.5%)	55 (27.5%)	107 (53.5%)
We have a high employee retention rate.	-	-	19 (9.5%)	93 (46.5%)	88 (44.0%)
Our employees are highly productive in their work.	19 (9.5%)	-	38 (19.0%)	52 (26.0%)	91 (45.5%)
Employee engagement in our firm is very high.	19 (9.5%)	-	74 (37.0%)	-	107 (53.5%)
Our firm actively invests in employee development and skill enhancement.	19 (9.5%)	-	38 (19.0%)	17 (8.5%)	126 (63.0%)
We have effective strategies in place to retain top talent.	19 (9.5%)	-	38 (19.0%)	71 (35.5%)	72 (36.0%)
Our employees are motivated and committed to their work.	19 (9.5%)	-	19 (9.5%)	55 (27.5%)	107 (53.5%)
Total	**8.1%**	**-**	**17.5%**	**24.5%**	**49.9%**

Regression Analysis

Model Summary

From the model in Table 3, there was a very high correlation coefficient (R) of 0.986 indicating a very strong positive linear relationship between sustainability and human capability. This suggests that with improved human capability, sustainability in the firms will rise similarly. The R Square value is 0.972, indicating that the human capability variable explains 97.2% of sustainability variance. This is a very high explanatory capacity which indicates that human capability is a strong driver of sustainability performance in the industry. The Adjusted R Square, which adjusts for sample size and number of predictors, is similarly the same at 0.972, showing that with generalization beyond the sample data, the reliability and stability of the model is guaranteed.

Table 3

Model Summary on Influence of Human Capabilities

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.986[a]	.972	.972	.18738

a. Predictors: (Constant), Human Capability

ANOVA of Influence of Human Capabilities

The sum of squares regression is 243.311, which is the explained variation by the model as shown in Table 4. The sum of squares residual is 6.952, which is the unexplained variation. The total sum of squares is 250.263, or total variation in sustainability. Regression mean square = 243.311, while the residual (error) mean square is 0.035. The F-statistic value obtained is as large as 6929.761, with the attendant significance value (Sig.) =.000. The p-value calculated here is far smaller than the typical 0.05 threshold, and this indicates the model is clearly statistically significant.

Table 4

ANOVA of Influence of Human Capability on Sustainability

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	243.311	1	243.311	6929.761	.000b
	Residual	6.952	198	.035		
	Total	250.263	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability
b. Predictors: (Constant), Human Capability

Regression Coefficient of Influence of Human Capability on Sustainability

In Table 5, the unstandardized coefficient (B) is 1.044 and its standard error is 0.013. This implies that with a one-unit increase in human capability, it will raise sustainability by approximately 1.044 units holding all else constant. This large and positive coefficient demonstrates an extremely strong direct effect of human capability on outcomes of sustainability. The beta coefficient (β) standardized = 0.986 reveals that human capability bears a predominantly very strong effect on sustainability than other potential predictors. The t-value is extremely high at 83.245, and the corresponding p-value is .000, which is far less than the conventional significance threshold of 0.05. This makes the effect of human ability on sustainability statistically significant. The intercept is -0.204, and its standard error is 0.053, and it is also statistically significant (p = .000).

Table 5

Regression Coefficient Analysis of Human Capacity on Sustainability

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-.204	.053		-3.859	.000
	Human Capability	1.044	.013	.986	83.245	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Correlation Analysis of Human Capacity and Sustainability

As the findings in Table 6 indicate, there exists a very strong and positive correlation coefficient of 0.962 between human capability and sustainability with p-value = .000. This coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), which indicates a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. Because the p-value was substantially lower than the 0.05 level, the study established that human capability contributed meaningfully and positively to sustainability. It indicates that employee skill formation, productivity, motivation and retention boost strongly correlated higher consumer electronics retail businesses' sustainability in Kenya. The study confirms the central role of human capability as a strategic resource in striving for long-term sustainability in consumer electronics industry.

Table 6

Relationship between Human Capability and Sustainability

			Human Capability	Sustainability
Spearman's rho	Human Capability	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.962**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	200	200
	Sustainability	Correlation Coefficient	.962**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussion of Results

Influence of Human Capability on Sustainability

The research findings clearly reveal that there is a mutual agreement by most of the respondents concerning human capabilities specifically employee skills, employees' retention, and workers' motivation to maintain consumer electronics retail companies in Kenya. This supports earlier research by Harris and Brown (2020) and Bharadwaj (2023) highlighting that employment of job-capable employees and carrying out ongoing training improves efficiency and facilitates long-term success. Along the same lines, the study aligns with Nazir and Fan (2024) sentiments that aligning worker abilities with the objectives of the company not only keeps workers for a longer period but also minimizes costs and allows companies to keep up with emerging technologies. The most important aspect of this study is how it localizes such concepts in the particular social economic setting in Kenya and something that has not been considered by previous studies.

Among some of the other researchers who have joined hands with this conclusion are Khan et al. (2021) and Ariza-Montes et al. (2022), who also believed that investment in the training of the employees at the company level and in creating a good working environment are the key parameters which function for retaining and keeping the expertise among the employees in the long run. This is more so vital in Kenya where the best way of ensuring less costs on hiring and greater sustainability of the consumer electronic companies is keeping the experienced employees. Customer loyalty also emerged as a central driver in accordance with the results of Exploding Topics (2024). Based on the study, it can be concluded that the human capital practices that aid in the retention of workers like training and motivation among others, also facilitate in the retention of the customers. However, although most studies done internationally skewed towards universal retention solutions, the research gives an insight to the need to tailor that popular retention solutions to fit tech-savvy consumers and workers in Kenya, a point that is lacking in international studies and literature.

Finally, the results support previous studies which indicate that employee engagement constitutes the heart of sustainability. Deloitte (2023), Olivero (2023) as well as Datamaran (2023) studies always revealed that engaged employees are more effective, economical and dedicated to organizational objectives. Respondents in this research indicated comparable cases where workers who encountered a good culture that focuses on sustainability were more energetic and enhanced performance, especially when the workers are supported by the tools needed and valued for the work they do. While international case studies like Unilever illustrate the power of this form of engagement, few studies explore how it plays out in Kenya's electronics retail sector. This paper fills this research gap by illustrating that where local needs like providing up-to-date tools and recognition of staff contributions are met with engagement strategies, they can significantly influence staff commitment and business resilience. There is room for additional investigation, particularly into how such locally developed strategies influence employees who frequently deal with customers.

Results from this study reveal that human capability is imperative for ensuring the sustainability of consumer electronic retail firms in Kenya. The findings from this research have shown that the technical capabilities of employees had a significant effect on the sustainability of the firms. This study confirms and agrees with past research that competent employees have continued to be core for ensuring the sustainability of organizations operating within the technologically evolving environment. Previous research by Bharadwaj (2023) and Nazir and Fan (2024) have reiterated the point that competent employees have the ability to help organizations adapt to new technology and therefore improve productivity and minimize costs. This study supports past research and confirms that human capability is the base of sustainability for organizations operating in technology-intensive retail sectors.

Moreover, the findings of the study support previous literature that emphasized a positive association between continuous training and development, and the sustainability of an organization. Previous studies have already identified that organizations that support training and development among employees promote job satisfaction, commitment, and turnover rates. These, in turn, contribute to protecting the sustainability of institutional knowledge by minimizing recruitment expenditure. These findings are supported by the findings of the study, as they found that human capability enhances the sustainability of the organization. This is supported by Bharadwaj (2023) who found that career development programs enhance the association of employees toward organizations. Similarly, Nazir & Fan (2024) supported the importance of the motivational aspect of human development. However, the findings of previous studies were aimed more toward sustaining the performance of those employees.

Also supported by the study is the need to align employee competency with organizational strategies as a means of improving sustainability. It has been shown from different studies within and out of the required context that aligning organizational strategies with that of human capital increases efficiency, innovation, and sustainability performance. In support of these, the results of the study illustrate that companies with qualified staff are best placed to implement new and improved technologies such as IoT and sustainable practices throughout the organizational operations. In a similar observation, Bharadwaj (2023) indicated that IoT, digital supply chains, and other forms of new and improved technology can only improve sustainability when accompanied by qualified staff. In conclusion, the results are in agreement and corroborate and are consistent with previous literature concerning the role of employee and customer retention as factors for the sustainability of consumer electronics retailer organizations.

According to previous literature by Rodriguez (2016), Owusu (2020), Khan et al. (2021), and Ariza-Montes et al. (2022), employee and customer retention have been denoted to play an important role in improving levels of performance and competitiveness within an organization if retention levels are high. The results from this study therefore corroborate and are in agreement with previous literature and confirm and verify the important role that employee and customer retention play for an organization's continued survival and competitiveness by showing how employee retention and human capability play an important role in improving employee commitment and service performance and eventually customer loyalty and retention and competitiveness for the consumer electronics retailer market in Kenya. The results from this study do not disapprove previous literature but rather approve and corroborate previous literature.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The outcome of this research recognizes the central position of human capability, that is, employee competence, staff retention and alignment, in building consumer electronics retail firms' sustainability in Kenya. Productive employees aligned to company goals and led by continuous development add significantly to operations performance, innovation and customer satisfaction. These dimensions, when they are embedded in organizational culture, make it possible for firms not only to maintain competitiveness in an ever-evolving technological environment but also achieve long-term sustainability.

The study also reiterates the need to culturally situate human capital initiatives in a bid to capture Kenya's unique social and economic contexts, which are overlooked in international literature. Furthermore, the study establishes that employee and customer retention are closely associated with organizational sustainability. Long-term retention of staff helps to preserve institutional knowledge and reduces recruitment costs, while customer loyalty increases business stability and expansion. Employee engagement, in the form of access to appropriate tools, recognition, and meaningful work, was shown to be a significant predictor of job satisfaction and productivity. These results indicate that investment in people rather than just technology is a strategic path towards achieving long-term sustainability in consumer electronics retailing in Kenya.

The outcome of this research recognizes the central position of human capability, that is, employee competence, staff retention and alignment, in building consumer electronics retail firms' sustainability in Kenya. The recommends that productive employees of consumer electronic firms should aligned to company goals and embrace continuous development that is significant to operations performance, innovation and customer satisfaction.

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