

From Employees to Profits: An Integrated Model of Employee Engagement, Customer Satisfaction, Financial Performance, and Organizational Sustainability



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Abstract

This study develops and tests an integrated employee-to-outcome model in which employee engagement shapes customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction drives financial performance, and financial performance supports organizational sustainability. The model also proposes a serial indirect pathway from employee engagement to organizational sustainability through customer satisfaction and financial performance. The analyzed dataset contained 200 complete cases and 20 reflective indicators, with five indicators for each construct. Measures were adapted from Saks (2006), Lam et al. (2004), Powell and Dent-Micallef (1997), and Gelhard and von Delft (2016). Partial least squares structural equation modeling showed satisfactory reliability and convergent validity across all constructs, with Cronbach's alpha values between .882 and .893, composite reliability between .914 and .921, and AVE between .679 and .699. All three direct hypotheses were supported: employee engagement positively affected customer satisfaction ($\beta = .472$), customer satisfaction positively affected financial performance ($\beta = .563$), and financial performance positively affected organizational sustainability ($\beta = .531$), all $p < .001$. The serial indirect effect was also significant (effect = .141, $p < .001$). The findings support a connected value-creation logic in which employee-related resources translate into customer value, financial outcomes, and ultimately sustainability performance.

Keywords: Employee engagement; customer satisfaction; financial performance; organizational sustainability; PLS-SEM; serial mediation

1. Introduction

Organizations increasingly face a dual managerial challenge: they must generate strong economic outcomes while also maintaining durable relationships with employees, customers, communities, and the natural environment. These priorities are often examined in separate research streams. Human resource and organizational behavior research emphasizes employee engagement and its consequences for individual and unit performance, marketing research emphasizes customer satisfaction and loyalty, strategy research focuses on financial performance and competitive advantage, and sustainability research addresses long-term economic, social, and environmental viability. In practice, however, these outcomes are interdependent. Employees create service experiences, customers respond to those experiences, customer responses influence revenue and cash-flow prospects, and financially stronger organizations possess greater discretion to invest in long-term sustainability initiatives. The central problem is

therefore not whether each construct matters independently, but how they operate as a connected value-creation chain.

Employee engagement provides a plausible starting point for such a chain because it captures the extent to which employees invest cognitive, emotional, and behavioral energy in their work roles. Kahn (1990) described engagement as the expression of the self in role performance, while later work positioned engagement as a motivational state associated with stronger task and contextual performance (Rich et al., 2010; Christian et al., 2011). Engagement also has outward-facing consequences. When engaged employees display greater attentiveness, persistence, initiative, and emotional presence, customers are more likely to encounter responsive and reliable service. Evidence linking work engagement and organizational resources to service climate and customer loyalty supports this employee-to-customer mechanism (Salanova et al., 2005). Related service research similarly shows that employee-

related conditions can influence customer satisfaction and, subsequently, profitability (Yee et al., 2008).

Customer satisfaction represents the second stage of the proposed chain. Satisfaction summarizes customers' evaluation of the value and experience delivered by an organization. A substantial marketing literature shows that satisfied customers are economically important assets. Customer satisfaction has been linked to profitability (Anderson et al., 1994), future cash-flow growth and stability (Gruca & Rego, 2005), and favorable stock-market outcomes (Fornell et al., 2006). These findings suggest that customer satisfaction is not merely an attitudinal marketing metric; it is a mechanism through which operational and relational advantages are translated into financial outcomes.

The final transition from financial performance to organizational sustainability requires a different theoretical logic. Much sustainability research asks whether responsible and sustainable practices improve financial performance. The reverse pathway is also theoretically meaningful. Slack-resources arguments propose that firms with stronger prior financial performance have more discretionary resources to devote to social and environmental initiatives (Waddock & Graves, 1997). Stronger profitability, growth, and financial resilience can therefore expand an organization's ability to fund cleaner technologies, responsible sourcing, workforce development, stakeholder engagement, innovation, and other sustainability-oriented practices. This direction is especially relevant when sustainability is understood as the organization's capability to preserve economic viability while meeting social and ecological expectations (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002; Gelhard & von Delft, 2016).

Despite evidence supporting individual links in this chain, research remains comparatively fragmented across disciplinary boundaries. Employee engagement studies frequently end with employee performance or customer outcomes; customer satisfaction studies often end with loyalty or financial outcomes; and sustainability studies commonly begin with environmental, social, governance, or capability antecedents. Fewer empirical models trace the complete sequence from employee engagement to customer satisfaction, financial performance, and organizational sustainability. This omission matters because isolated direct-effect models can understate the mechanisms through which employee-related resources ultimately contribute to long-term organizational outcomes.

Accordingly, this study examines four questions: whether employee engagement improves customer satisfaction; whether customer satisfaction improves financial performance; whether financial performance supports organizational sustainability; and whether customer satisfaction and financial

performance sequentially transmit the effect of employee engagement to organizational sustainability. The study contributes in three ways. First, it integrates employee, customer, financial, and sustainability domains in one parsimonious structural model. Second, it tests a serial mediation mechanism rather than treating distal organizational outcomes as direct consequences of employee engagement. Third, it provides a managerial logic for connecting human-capital investments with customer metrics, financial outcomes, and sustainability priorities. The resulting framework offers a concise explanation of how value can move from employees to customers, from customers to profits, and from profits to sustainable organizational capacity.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Theoretical foundation

The model combines three complementary theoretical ideas. First, social exchange reasoning explains why employees who experience supportive and meaningful work conditions may reciprocate through deeper engagement and stronger role performance. Saks (2006) explicitly used social exchange theory to explain antecedents and consequences of job and organizational engagement. Second, service-profit logic explains how employee-related states and behaviors are transmitted to customer evaluations and business outcomes. Empirical research in high-contact services has shown that employee satisfaction and employee loyalty are related to service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and profitability (Yee et al., 2008; Yee et al., 2010). Third, slack-resources reasoning explains why financial success may create the discretion needed for social and environmental investment. Waddock and Graves (1997) found that prior financial performance was positively associated with subsequent corporate social performance, consistent with the idea that resource availability can enable responsible action. Together, these perspectives support a staged model in which human resources generate customer value, customer value supports financial value, and financial value expands the organization's capacity to pursue sustainability. In this combined view, the causal sequence is not simply a collection of correlations. Each link represents a conversion mechanism: employee energy is converted into customer experience, customer evaluation into economic returns, and economic returns into discretionary capacity for longer-horizon organizational action. This staged logic also explains why distal outcomes may show weaker direct associations than proximal ones. A serial model therefore provides a more theoretically disciplined account of how micro-level workplace conditions can accumulate into organization-level consequences than a model that connects engagement directly to sustainability without

intermediate mechanisms.

2.2 Employee engagement and customer satisfaction

Employee engagement reflects a high-investment work state in which employees direct attention, energy, and personal presence toward task and role performance. Kahn's (1990) foundational formulation emphasized the physical, cognitive, and emotional expression of the self at work. Subsequent engagement research has consistently linked engagement with performance-relevant outcomes. Rich et al. (2010) showed that job engagement helps explain task performance and organizational citizenship behavior, while Christian et al. (2011) reported meta-analytic evidence connecting work engagement with task and contextual performance. At the business-unit level, Harter et al. (2002) found meaningful associations between employee satisfaction-engagement and customer satisfaction as well as profit.

The customer mechanism is especially plausible in service and customer-contact settings. Engaged employees are more likely to sustain attention, display initiative, respond constructively to customer needs, and communicate positive affect. Salanova et al. (2005) showed that work engagement and organizational resources contribute to service climate, which in turn predicts employee performance and customer loyalty. Yee et al. (2008) similarly found that employee satisfaction was related to customer satisfaction in high-contact services. Although engagement and satisfaction are distinct employee constructs, both streams support the broader proposition that positive employee states can shape customer evaluations through the quality and consistency of service encounters. Therefore:

H1: Employee engagement has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction.

2.3 Customer satisfaction and financial performance

Customer satisfaction captures customers' overall evaluation of whether an organization has met or exceeded their expectations and delivered valued outcomes. Satisfied customers are more likely to remain with a provider, repurchase, recommend the organization, and exhibit lower sensitivity to competitive alternatives. These behavioral consequences create economic value by supporting revenue continuity, reducing customer-acquisition pressure, and stabilizing future demand. Anderson et al. (1994) provided early evidence that customer satisfaction is associated with profitability. Gruca and Rego (2005) strengthened the financial argument by showing that satisfaction contributes to shareholder value through higher future cash-flow growth and lower cash-flow variability. Fornell et al. (2006) likewise demonstrated that portfolios of firms with

superior customer satisfaction can exhibit favorable returns with comparatively low risk.

The customer-to-financial relationship also appears in service-operation research. Yee et al. (2008) found that customer satisfaction influenced profitability after accounting for employee-related and service-quality factors. Such evidence positions customer satisfaction as a leading indicator rather than an endpoint: it represents a market-based asset that can be monetized through retention, loyalty, cross-buying, reputation, and reduced volatility. In the proposed model, customer satisfaction is therefore expected to convert the benefits of engaged employees into stronger organizational financial outcomes. Accordingly:

H2: Customer satisfaction has a significant positive effect on financial performance.

2.4 Financial performance and organizational sustainability

Organizational sustainability is broader than short-term profit. It concerns an organization's capacity to maintain economic viability while responding to social and ecological constraints and stakeholder expectations. Dyllick and Hockerts (2002) argued that genuine corporate sustainability requires attention to economic, natural, and social capital rather than a narrow focus on eco-efficiency. Hart and Milstein (2003) similarly framed sustainable value creation as a multidimensional strategic opportunity. Gelhard and von Delft (2016) operationalized sustainability performance as a firm-level outcome reflecting superior responses to economic, social, and environmental demands.

Although sustainability can enhance long-term financial outcomes, the reverse direction is also theoretically defensible. Sustainability initiatives frequently require discretionary investment, managerial attention, experimentation, process redesign, and longer payback horizons. Firms under severe financial pressure may defer such investments, whereas financially stronger firms have greater ability to allocate resources beyond immediate operating necessities. Waddock and Graves (1997) reported evidence consistent with this slack-resources mechanism: prior financial performance was positively related to subsequent social performance. The broader literature also indicates that sustainability and financial performance may be mutually reinforcing rather than strictly one-directional (Eccles et al., 2014; Surroca et al., 2010). In the present model, the hypothesized direction is specifically from financial performance to sustainability because financial strength is treated as an enabling resource. Therefore:

H3: Financial performance has a significant positive effect on organizational sustainability.

2.5 Sequential mediation from engagement to sustainability

The preceding relationships imply a serial process. Engagement should not be expected to transform organizational sustainability automatically. Rather, its distal effect can emerge through intermediate value-creation stages. Engaged employees contribute to stronger customer experiences; satisfied customers support financial outcomes; and stronger financial outcomes enlarge the resource base from which sustainability initiatives can be pursued. This logic is consistent with evidence connecting employee conditions to customer and profitability outcomes (Harter et al., 2002; Yee et al., 2008), evidence connecting customer satisfaction to financial value (Anderson et al., 1994; Gruca & Rego, 2005), and slack-resources reasoning connecting prior financial performance to responsible organizational action (Waddock & Graves, 1997). Serial mediation is therefore theoretically more informative than a direct engagement-to-sustainability path because it identifies the intervening mechanisms that connect micro-level employee experience to macro-level organizational outcomes. Thus:

H4: Employee engagement has a significant positive indirect effect on organizational sustainability through the sequential mediation of customer satisfaction and financial performance.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design and analytical sample

The empirical analysis supplied for this manuscript contained 200 complete cases and 20 manifest variables. The SEM export indicates that all 200 cases were retained and that no model indicator contained missing or nonnumeric data. The available analytical output does not, however, identify the organizational sector, country or region, sampling frame, respondent category, data-collection period, response rate, or demographic profile. These details are therefore not inferred. Before journal submission, the authors should insert the actual study context and sampling information from the original data-collection records. This transparency is important because the substantive meaning and external validity of employee engagement, customer satisfaction, financial performance, and sustainability relationships depend on the respondent source and organizational context.

The model is parsimonious, with one predictor for each endogenous construct, but sample-size adequacy should ideally be justified prospectively. Kock and Hadaya (2018) caution against relying solely on the traditional ten-times rule and recommend power-oriented alternatives for PLS-SEM. With 200 complete cases, the present analysis provides a substantial case-to-parameter ratio for the four-construct model, but the final article should report the authors' original power calculation or minimum-effect assumption if one was used during research design.

3.2 Measures

All four constructs were modeled reflectively and measured with five items each, producing a 20-item instrument. Employee engagement (EE) was adapted from the five-item job-engagement measure reported by Saks (2006). Customer satisfaction (CS) was adapted from Lam et al. (2004). Financial performance (FP) used subjective comparative performance indicators adapted from Powell and Dent-Micallef (1997), emphasizing overall financial performance, profitability, and sales growth relative to major competitors. Organizational sustainability (OS) was adapted from Gelhard and von Delft (2016), focusing on sustainability leadership, sustainable offerings, reputation, and responsiveness to social and ethical expectations. The items were paraphrased for contextual fit while retaining the conceptual domain of the source measures. Table 1 presents the final recommended scale structure used to label the SEM indicators. The five-item format was retained consistently across constructs to keep the questionnaire balanced and to provide adequate indicator coverage without making the instrument unnecessarily long. Because financial performance and sustainability can be sensitive topics, the measures use comparative and perceptual judgments rather than requiring respondents to disclose exact accounting or ESG figures. This approach can improve response feasibility, although objective indicators should be added in future validation studies where organizational records are available.

3.3 Analytical procedure

PLS-SEM was used because the model is oriented toward explaining and predicting endogenous constructs and includes a serial indirect effect. Contemporary guidance recommends assessing the measurement model before interpreting structural paths (Hair et al., 2019; Benitez et al., 2020). The analysis was generated in IISIR SEM Lab v2.0.5. For reflective measurement quality, indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) were examined. Convergent validity was evaluated against conventional loading and AVE criteria, while discriminant validity was assessed using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2015). The software also reported bootstrap HTMT confidence intervals.

The structural model was assessed using standardized path coefficients, bootstrap standard errors, *t* statistics, *p* values, confidence intervals, R^2 , inner VIF, and f^2 effect sizes. Mediation was evaluated from specific indirect effects and their bootstrap confidence intervals rather than by relying on the significance pattern of separate component paths, consistent with modern PLS mediation recommendations (Nitzl et al., 2016). Predictive relevance was examined using Q^2 and construct-level PLSpredict output, including Q^2_{predict} and

comparison of PLS RMSE against a benchmark, following the predictive emphasis advocated by Shmueli et al. (2019). SRMR, d_ULS, NFI, and RMS_theta were treated as diagnostic rather than stand-alone proof of model validity.

4. Results

4.1 Preliminary assessment and measurement model

All 200 cases were complete across the 20 indicators. Indicator means ranged from 2.840 to 3.165 on the

five-point scale, and standard deviations ranged from 1.091 to 1.209, indicating meaningful dispersion across responses. The reflective measurement model showed strong internal consistency and convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha was .893 for EE, .882 for CS, .891 for FP, and .887 for OS. Composite reliability ranged from .914 to .921. AVE values ranged from .679 to .699, comfortably exceeding the .50 benchmark. All retained indicator loadings exceeded .708; the lowest was .774 (CS5) and the highest was .861 (EE5). These results support indicator reliability and convergent validity.

Table 1. Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach α	Composite reliability	AVE	Loading range
Employee Engagement (EE)	.893	.921	.699	.816–.861
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	.882	.914	.679	.774–.853
Financial Performance (FP)	.891	.920	.697	.821–.845
Organizational Sustainability (OS)	.887	.917	.689	.801–.860

4.2 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity was supported by both reported criteria. In the Fornell-Larcker matrix, the square root of AVE for each construct (.824 to .836) exceeded its correlations with the other constructs. HTMT values ranged from .193 to .633, all below .85. Bootstrap inference also supported distinctiveness: every HTMT upper confidence limit remained below 1.00. The largest HTMT value was between CS and FP (.633; bootstrap CI [.524, .721]), which is theoretically reasonable because customer satisfaction is positioned as the immediate antecedent of financial performance, yet the magnitude remained below conventional screening thresholds.

Table 2. HTMT Discriminant Validity Matrix

Construct	EE	CS	FP	OS
EE		.522	.285	.193
CS	.522		.633	.382
FP	.285	.633		.594
OS	.193	.382	.594	

Note. All HTMT values were below .85; bootstrap upper confidence limits were below 1.00.

4.3 Structural model and hypothesis tests

All three direct structural relationships were positive and statistically significant. EE had a positive effect on CS ($\beta = .472$, $SE = .053$, $t = 8.855$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.364, .577]), supporting H1. CS had the strongest direct path in the model, positively affecting FP ($\beta = .563$, $SE = .048$, $t = 11.826$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.468, .653]); therefore, H2 was supported. FP positively affected OS ($\beta = .531$, $SE = .051$, $t = 10.372$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.429, .628]), supporting H3. Inner VIF values were 1.000 for all paths, indicating no structural collinearity concern in this single-predictor sequence.

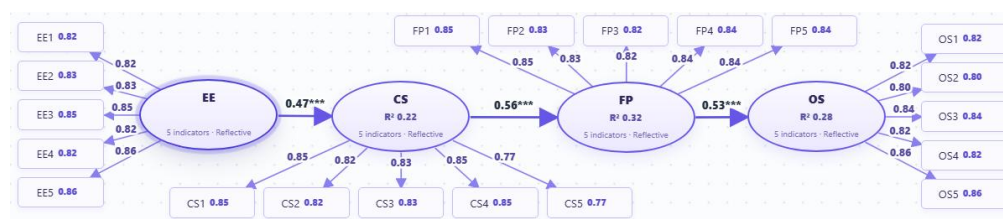


Figure 1. Estimated structural model and standardized effects.

The endogenous constructs showed meaningful explained variance. EE explained 22.3% of the variance in CS ($R^2 = .223$; adjusted $R^2 = .219$), CS explained 31.7% of the variance in FP ($R^2 = .317$; adjusted $R^2 = .314$), and FP explained 28.2% of the variance in OS ($R^2 = .282$; adjusted $R^2 = .278$). The corresponding f^2 effect sizes were .287 for EE $\rightarrow$ CS, .465 for CS $\rightarrow$ FP, and .392 for FP $\rightarrow$ OS, indicating one medium and two large effects under the

software's magnitude classification.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

Hyp	Path	β	SE	t	p	95% CI	Decision
H1	EE $\rightarrow$ CS	.472	.053	8.855	<.001	[.364, .577]	Supported
H2	CS $\rightarrow$ FP	.563	.048	11.826	<.001	[.468, .653]	Supported
H3	FP $\rightarrow$ OS	.531	.051	10.372	<.001	[.429, .628]	Supported
H4	EE $\rightarrow$ CS $\rightarrow$ FP $\rightarrow$ OS	.141	.028	5.066	<.001	[.094, .203]	Supported

4.4 Mediation, predictive relevance, and diagnostics

The serial indirect effect proposed in H4 was significant. EE influenced OS through CS and FP with an indirect effect of .141 (SE = .028, $t = 5.066$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.094, .203]); thus, H4 was supported. Two shorter indirect paths were also significant: EE $\rightarrow$ CS $\rightarrow$ FP produced an indirect effect of .266 ($p < .001$, 95% CI [.192, .350]), and CS $\rightarrow$ FP $\rightarrow$ OS produced an indirect effect of .299 ($p < .001$, 95% CI [.219, .388]). Because no direct EE $\rightarrow$ OS, EE $\rightarrow$ FP, or CS $\rightarrow$ OS paths were specified, the reported total effects for these relationships were entirely indirect.

Predictive assessment was favorable. Q^2 values were .215 for CS, .314 for FP, and .276 for OS, all above zero. Construct-level Q^2_{predict} values were .200, .303, and .273, respectively, and PLS RMSE was lower than the benchmark RMSE for all three endogenous constructs. Composite-model diagnostics were SRMR = .0205, $d_{\text{ULS}} = .0025$, NFI = .9976, and RMS_theta = .0805. These statistics are best interpreted as supporting diagnostics rather than universal fit tests. In the IPMA for OS, FP had the highest importance (.531) and a performance score of 48.8, causing the software to flag FP as the principal priority opportunity. Specifically, PLS RMSE values were .902 for CS, .839 for FP, and .856 for OS, compared with benchmark RMSE values of 1.009, 1.005, and 1.005. This consistent improvement over the benchmark indicates that the structural model retained out-of-sample predictive usefulness at the construct level rather than merely fitting the estimation sample. The combination of positive Q^2 , positive Q^2_{predict} , and lower RMSE provides convergent evidence for predictive relevance.

5. Discussion

The findings provide coherent support for the proposed employee-to-sustainability chain. All direct hypotheses were supported, and the serial indirect pathway from employee engagement to organizational sustainability was statistically significant. The results therefore suggest that the organizational value of engagement can extend beyond employee attitudes or immediate job performance. In the estimated model, employee engagement first translated into customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction then translated into financial performance, and financial

performance finally translated into sustainability performance. The pattern is consistent with the broader idea that internal organizational resources create value through intermediate market and financial mechanisms rather than through isolated direct effects.

The positive EE $\rightarrow$ CS relationship supports H1 and aligns with research arguing that engaged employees bring greater energy, attention, and role investment to their work. Kahn's (1990) engagement concept emphasizes the active employment of the self in role performance, while Rich et al. (2010) and Christian et al. (2011) demonstrate that engagement is associated with stronger performance. The present result extends that logic toward customer outcomes. The standardized coefficient of .472 and medium f^2 indicate that engagement explains a meaningful portion of variation in customer satisfaction even in a highly parsimonious model. This is consistent with Salanova et al. (2005), who linked work engagement and organizational resources to service climate and customer loyalty, and with service-operation evidence showing that positive employee states can affect customer satisfaction (Yee et al., 2008). The managerial implication is that customer experience cannot be treated solely as a marketing or front-office issue; it is partly rooted in the quality of employee experience and engagement.

H2 received the strongest direct support. Customer satisfaction had a standardized effect of .563 on financial performance and an f^2 of .465. This reinforces the view that satisfaction is an economic asset rather than a soft attitudinal metric. Anderson et al. (1994) associated customer satisfaction with profitability, while Gruca and Rego (2005) showed that satisfaction supports shareholder value by increasing cash-flow growth and reducing variability. Fornell et al. (2006) likewise linked superior satisfaction to attractive return-risk outcomes. The current model complements these studies by positioning customer satisfaction as the bridge between employee engagement and financial performance. In practical terms, engagement initiatives are more likely to produce economic value when their effects are visible in customer-level outcomes such as satisfaction, retention, advocacy, complaint reduction, or service recovery.

The positive FP $\rightarrow$ OS path supports H3 and is theoretically notable because research frequently

models the reverse direction. The coefficient of .531 and large f^2 suggest that financial performance can act as an enabling condition for sustainability. This interpretation is consistent with slack-resources theory: stronger financial results increase the discretionary resources that managers can allocate to environmental improvement, social initiatives, workforce development, responsible sourcing, product redesign, and long-term innovation. Waddock and Graves (1997) provided classic evidence that prior financial performance can predict subsequent social performance. Dyllick and Hockerts (2002) and Hart and Milstein (2003) further emphasize that sustainability requires coordinated attention to multiple forms of value and capital. The finding should not be interpreted to mean that organizations must postpone sustainability until they become profitable; rather, it indicates that financial strength may increase the scope, continuity, and strategic ambition of sustainability efforts.

H4 is the central integrative contribution. The serial indirect effect of .141 indicates that employee engagement can reach organizational sustainability through two successive mechanisms: customer satisfaction and financial performance. This result is more informative than a simple association between engagement and sustainability because it identifies a plausible process. Engaged employees help create better customer experiences; satisfied customers improve the organization's financial position; and financial strength supports sustainable capability. The two additional significant indirect effects reinforce this chain: engagement affected financial performance through customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction affected sustainability through financial performance. In combination, these results connect organizational behavior, marketing, finance, and sustainability literatures in a single explanatory structure.

Three theoretical contributions follow. First, the model crosses levels of analysis conceptually, beginning with an employee-centered construct and ending with an organizational sustainability outcome. This helps address the fragmentation that occurs when employee, customer, financial, and sustainability outcomes are investigated separately. Second, the model identifies customer satisfaction and financial performance as sequential value-conversion mechanisms. Engagement itself is not treated as a direct guarantee of organizational sustainability; value must travel through customer and financial stages. Third, the model foregrounds the enabling role of financial performance in sustainability. The sustainability-financial performance relationship is often discussed as a business case in which responsibility produces profit. The present direction highlights the complementary possibility that profit and financial slack can fund responsible, resilient, and long-term organizational action. This reciprocal possibility is consistent with

research showing complex two-way relationships between responsibility, intangible resources, and performance (Surroca et al., 2010; Eccles et al., 2014).

The managerial implications are equally direct. Organizations should manage the four constructs as a linked dashboard rather than as independent departmental targets. Human resource leaders can monitor engagement, but they should also examine whether engagement improvements are reflected in customer satisfaction. Marketing and operations teams can track whether satisfaction gains translate into sales growth, profitability, or other financial outcomes. Finance leaders can then ask whether incremental financial capacity is being reinvested in sustainability capabilities rather than consumed entirely by short-term priorities. The IPMA result strengthens this recommendation: financial performance showed the highest importance for OS and was flagged as a priority opportunity. Managers seeking stronger sustainability outcomes should therefore protect the financial mechanisms that fund them while simultaneously addressing the upstream employee and customer drivers that create those resources.

Several limitations qualify the conclusions. Most importantly, the analytical export does not identify the sector, geography, sampling frame, respondent source, or demographics; these details must be added from the original study records before publication. Second, the available output reflects a cross-sectional path model and therefore does not establish temporal causality. The $FP \rightarrow OS$ direction is theoretically justified by slack resources, but reciprocal or lagged relationships should be tested longitudinally. Third, FP and OS are perceptual constructs in the recommended instrument, so future research should combine them with objective financial data and external sustainability indicators. Fourth, if all 20 items were obtained from one respondent at one time, common-method variance may inflate relationships; multi-source data would be preferable. Fifth, no control variables were included. Future studies could examine firm size, sector, customer-contact intensity, market turbulence, ownership, or sustainability maturity as controls or moderators. Finally, the SEM output itself advises validation of publication-critical estimates against established specialist software. Replication in SmartPLS, ADANCO, or an equivalent package before submission would therefore strengthen confidence in exact inferential results.

6. Conclusion

This study examined an integrated pathway from employee engagement to organizational sustainability through customer satisfaction and financial performance. The empirical model supported every proposed relationship. Employee engagement positively influenced customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction positively

influenced financial performance, and financial performance positively influenced organizational sustainability. Most importantly, employee engagement exerted a significant serial indirect effect on sustainability through customer satisfaction and financial performance. These findings support the idea that employee-related value is converted progressively into customer value, financial value, and sustainable organizational capacity. The study's main contribution is its integrative logic. Rather than treating engagement, satisfaction, financial outcomes, and sustainability as separate management domains, the model positions them as stages in a common value-creation system. This has a practical implication: initiatives designed to improve engagement should be evaluated not only through employee metrics but also through downstream customer and financial indicators, while financial gains should be connected to the organization's ability to sustain responsible, resilient, and long-term practices. The strongest direct path from customer satisfaction to financial performance and the high importance of financial performance for sustainability reinforce this sequential interpretation. The conclusions should nevertheless be interpreted within the limits of the available analytical export. The study context, sampling process, respondent profile, ethics procedure, and common-method controls were not embedded in the SEM output and must be documented from the original research records before journal submission. Future longitudinal and multi-source studies can test whether the proposed chain persists across industries and whether reciprocal relationships emerge over time. Subject to these contextual qualifications, the results offer a parsimonious explanation of how engaged employees can contribute to profits and, through those profits, to organizational sustainability. A particularly useful extension would compare service-intensive and non-service settings to determine whether the employee-to-customer link becomes stronger when customer contact is frequent. Studies could also test whether environmental turbulence, firm size, or sustainability maturity changes the strength of the financial-performance-to-sustainability relationship.

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