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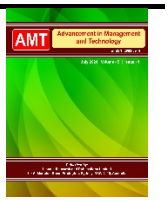

Original Article

Organisational Culture and Technology Orientation on Strategic Fit in Retail Business: The Mediating Role of Economic Sustainability

Monica C. Gajere, Danjuma Tali Nimfa*, Linus Jonathan Vem, Reuel Johnmark Dakung

Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Jos, Jos 930105, Nigeria

**Corresponding Author's Email: nimfad@unijos.edu.ng*

Abstract

Purpose: The present research investigates the effect of organisational culture and technology orientation on strategic fit with the mediating role of economic sustainability. **Methodology:** A questionnaire-based survey method was employed to collect empirical data from 124 owner-managers of the small retail business in Nigeria. The study used the partial least squares structural equation modelling enabled by SmartPLS 4 to test the model's accuracy. **Findings:** The findings demonstrated that organisational culture and technology orientation has a favourable influence on strategic fit. Similarly, the research indicated that organisational culture has a significant impact on economic sustainability. On the other hand, the impact of technology orientation on economic sustainability was negative and insignificant. In addition, the results demonstrate that economic sustainability has a direct positive influence on strategic fit. Finally, economic sustainability partially mediates the role between organisational culture and strategic fit, but there is no mediation between technology orientation and strategic fit. **Originality/value:** This is research that incorporates strategic approaches (organisational culture, technology orientation and economic sustainability to examine their impact on strategic fit) within the small retail business in Nigeria. Furthermore, the role of economic sustainability as a mediator between organisational culture, technology orientation, and strategic fit is relatively new in literary works. This study proved the reliability and validity of organisational culture and technology orientation on strategic fit in Nigeria, a developing country.

Keywords: *Economic Sustainability; Organisational Culture; Small Retail Business; Strategic Fit; Technology Orientation*

Introduction

Strategic fit is the overarching state that must be pursued on a continuous basis, though difficult to achieve in small retail businesses (Audretsch & Belitski, 2022). Because of this, the strategic fit is elusive, and owner-managers face a significant challenge today and in years ahead (Akhmedova, Mas-Machuca & Magomedova, 2022). Therefore, management has been tasked with the daunting responsibilities of upholding and coordinating the interactions between scenarios, strategic planning, culture, and encouraging leadership. For the purpose of achieving sustainable orientation, competitive situations may consciously create short-term inconsistencies for small retail businesses. For instance, a manager might sense impending environmental changes that will probably alter the character of the competitive marketplace. Accordingly, owner-managers need to begin by changing the culture, technology orientation and aligning their managerial style to prepare the entity for the unforeseen circumstance. Prior research has indicated that the organisational cultural shift will allow the firm to reconfigure its strategic fit over time (Gajere & Nimfa, 2021; Balmer & Podnar, 2021). Similarly, technology is transforming retail, beginning with the categorisation of technologies that influence small retail businesses, specifically during COVID-19 and around the globe (Shankar *et al*., 2021; Yadewani

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et al., 2024; Aminu *et al*., 2024). Past research has emphasised the need for more study on organisational culture, technology orientation, and strategic fit focusing on small retail businesses (Shankar *et al*., 2021; Tajeddini, Martin & Ali, 2020). In order to close this research gap, this study aims to investigate the impact of organisational culture and technology orientation on strategic fit. Additionally, the study looks at how economic sustainability mediates the connection between organisational culture and technology orientation on strategic fit.

Review of Literature

Theoretical basis

The organisational alignment theory served as the underpinning theory for this study. This theory is largely used to assess the extent to which strategy, structure, and culture facilitate an environment that encourages the attainment of organisational goals (Semler, 2007). The concept of alignment gives an understanding of how interdependent elements of the organisation can achieve tremendous individual and collective efficiency and effectiveness by alignments leading to high-performance work systems. The business and its competitive landscape should be characterised by different influences in the same global ecosystem rather than as distinct or interdependent entities (Semler, 2007). Fundamentally, the belief in strategic fit demonstrates the level of alignment that emerges in an enterprise's strategic, economic, organisational culture, and management styles (Chorn, 1991; Nimfa *et al*., 2021a). This implies that a small retail business with a strong emphasis on culture and technology orientation will achieve a strategic fit, with economic sustainability as a mediating paradigm. This alignment enables small retail businesses to overcome performance barriers and ensure business sustainability even during difficult times.

Organisational Culture and Strategic Fit

Strategic fit is gaining traction in academia, accompanied by a growing recognition of its importance in economic, socio-cultural, and environmental challenges in the retail industry (Akhmedova, Mas-Machuca & Magomedova, 2022). The new normal around the globe calls for requisite response to environmental changes experienced by enterprise owners around the globe. This has placed a demand on organisations to align with forces in and around the organisation to cope with the complexity brought about by globalisation which has led to the new normal in most countries of which Nigeria is not an exception (Scholz, 1987). Schein (1990) asserts that the basic functions of the corporate culture is to ensure organisations adapt to the external environmental factors which requires sensitivity to the environmental conditions and changes. The action carried out to respond to these factors are related to organisational strategy. Therefore, it can be said that there is a close relationship between organisational culture and strategy (Tasgit, Şentürk & Ergün, 2017). According to Tosti (2007) for organisations to succeed, the adaptation of the organisational culture and strategy is a must. If the gap between strategy and culture is deepening, failure is inevitable. By increasing the fit between strategy and organisational culture, the adaptation of the firm to the external environment is increasing and reflects in the performance in a positive way (Tsui, Wang & Xin, 2006; Hilong, 2023; Nimfa, Latiff & Wahab, 2022). There are scholarly debates showing the relationship between business strategy and corporate culture in organisational behaviour and strategic management literature (Ogbonna & Whipp, 1999). As succinctly presented by Waheed *et al*. (2021), that the aim of strategic fit is achieved when organisational practices such as human resource practices, organisational dynamic capabilities and business strategy aligns with the firm’s culture. Additionally, the relationship between organisational culture and strategic fit has not been subjected to empirical evidence in the new normal for Nigerian enterprises. Therefore, this study hypothesis that:

H1: Organisational culture has a significant relationship with strategic fit

Technology Orientation and Strategic Fit

The retail sector has undergone significant change and advances in technology (Shankar *et al*., 2021). Scholars such as Lee, Chan and Mcnabb (2017) shared the view that business functional strategies fit the requirement of the business orientation but left out the need for aligning technology with these strategies to strike a fit. A technology orientation is expected to provide more opportunities to enterprise

owners (Rajagopal, 2022; Nimfa *et al*., 2021b). Technology orientation encompasses a wide, developing network of communities from several industries, which communicates important changes in the way businesses operate (Li, Zhou & Cheng, 2019). Firms' investments in information technology trigger substantial technology improvements and are viewed as more entrepreneurial if their strategic decisions are motivated by opportunity rather than resources, which may promote a strategic fit (Bradley, Shepherd & Wiklund, 2011; Majumdar & Ghosh, 2023). Pratono (2016 stated that there is a growing understanding in the strategic sphere that variations in management system forms demonstrate how well-positioned businesses reap the rewards of technology investments. A technology-focused company excels in technical competency and adaptability (Subramanian & Balanagarajan, 2018), which are drivers for innovation breakthroughs because it encourages the adoption of the most cutting-edge technologies in its new products and heavily invests its resources in research and development (Ghosh *et al*., 2024; Ali, 1994; Workman, 1993). This study intends to advocate for the alignment of technological orientation and strategic fit to add to this debate by hypothesising that:

H2: Technology orientation has a strong relationship with strategic fit.

Organisational Culture and Economic Sustainability

Organisational culture "change depends on a well-articulated vision, the engagement of staff throughout the organisation, relentless focus and repetition, and patience" (Kleiman *et al*., 2021; Saruchera & Asante-Darko, 2021). Moreover, organisational culture acts as a switch mechanism to inaugurate organisational commitment, which supports the organisation in adjusting to the external changes (Halim, Ahmad & Ramayah, 2019; Nusari *et al*., 2018).). Economic sustainability aims are imperative for small and medium enterprises (Wagner & Svensson, 2014). However, economic sustainability differs from attaining cost-effective goals (Sun, Li, X., & Wang 2024). Preceding study held that, economic sustainability is connected with accomplishing present economic goals without jeopardising potential economic initiatives (Chopra *et al*., 2021). Financial goals such as profitability, cost savings, and financial planning have to focus on sustainability (Khaled, Ali & Mohamed, 2021). Therefore, sustainability focus and transparent financial allocation are critical components of economic sustainability. Besides, the core value of the firm's economic sustainability is remarkable stability among owner-managers and investors to satisfy stakeholders (Wang, 2021). Additionally, a business's ability to grow, leverage opportunities, and sustain its market position over time is termed marketplace competitiveness (Nduati & Mang'ana, 2024). Research on organisational culture and economic sustainability is scarce, notably for small retail businesses. In addition, the connection between organisation culture and economic sustainability remained understudied in literature. Thus, this study posits that:

H3. There is a strong relationship between organisational culture and economic sustainability

Technology Orientation and Economic Sustainability

Many past studies have noted the positive relationship between technology orientation and economic sustainability (e.g., Shashi *et al*., 2018; Khan & Quaddus, 2015). This is because technology orientation generates new technology, information and philosophies (e.g., Tseng Chang & Chen, 2019),

Technology orientation shows how advanced and cutting-edge technology can be used by small retail businesses to provide novel results for meeting both old/new customers' needs and build superior customer focus value endlessly (Tseng Chang & Chen, 2019). Hakala and Kohtamäki (2011) considered technology orientation as the driving force behind modern innovators' active development and implementation of new technology into products, yearning for a more technologically advanced competitor, and recognition of customers who appreciate the items they offer. The creation of knowledge is strong in businesses with good technology orientation, as well as changing economic sustainability rebound the new evidence and insight (Guo *et al*., 2020). Even though the literature agrees on the relationship between customer, technology orientations and product innovativeness in SMEs (Salavou, 2005). Past research had focused on the technology orientations and product

innovativeness; competitor orientation and innovation i.e., the intensity of enterprise values in stimulating and supporting innovativeness (Schulze, Townsend & Talay, 2022; Nimfa *et al*., 2021b). Accepting a technology-driven holistic approach is a crucial step toward the economic sustainability viability of small retail businesses (Khaled, Ali & Mohamed, 2021; Halac, 2015; Yang *et al*., 2022). Therefore, based on the discussion above, it is anticipated that:

H4. There is a strong connection between technology orientation and economic sustainability

Economic Sustainability and Strategic Fit

Economic sustainability entails the formation of a firm that develops a comprehensive strategy, makes plans, and employs a social behaviour approach to meet its future demands. Small retail businesses are required to align their strategies to meet a range of consumers' needs due to the changing market, which forces them to continue operating in a less stable and more complicated environment (Ukko *et al*., 2022). Economic sustainability leads to a sustainable economy that can withstand scepticism, such as the possibility of soaring energy and resource costs (Sarkar, Ullah & Sarkar, 2022). In the context of a small retail business, economic sustainability ensures that actions are positive and robust in the face of adversity (Spangenberg, 2005). Economic sustainability protects the company by ensuring that enterprise operational processes are robust and resilient in an ever-changing environment. Adopting a sustainable cost-effective business contributes to positive strategic fit in the areas of social, economic, and environmental progress (Risitano *et al*., 2022). According to existing literature a strong strategic alliance with buying groups and a product placement information strategy can produce the best results for small retail businesses (Kim, Miao & Hu, 2021). Accordingly, economic sustainability must be promoted in order to support retail businesses that would aid in focusing on customers' needs as a strategic fit initiative (Nduati & Mang'ana, 2024). Waheed *et al*. (2021) opined that strategic fit occurs when principles and business strategy interface through firm dynamic capabilities and human resource practices. Based on the preceding debate, the study proposed that:

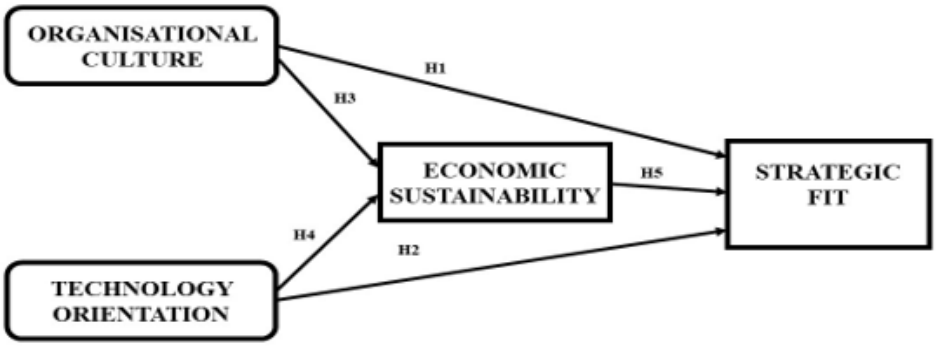
H5. There is a strong relationship between economic sustainability and strategic fit

Mediating Role of Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability shows that businesses invest in green technologies because they believe in their social and economic value. Existing studies have established economic sustainability as a mediating factor (Saunila *et al*., 2019). Unfortunately, prior research has not validated the role of economic sustainability as a mediator between organisational culture and technological orientation on strategic fit. Furthermore, previous research has focused less on the indirect impacts of economic sustainability on the interactions between organisational culture, technology orientation, and strategic fit in small retail businesses. A stable organisational culture fosters employee collaboration, cohesion, teamwork, and mutual trust, which will systematically support the implementation of a strategy (CultureIQ, 2019). Also, in a technology-oriented firm, cultural norms and ideals serve as a guide for its actions and strategies which reflects creativity and invention in the organisation (Rezazadeh, Karami & Karami, 2016). In addition, preceding studies claimed that green technology increases productivity, which further enhances the economic and financial situation of the enterprise (Hottenrott, Rexhäuser & Veugelers, 2016). Similarly, technology orientation is associated with the thought that small businesses and consumers embrace technologically superior products and services, which reflects the technological push philosophy (Gatignon & Xuereb, 1997). A technology-focused firm supports and encourages notions or natural curiosity that lead to new ways of thinking about strategic, cultural improvements and foster economic sustainability (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994; Hurley & Hult, 1998). Hence, this study intends to add to this stream of research by proposing that:

H6: Economic sustainability mediates the relationship between organisational culture and strategic fit.

H7: Economic sustainability mediates the relationship between technological orientation and strategic fit.



Source: Authors Design, 2023

Figure 1: Conceptual model

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative study approach and a cross-sectional survey strategy. The quantitative research technique and survey design was appropriate (Saunders *et al*., 2017) because the original study's purpose was to analyse the impact of organisational culture and technology orientation on strategic fit: the role of economic sustainability as a mediator. The approach and design make data collection possible through a survey-based questionnaire.

Population of the Study, Sampling Technique and Data Collection

The study gathered evidence-based data from Nigerian small retail business owners. Small retail businesses were classified based on their asset base, skilled workforce, revenue threshold, legal status, and employees hired (Adeola *et al*., 2021; Abor & Quartey, 2010). The investigation focused on small retail businesses in Jos Metropolis (Plateau State's capital) and Abuja Municipal Area Council (Nigeria's Federal Capital City). Because of the indeterminate number of small retail businesses in Nigeria. Small retail businesses were chosen for the study as they were badly affected by the coronavirus outbreak. The majority of small retail businesses failed due to inadequate technology infrastructures, insufficient government backing, and poor organisational cultures.

The purposive sample procedure was used to discover 125 small retail businesses with rich data and survey participants that were interested (Shah & Soomro, 2022; Zikmund-Fisher *et al*., 2010). Small retail businesses that met the classification requirements were selected using homogeneous purposive sampling. This assisted in sampling small retail businesses with similar attributes. Following that, respondents who are owner-managers were randomly picked from each small retail business. Applying Patton's (2002) selection criteria for sample data of non-probability research, 375 participants (for instance, one respondent from each small retail business) were given a copy of the survey questionnaire to complete. Some respondents were reached out in person, while others were contacted via email due to the insecurity/unstable nature of the business environment. The study maintained that the accepted responses represented the targeted sample size by eliminating nonresponse errors. Furthermore, the study assured the participants of confidentiality and privacy, as well as reminders sent to the respondents. The process for data collection took about three months (from February 2, 2023, to May 2, 2023). To resolve the issue of common method, bias the procedural approach (Podsakoff et al., 2003) was adopted for the enquiry. Hence, the participants were instructed on how to complete the research questionnaire to increase the likelihood that responses are accurate (Hair *et al*., 2019). According to Podsakoff *et al*. (2003), respondents' precision enhances if participants understand the extent to which the data would be used or benefit their businesses. In addition, this encourages feedback, assurance of confidentiality of the survey, reducing redundant procedures and similarity. Furthermore, question wordings with numerous meanings were identified to retain items simple and

easy. The study also distinguishes between independent and dependent variables. Finally, participants were provided precise instructions on how to respond to each section's survey questions.

Measures and Analysis

To measure the independent variables (organisational culture and technology orientation), for organisational culture five items each were adapted from (Gorondutse & Hilman, 2019) with 0.865 reliability Cronbach Alpha; for technology orientation had six items were adopted from (Al-Ansari, Altalib & Sardoh, 2013; Nimfa, Latiff & Wahab, 2020) with 0.756 reliability Cronbach Alpha. Regarding the dependent variable (strategic fit), items were adapted from Tamayo-Torres *et al*. (2016) developed by Doz, Olk and Ring (2000) and Makadok (2001) with 0.882 Cronbach Alpha. For the mediating variable (economic sustainability), five items were adapted from Rai, Rai and Singh (2021) with 0.830 reliability Cronbach Alpha. All statements were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1= strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The validity and reliability of the measures are evaluated using the predictive validity tests and Cronbach's alpha. Based on the cross-correlation data, Table 1 demonstrates that the scales were consistently valid because all the variables are within the accepted threshold. The internal consistency of the items was indicated by the Cronbach Alpha (CA) values given in Table 1 exceeding the proposed threshold of 0.70 (Hair *et al*., 2019), which supported the reliability of the scales (Hilton *et al*., 2021).

Results

Table 1 illustrates the participants' demographic characteristics of the study, i.e., the unit of analysis which is organisational, (owner managers or founders of small retail businesses). The legal status responses were between 1-5 years (66.1%), whereas 33.9% of participants were between 6 years and above. Followed by an annual turnover of ≤ N20 million (56.5%) and ≤ N100 million (43.5%) responses from the participants. In respect of assets base, ≤ N5 million (54.8%) were the majority, while > N5 million ≤ N100 million (45.5%) responses from owners of small retail business owners. Also, the majority of employees hired were ≤ 10 (62.1%) and >11 ≤ 50 (37.9%) responses. The educational level revealed that the majority of participants were bachelor's degrees 35.5%, National diplomas (24.2%), Secondary/college (16.9%), Master's degrees (12.9%), and Doctorate (10.5%). Table 2 discloses the mean values of items ranging from 4.0806 to 3.1855, which indicates that participants generally agreed with the survey question items. Table 2 displays the standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis of the study variables. The direction of responses is regarded as normal, when both skewness and kurtosis are zero (a situation that few researchers will ever experience). A general rule of thumb for skewness is that if the number is more than +1 or less than -1, it indicates a significantly skewed distribution. The general principle for kurtosis is that if the number is higher than +1, the dispersion is too high. Similarly, a kurtosis little less than -1 suggests an overly flat dispersion. Distributions with skewness or kurtosis that surpasses the thresholds are regarded as non-normal (Hair *et al*., 2017). Applying the criteria of (Hair *et al*., 2017), the data are nonparametric, revealing that the data was non-normal.

Similarly, in this study, PLS-SEM using SMARTPLS statistical software was more appropriate for testing hypotheses (Hair *et al.*, 2019).

Table 1: Demographic Characteristic

Items	Elements	Frequency	Percentage %
Retail Legal Status	Incorporated 1-5 years	42	33.9
	Incorporated 6 and above	82	66.1
	Total	**124**	**100**
Annual Turnover	≤N20 Million	70	56.5
	≤ N100 Million	54	43.5
	Total	**124**	**100**
Assets Base	≤ N5 Million	68	54.8
	> N5 Million ≤ N100 Million	56	45.2
Employees Hired	>11 ≤ 50	47	37.9
	≤ 10	77	62.1
	Total	**124**	**100**

Educational level	Secondary/college	21	16.9
	Bachelor degree	44	35.5
	National Diploma	30	24.2
	Master degree	16	12.9
	Doctorate degree	13	10.5
	Total	**124**	**100**

Source: SPSS Version 27 output, 2023

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Variable		N	Mean	Std Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std Error	Statistic	Std Error
Economic Sustainability	ES1	124	4.1694	0.88089	-0.992	0.217	0.755	0.431
	ES2	124	4.0806	0.9508	-1.086	0.217	0.938	0.431
	ES3	124	4.000	0.93704	-0.904	0.217	0.646	0.431
	ES4	124	4.0806	0.94221	-1.052	0.217	0.912	0.431
Organisational Culture	OC1	124	4.0645	0.81392	-1.131	0.217	2.353	0.431
	OC2	124	4.0726	0.80822	-0.885	0.217	0.744	0.431
	OC3	124	4.0403	0.85918	-1.016	0.217	1.166	0.431
	OC4	124	4.000	0.91953	-1.212	0.217	1.749	0.431
Technology Orientation	TO1	124	3.8629	0.99866	-1.313	0.217	1.872	0.431
	TO2	124	3.7984	1.01196	-1.306	0.217	1.744	0.431
	TO3	124	3.7258	0.97396	-0.979	0.217	1.143	0.431
	TO4	124	3.7258	1.02282	-1.093	0.217	1.199	0.431
Strategic Fit	SF1	124	3.4758	0.96663	-0.864	0.217	0.839	0.431
	SF2	124	3.5081	0.94134	-0.707	0.217	0.459	0.431
	SF3	124	3.1855	1.24526	-0.025	0.217	-0.931	0.431
	SF4	124	3.4194	1.02883	-0.645	0.217	0.105	0.431
	Valid N (listwise)	124						

Source: Smartpls 4 output, 2023

Evaluation of Measurement Model

Convergent Validity

Table 3 illustrates that the Cronbach Alpha values were over 0.70 (Hair *et al*., 2019), representing a high level of specific item internal consistency. The composite reliability and average variance retrieved were utilised to establish convergent validity. In addition, when the value of composite reliability is greater than 0.7, it is regarded as appropriate, and when the average variance extracted value is greater than 0.5, it is deemed acceptable. To validate that all items or indicators that match the requirements for strong convergent and discriminant validity meet the requirements for strong convergent and discriminant validity, the factor loading of each indicator was evaluated. The results in Table 4 disclosed that all loadings of the indicators are from 0.988 to 0.799, which are greater than 0.7 as suggested by Hair *et al*. (2019, 2014). Therefore, the measurement model maintained 16 indicators.

Discriminant Validity

The proposed standards had been used to test discriminant validity (Hair *et al*., 2019), in which the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) correlation values must be less than 0.90. The square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) must be higher than the relationship between two latent constructs. Table 5 illustrates the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) correlation values ranging between 0.830 and 0.281 for the constructs that met the criteria.

Table 3: Convergent Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
OC	0.985	0.989	0.958
TO	0.846	0.896	0.683
ES	0.945	0.960	0.858
SF	0.950	0.964	0.870

Source: Smartpls 4 output, 2023

Table 4: Loading

	Economic Sustainability	Organisational Culture	Strategic Fit	Technology Orientation
ES1	0.933			
ES2	0.928			
ES3	0.923			
ES4	0.922			
OC1		0.971		
OC2		0.988		
OC3		0.983		
OC4		0.972		
SF1			0.939	
SF2			0.962	
SF3			0.886	
SF4			0.941	
TO1				0.858
TO2				0.845
TO3				0.801
TO4				0.799

Source: Smartpls 4 output, 2023

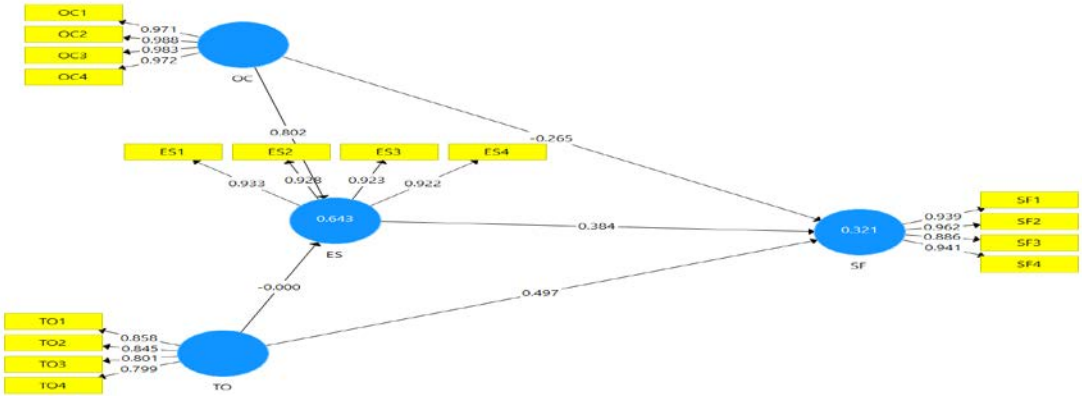
Table 5: Discriminant Validity - HTMT

	ES	OC	SF	TO
ES				
OC	0.830			
SF	0.373	0.281		
TO	0.406	0.502	0.567	

Source: Smartpls 4 output, 2023

Structural model

As the next stage, the structural model was examined. As a result, typical parametric-based approaches for determining statistical significance are unsuitable for PLS-SEM. Since the SmartPLS technique applies Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) in assessing parameters, it violates the criteria of data normality test observations (Henseler & Chin, 2010; Elgharbawy & Abdel-Kader, 2021). Bootstrapping is distinguished by thorough measure analysis, which uses the process to assess the importance of the predictor variables (Henseler & Chin, 2010). The PLS algorithm used involves 300 iterations to determine the path values and bootstrapping analysis on 5000 resamples to establish the statistical significance of the regression coefficient.



Source: Smartpls 4 output, 2023

Figure 2: Items loading, path coefficient and Root square (R2)

The essential requirement of the structural model was evaluated using the factor determining the root square (R2). Figure 2 illustrates the endogenous variable R2 values for economic sustainability and strategic fit, which range from 0.643 to 0.321, respectively. The root square values reflected the model's predictive validity.

The model fit was evaluated using the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) method. Henseler, Hubona and Ash (2016) maintained that the appropriate SRMR value should not be greater than 0.80. The model's value was 0.056, which is sufficient for achieving a satisfactory fit for the path models.

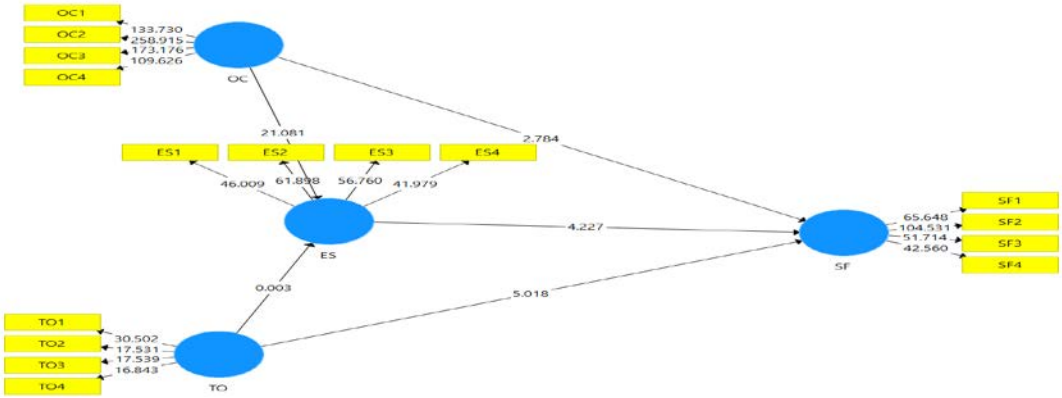
Hypotheses results

The structural model was found to be consistent and robust. The hypothesised interactions are tested using PLS-SEM path modelling via SMART PLS software. As a result, the partial least squares technique and bootstrapping process with 5000 bootstrap samples was employed to analyse path coefficients' significant levels (Hair *et al*., 2014). Table 6 displayed the path coefficient ratios and bootstrapping outcomes for the direct link hypotheses among latent variables. The testing of direct hypotheses produced positive and significant results except for hypothesis 4, which confirmed negative findings. The results indicated that organisational culture has a positive and significant effect on strategic fit (b = -0.265, t = 2.784, $p < 0.05$). The findings revealed that technology orientation has a positive effect on strategic fit (b = 0.497, t = 5.018, $p < 0.05$). The results specified that organisational culture has a strong and significant effect on economic sustainability (b = 0.802, t = 21.081, $p < 0.05$). However, the findings established that technology orientation has a negative effect on economic sustainability (b = -0.000, t = 0.998, $p > 0.05$). Furthermore, the outcomes maintain that economic sustainability has a direct positive influence on strategic fit (b= 0.384, t = 4.227, $p < 0.05$). Thus, H1, H2, H3 and H5 were supported, while hypothesis H4 was not supported.

Mediating effect

The mediation assessment was employed to establish whether the mediator variable can curiously transmit the impact of the exogenous variable to the endogenous variable (Al Halbusi *et al*., 2022). The mediation interaction effect tests the indirect stimulus of the exogenous constructs on the endogenous constructs via the mediator variable. Preceding research acknowledged that the mediation in multivariate analysis is accomplished using different procedures (Hayes, Smock & Carr, 2015). For instance, techniques used by (Baron & Kenny, 1986) underlying step approaches; contemporary methods that has few unrealistic inferential assumptions and rule of thumbs, which involves re-sampling method referred to as PLS bootstrapping (Preacher & Hayes, 2008; MacKinnon, Lockwood & Williams, 2004), as well as product method distribution (Fernández-Jiménez *et al*., 2022; MacKinnon, Lockwood & Williams, 2004).

Conspicuously, this paper utilises PLS-SEM method to examine the mediating interaction (Hair *et al.*, 2019). The PLS-SEM method of data analysis had progressively gained ground among modern scholars for its efficiency and robustness (Memon *et al*., 2021). Since it has the capability of testing multifaceted multivariate connotations as related to this study. Additionally, the bootstrapping process was employed for evaluating the statistical meaning of appropriate path coefficients in prior direct linkages since it embodies the precise measurements calculation (Memon *et al*., 2021; Chin, 2009). Also, the mediation effect was assessed through the bootstrapping method (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2012), as suggested by scholars like (Hair *et al*., 2014; Zhao, Lynch Jr & Chen, 2010). Using 5,000 samples and a 95% confidence interval, a bootstrapping process was used to evaluate the indirect effects interaction (Hair *et al*., 2019).



Source: Smartpls 4 output, 2023

Figure 3: Structural model

The confidence interval (CI) values for the indirect effect a*b are provided by the PLS outputs. Furthermore, where the 95 % confidence level excludes 0, an indirect effect connecting X and Y via the mediator with a 95 % confidence level results in the mediation effects shown in Figure 3.

Table 7 disclosed the bootstrapping outcomes of the mediation effect interaction for economic sustainability on the link amid organisational culture, technology orientation and strategic fit. Table 7 revealed that the confidence interval (CI) did not include zero (0) for the significant indirect effects of organisational culture on strategic fit, and technology on strategic fit (b = -0.265, CI = 0.160 to 0.452). The direct correlation and path c' was positive and the indications of the path coefficients a, b, and c' are all significant, indicating that economic sustainability mediates the influence of organisational culture on strategic fit. The relationship between organisational culture and strategic fit was significantly mediated by economic sustainability (b = 0.308, t = 4.126, p 0.05), thus, H6 was supported by the data. However, findings show the indirect effects confidence interval of technology orientation on strategic fit (b = -0.000, CI = -0.041 to 0.042) which contain a zero (0). The direct correlation path coefficient c' was positive and the symbols of path coefficients a-b are not significant, b-c and a-c were significant, indicating that economic sustainability did not mediate the relationship between technology orientation and strategic fit. Hence, the mediating impact of economic sustainability on the connection between technology orientation and strategic fit was not significant (b = 0.003, t = 0.003, p > 0.05), thus H6 could not be supported.

Table 6: Path coefficient /Results of direct hypotheses testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	CILL	CIUL
OC -> SF	-0.265	-0.266	0.095	2.784	0.005	-0.438	-0.058
TO -> SF	0.497	0.495	0.099	5.018	0.000	0.278	0.666

OC -> ES	0.802	0.800	0.038	21.081	0.000	0.719	0.869
TO -> ES	-0.000	0.001	0.052	0.003	0.998	-0.108	0.095
ES -> SF	0.384	0.389	0.091	4.227	0.000	0.200	0.553

OC=Organisational culture, TO=Technology Orientation, ES=Economic sustainability,

ST=Strategic fit, CILL=Confidence Interval Lower limit, CIUL=Confidence Interval Upper limit

Source: Smartpls 4 output, 2023

Table 7: Results of mediation effects hypotheses testing/indirect relationship

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	CILL	CIUL
OC -> ES -> SF	0.308	0.311	0.075	4.126	0.000	0.160	0.452
TO -> ES -> SF	0.003	0.001	0.021	0.003	0.998	-0.041	0.042

OC=Organisational culture, TO=Technology Orientation, ES=Economic sustainability,

ST=Strategic fit, CILL=Confidence Interval Lower limit, CIUL=Confidence Interval Upper limit

Source: Smartpls 4 output, 2023

Discussion

This research purpose was to explore the bond between organisational culture and technology orientation on strategic fit and whether economic sustainability mediates the link. A substantial bearing of organisational culture and technology orientation on strategic fit was found, which supports the concept that organisational culture and technology orientation should be considered to focus on the necessities of strategic fit. Such insight is imperative as a result of the present requirement for strategic fit in the small retail business industry, resulting from dominant rivalry prompted by the spread of advanced competition that hunt for customer fulfilment and cut resource wastages. Organisational culture and technology orientation revealed positive relationships on the strategic fit among small retail businesses in Nigeria. This result was consistent with previous research (Apaydin *et al*., 2021; Kramer & Porter, 2006) who claimed that strategically chosen social responsibility may help the business boost its competitiveness and profit margins in addition to meeting stakeholder expectations. The present result guided that organisational culture and technology orientation are worthwhile strategic fit for the small retail businesses. More so, this research acknowledged that appropriate organisational culture and technology orientation in small retail businesses can enhance their strategic fit.

The result shows that economic sustainability mediates the link between organisational culture and strategic fit. Specifically, economic sustainability mediates the link between organisational culture. The outcome recognises the prudent utilisation of economic sustainability in assisting small retail businesses to achieve strategic fit through organisational culture. Further, economic sustainability in this paper plays a role as machinery that elucidates the effect of organisational culture and strategic fit. In this research, small retail businesses' economic sustainability would improve if their organisational culture was changed to encourage greater participation in strategic fit activities. This is because the effect of strategic fit was felt both indirectly through economic sustainability and directly through organisational culture.

Theoretical contribution

This paper bids an alternate clarification to the incompatible results in the strategic management transformation literature. This study knowledge that it may be the first effort to integrate two sights in a single study to comprehend the details of how organisational culture, technology orientation, and economic sustainability processes relate to stimulate strategic fits. Preceding scholars have focused mostly on the interface between strategic fit, strategy, structure, and multinational corporation performance. The present findings advocate that organisational culture, technology orientation and economic sustainability are equally important for small retail businesses. Specifically, this study finds that an organisational culture, technology orientation and economic sustainability among small retail

businesses is positively linked with strategic fit. The present findings underline the repute of strategic fit as a source of innovation competitive advantage in small retail businesses. Most importantly, the mediation analysis, which fails to gain support from this research, submits that applying technology orientation alone is not eloquently connected to economic sustainability, and the corollary is that the significance of launching corresponding technology orientation and economic sustainability does not track the design of more than better. Therefore, failure to obtain backing for the mediation perspective of economic sustainability between technology orientation and strategic fit, also cries for further theoretical explanation in future bids of organisational alignment theory on strategic fit study. Small retail business managers need to understand the interrelationship of small retail business elements. When a small retail business identifies opportunities in the organisational culture and technology orientation, it is important to establish proper strategic fit and procedures that will boost sustainability growth strategy. For instance, the mediation investigation validates, the affiliation between organisational culture and strategic fit is mediated by economic sustainability.

This present study recommends that the organisational culture and strategic fit processes must be promoted to grasp entirely the benefits of adopting a fitting strategic policy. This is fairly an overbearing necessity for small retail businesses to reach an internal strategic fit in small retail businesses. When owner-managers design a strategic fit process that works as a plan for accomplishment, it is obligatory to accept that there is a tolerable arrangement to ensure the strategic fit is pragmatic to gain advantage from it.

From owner-managers' perspective, this means the requirement to track a steady and simultaneous strategic fit pattern in the small retail business would attain the core standardisation. Owner-managers of small retail businesses needs to view the economic sustainability between the two factors that stimulate their retail business (i.e., organisational culture and technology orientation) as desirable rudiments that can foster strategic fit (Zajac, Kraatz & Bresser, 2000; Santa-Maria, Vermeulen & Baumgartner, 2022).

Methodological Contributions

This research reveals the virtues of retaining a multivariate context. Prior studies have proposed that academics had better explain their choice of specific method of fit in undertaking research (van Witteloostuijn *et al*., 2022; Powell, 1992). Because outcomes are subtle to selecting such a method of fit, inappropriate choice of process might lead to erroneous decisions. More importantly, engaging one certain procedure of fit and overlooking the option of other forms confines the generalisability of the results since conclusions are drawn consistent with just that precise choice and findings. This method is exclusively beneficial when the extant literature does not specify any particular form of fit. Using partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), facilitated by SMARTPLS software view consents the investigation of both accuracy of appropriateness between the observed direct and indirect constructs (mediation) associations and the method's all-inclusive viewpoint. These simultaneous aids of precision analysis are not achievable with a single instinct. Also, this study has incorporated different variables in a single model linking their relationship in the framework and hypotheses were tested using the new second generation software partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), using SMARTPLS.

Conclusion

This study highlights the impact of organizational culture and technology orientation on achieving strategic fit in the retail industry. The research demonstrates that a strong, flexible organizational culture and a proactive technological orientation play crucial roles in aligning retail business strategies. Moreover, economic sustainability emerges as a key mediating factor that links these components to strategic fit. The findings suggest that for retail enterprises to thrive and maintain a competitive advantage, they must foster a culture that embraces technological innovation while prioritizing economic sustainability, ensuring the harmonious alignment of strategic goals.

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Conflict of Interest:

The authors declare that there are no known conflicts of interest or affiliations with other individuals that could have influenced the work presented in this paper.

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