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Investing in Human Capital and its Impact on Organizational Sustainability: An Exploratory Study at Al-Mustaqbal University

Kamil Shakeer Al-Watifi¹, Abbas Mizel Al-Sahlani²

Abstract

This study aims to determine the impact of investment in human capital on organizational sustainability at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university. The study began with a main problem that included several questions revolving around the nature of the influential relationships between the two variables at Al-Mustaqbal university. It adopted the scale (Daft 2003) to measure the dimensions of investment. With human capital, the scale (Alshuwaikhat et al. 2016) was adopted to measure the dimensions of organizational sustainability. The questionnaire was used as a main tool for collecting the data necessary for the study. The study sample represented (230) faculty members of Al-Mustaqbal university. For the purpose of analyzing and processing the data statistically, a group of descriptive statistical methods were used during the statistical program (Amos v.23). It was concluded that there is a significant effect of investment in human capital and its dimensions on organizational sustainability at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university, with the university administration being keen to work on enhancing investing in human resources to achieve a sustainable and clean environment for the university. The study recommended the necessity of working to achieve an environmentally friendly university, by increasing green areas, shifting towards clean energy, and conducting more research related to sustainability.

Introduction

Tackling investing in human capital within universities is a type of foresight of the future, a foresight that invests promising energies and provides the market with qualified outputs to create suitable job opportunities and create innovative fields of work and production projects that work to make society ready for rapid change towards new requirements that is not realized by traditional planners (Juma'a, 4:2021). Modern trends in management have emphasized the distinctive role of human capital in the work of organizations, as it is a root of creativity, its basic resource, and the directing engine of the rest of its resources, which gives it the ability to adapt to different variables and data in the internal and external environments. From abroad, interest in human capital and its investment emerged as one of the most important factors that contribute to achieving organizational sustainability. This study is an attempt to arouse interest in an important topic, which is the impact of human capital on organizational sustainability within a private educational organization.

Section One: Study Methodology

¹ Babylon University, Email: bus.kamil.shakeer@uobabylon.iq

² Al-Kufa University, Email: abbas_muzel@yahoo.com

1.1 The Problem of the Study

Those who follow modern administrative thought, specifically starting from the end of the twentieth century to the beginning of the current century, find the emergence of the need for organizational sustainability that this thought have dealt with, and which was imposed by the magnitude of the challenges that organizations have faced and are still facing, including the phenomenon of globalization, the acceleration of technological development, the diversity of the workforce and the emergence of the knowledge economy, all of these things made the management of organizations aim to invest in human resources (Hussein, 2007: 44).

By looking at the results of the latest 2022 British classification, THE Impact Ranking, it showed that Al-Mustaqbal university was ranked in the category (401-600) globally, as well as the Indonesian UI Green Matrics ranking for the year 2021, where the ranking of Al-Mustaqbal university was 124 globally. Due to the work of the two researchers at Al-Mustaqbal university as lecturers, as well as their repeated field visits and meeting with some of its leaders (holders of administrative positions) they realize the need to pay attention to the issue of organizational sustainability, as well as investing in human capital at the university.

1.2 The Importance of the Study

The importance of the study can be summarized by a number of points, the most notable of which are:

1. The investigated university, Al-Mustaqbal university, has its importance as a knowledge organization that provides educational, research, and community service.
2. Providing the employees with the required awareness on the issue of organizational sustainability.
3. Reviewing the concepts and trends demonstrated by previous researchers, who were interested in the variables of the current study in the theoretical scope, in addition to the academic contribution provided by the researcher with regard to some cognitive aspects of the variables of the study. The current study is a new attempt to draw attention to the necessity of paying attention to organizational sustainability, and to the subject of investing in human capital in organizations.
4. Trying to submit proposals to the management of the organization under study, and putting them into practice for the purpose of raising the level of its sustainability, as well as having a positive impact on the issue of investing in human capital in the organization.

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to achieve a set of objectives, including:

1. Pointing out the methods used by Al-Mustaqbal university to encourage investing in human capital in order to achieve organizational sustainability.
2. Identifying the extent to which the organizational sustainability dimensions being applied at Al-Mustaqbal university.
3. Recognizing the impact of investing in human capital in organizational sustainability at Al-Mustaqbal university.

The Second Section: The Theoretical Aspect

2.1 The Concept of Investing in Human Capital

Human capital is “the economic value of the knowledge, experience, skills, and abilities of human resources” (Daft, 2003: 408). The combination that makes up human capital (knowledge, information, skills, and experience) is the basic component on which the knowledge economy depends (Endres, 2000: 172). Michael (2014: 215) believes that it represents “a stock of competencies, knowledge, and social and personal qualities, including creativity, which is embodied in the ability to perform work to create economic value”, while (Asi, 2014: 78) states that it represents "the total knowledge, skills, experience, qualifications, creativity, and enthusiasm of individuals within the organization that contribute to a achieving excellence in performance if invested correctly."

The researchers believe that human capital represents an intellectual stock of values, habits, beliefs, and human skills in all specializations and fields, which can be invested in a sustainable manner that raises these capabilities, skills, and values to the level that achieves future development goals and visions, and is an indicator for measuring progress and competition among nations.

2.2 The Importance of Investing in Human Capital

Human capital is considered one of the most important pillars of strength in any organization as it contributes to achieving organizational excellence through creativity and innovation. Alfred Marshal believes that human capital is the resource upon which it is necessary to present ideas, conduct research, and transform their results into products (Asi, 2014: 79).

Investing in human capital contributes significantly to increasing the value of the organization's human capital, which is reflected in the increase of its own capital, which can be employed to enhance its market share (Levy, 2009: 43). Investing in human capital also contributes to supporting scientific research processes in the organization and its results are used to enhance the continuous processes of improvement carried out by the organization, and thus creativity and innovation as well as strengthening its organizational health and immunity (Yu et al., 2009: 11).

Investing in human capital is also considered extremely important for creating added value for the organization and achieving a surplus in its resources. This importance can be determined by estimating the amount of costs that the organization spends on the studies and research necessary to plan this type of investment, and the collected revenues (Slim et al., 2018: 121).

In addition, it can be said that human capital leads to increased creative capabilities and contributes to reducing costs, attracting customers and enhancing loyalty by providing services at competitive prices. Human capital is also considered the most valuable asset at the present time as it represents the rare resources capable of introducing improvements and modifications which are essential to everything in the organization's work. At the same time it contributes to enhancing competition, providing more new and developed services, and reducing the period between each innovation and the next.

2.3 Dimensions of Investing in Human Capital

Human capital plays the most important role in the overall performance of the organization, and it consists of a group of dimensions that can be developed and expanded in the human resource in a way that contributes to enhancing innovation and creativity. When reviewing the studies related to human capital, it becomes clear to us that thinkers and researchers differ in defining the dimensions of investment in human capital, each according to his point of view.

Some of them believe that it includes (knowledge, skills, and abilities) (Al-Anazi, 36: 2006), while others like (Edvinson, 1997), (Strovic, 2003), (Florides, 2005) and (Hussein, 2007) agree that it is (knowledge, Skills and abilities).

Also, the dimensions adopted by Hussein (2020: 139) based on (Daft, 2003) are (experiences, abilities, knowledge, skills). These dimensions will be adopted in this study as they are the closest to the environment of the organization under study. The researchers believe that these dimensions are compatible with the requirements of the current study as will be discussed in detail.

1- Skills

It represents the capabilities that are acquired through training and experience at work and developed through practice and learning. It also includes the capabilities of human resources to perform the job excellently within a specific period of time (Blundell et al., 1999: 3). It also includes the ability of resources to translate knowledge into action that its results are desirable and represent the personal level in achieving skills (Nigin, 2005: 18).

The researchers believe it is necessary for management to work on ensuring the diversity of employees` skills, whether they are technical skills, personal skills, human skills, or cognitive skills. Skills, regardless of their type, decrease significantly over time, which requires continued training, updating, and renewal of these skills while constantly acquiring new ones.

2- Capacities

It signifies "how human resources carry out their tasks" (Gizien et al., 2012: 107), while (Rindova & Fombrum, 1999: 191) see it as "the distinctive features of the organization in gaining competitive advantage, and that the capabilities that human capital carries are the strategic capabilities that provide organizations with strategic flexibility in a rapidly changing world.

Among the most important methods used in investing in human resources capabilities is learning through previous experiences, creativity by blending capabilities with current situations, and knowing what is expected to happen in the future in order to meet the needs necessary to confront them by strengthening communications between individuals (Hussein, 2020: 151). The researchers believe that capabilities are the distinguished performance of activities related to human resources that contribute to creating value, and they also represents all behaviors related to completing tasks with speed and quality.

3- Knowledge

Knowledge is an advantage of the present time, this is a time for the power of knowledge, and the term knowledge refers to "the combination of experience, perception, skill, values, and information, as well as the abilities of intuition, imagination, and thinking." (Hussein, 2007: 69).

There are those who believe that knowledge "is the stock that has been created from the outcome of scientific research, thinking, field studies, the development of innovative projects, and other forms of human intellectual production over time" (Mcelory, 2003: 112), and it is also "data and information that have been processed and organized in a manner that facilitates the process of using it by others to solve the problems they face and carry out their own work." (Mesqari et al., 2015: 3).

The most common classification is that of the implicit knowledge and the non-implicit or explicit knowledge (Daft, 2001: 259).

Knowledge can be defined as one of the dimensions of human capital. It uses the information that the human resource possesses to enable it to deal with the situations faced at work. Its importance is highlighted in understanding and visualizing the nature of the problems that hinder the work of human resources and working to find appropriate solutions to them.

4- Experiences

It is “the set of information, skills, and attitudes that a human resource possesses as a result of having gone through previous situations.”. That is, the term “experiences” summarizes the concept of knowledge and skill in an innate manner, and experiences represent “the intangible assets that human resources rely on in implementing their activities and operations, in light of the contemporary economy based on Knowledge.” (Nistor, 2007: 281).

It can be defined as the level of human resources’ accumulated knowledge acquired from the current job and previous jobs that the organization invests in to accomplish its work in a way that effectively achieves its goals.

Fourth: The Concept of Organizational Sustainability

It is the organization’s ability to perform tasks aiming to achieve the desired results using the resource base available to it (Bezerra et al, 2019: 1). It is a set of policies and procedures taken by organizations that adapt environmental data and societal needs in a way that enables them to achieve their economic goals and perform their activities with high efficiency while ensuring value for stakeholders (Al-Nasrawi, 2022: 97).

The researchers believe that it represents organizational efforts and actions in a balanced manner by spreading the concept of sustainability at all levels of the organization, while ensuring the spread of this culture in the external environment within which the organization operates to ensure the future.

Fifth: The Importance of Organizational Sustainability

The global community is unanimous in its opinion that sustainability is the only way forward in successful commercial projects and the survival of human civilization in the future. Modern organizations are also concerned with organizational and environmental sustainability while continuing to develop organizations and working to improve the behavior of their resources by making it proactive rather than responsive, and this leads organizations to work. Towards effective performance, which contributes to achieving goals faster than planned, because the organization will be one step ahead of competitors due to the proactive behavior of employees. Sustainability leads to the involvement of all relevant actors, and sustainability reports provide organizations with the opportunity to improve their transparency, market value, reputation and legitimacy, as well as enable them to compare with their competitors and motivate their collaborators (Batista & Francisco, 2018: 2).

On the basis of the above, it is clear that organizational sustainability contributes to achieving a balance between social, environmental and economic factors, and improving organizational performance, which increases the organization’s ability to preserve all resources inside and outside the organization, and thus achieve stakeholders’ satisfaction.

Sixth: Organizational Sustainability Goals

The world is currently living in a difficult phase. As time progresses, people’s requirements and

desires increase. This forces organizations to adapt to the changes that occur. Hence, organizations began to move toward achieving sustainability in their strategies. Among the most important goals of organizational sustainability are:

- 1- Achieving a better quality of life for workers, which is achieved through planning processes and implementing programs that achieve the principles of sustainability (Hammadi, 77: 2022).
- 2- Enhancing community awareness of existing and future environmental risks by developing people's sense of responsibility towards the environment, and urging them to actively participate in finding appropriate solutions to it.
- 3- A rational use of resources is achieved by virtue of organizations dealing with resources in the form of inputs that are used rationally with work without depleting them (Geis, et al, 1997: 4).
- 4- Unifying and cooperating efforts between different organizations regarding agreed-upon efforts to make various current and future groups happy (Al-Nasrawi, 107: 2022).
- 5- Paying attention to environmental safety by combating climate change and protecting oceans and terrestrial ecosystems (Justice & Sandra, 2019: 10).
- 6- Contributing to bringing about a positive change in the needs of society according to the organization's capabilities and activities (Hammadi, 78: 2022).

From the above, it is clear that sustainability is a purposeful process, and these goals lead to practicing sustainable business, and that one of the advantages of organizational sustainability is that it links organizations that have a future strategic approach that works through all the various available resources, creating a state of societal justice, and promoting environmental concerns. Safety systems, as well as having resources and infrastructure that respond to environmental changes, all of which aim for organizational sustainability.

Seventh: Dimensions of Organizational Sustainability

Organizational sustainability is considered a multi-dimensional concept. Researchers have differed in their adoption of the dimensions they adopt. The nature of the organization under study and the intellectual background of the researchers may have a role in adopting these dimensions. Some of them adopted the dimensions of organizational sustainability (the administrative dimension, the social dimension, the economic dimension, and the environmental dimension) (Al-Juhani, 76: 2015) and (Hammadi, 89: 2022). As for (Alshuwaikhat et al., 2016: 6), the dimensions (environmental dimension (sustainable campus environment), education and research, community service (social dimension), sustainability of financial resources) have been adopted. These dimensions will be adopted as they are closest to the environment of the organization under study and appropriate to the nature of the study.

1- Sustainable Environmental Dimension (Sustainable Campus Environment)

It relates to how to create a sustainable environment by rationalizing energy use by adopting energy-efficient lighting systems, adhering to renewable energy standards in new construction, and striving to obtain a certificate (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), which is a recognized international system that provides a standard for the design, construction and operation of high-rise buildings, quality and high performance, and takes into account site selection, energy saving and water efficiency, as well as reducing carbon dioxide emissions (Alshuwaikhat et al., 2016: 5).

It can be said that the environmental sustainability of the university campus focuses on rationalizing the use of natural resources and reducing gas emissions, as well as encouraging

resource investment, adopting environmentally friendly means of transportation, and adopting green infrastructure planning.

2- Sustainable Education and Research

This dimension is concerned with education for sustainable development as an integral part of quality education and one of the basic components of lifelong education which aims at sustainable development according to UN educational and cultural organization.

The dimension of sustainable education and research addresses aspects of sustainability related to research and scholarship in universities and the extent of their participation in sustainability-oriented research, and scholarships related to sustainability that benefit faculty members and students, as well as establishing specialized centers concerned with sustainability on campus, and work to integrate sustainability issues, local and global research in sustainability, encouraging graduate students to write their dissertations and research on matters related to sustainability, as well as encouraging cooperation with local and external organizations in seeking to find solutions to sustainability challenges (Alshuwaikhat et al., 2016: 8).

From the above, it can be said that sustainable researches within education and sustainable research are all efforts made within higher education institutions to ensure sustainability in areas of concern to society and aim to highlight the importance of pursuing comprehensive development in which all organizations operating in the country participate, and the forefront of these organizations are universities. In order to ensure the spread of the culture of sustainability in society and unify efforts towards sustainable development.

3- Sustainable Community Service

Sustainable community service within educational organizations includes creating clear-cut sustainability policies by establishing departments within the educational organization concerned with all matters related to organizational sustainability, as well as working to include aspects of sustainability in its strategic plans, and the possibility of making sustainability one of the most important criteria for selecting and promoting faculty and staff members, encouraging student clubs to be educated about sustainability and enhance community awareness of the importance of recycling waste and moving towards environmentally friendly behavior (Al-Nasrawi, 2022: 123).

It can be said that sustainable community service is a reflection of the educational organization's responsibility towards society by taking the most important role in raising awareness and adopting community-oriented activities while preserving workers' rights and spreading justice, equality and diversity to ensure a sustainable society.

4- Sustainability of Financial Resources

The sustainability of financial resources within educational organizations relates to the way of managing financial matters while providing diversification of income, as well as adopting mechanisms concerned with ensuring long-term funding for research and activities supporting sustainability, working to reduce expenses, working to design governance structures and management of financial resources, and working hard to identify sources of financial resources, new financing through partnerships with the private and governmental sectors for its intellectual output (Alshuwaikhat et al., 2016: 12).

It can be said that the sustainability of financial resources within educational organizations affects the diversity of funding sources, rationalization of expenditures, following new ideas

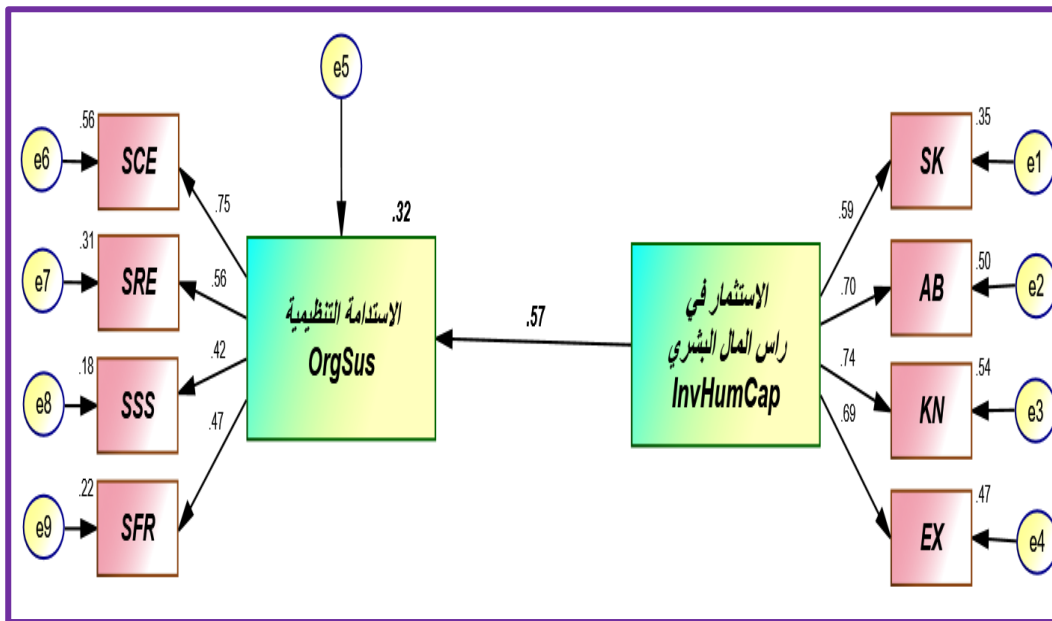
that serve society, and working to find new doors to obtain investments by introducing smart opportunities through which the organization achieves future benefits.

Section Three: The Practical Side

1- Testing the main hypothesis: (There is a significant effect of investing in human capital on organizational sustainability).

It appears from Figure (1) that the explanatory value of the coefficient of determination (R²) has achieved a high level of (32%). This confirms the size and level of change that occurs in the dependent variable, organizational sustainability, of which (32%) is due to the change in investment in human capital. While the remainder of the explanation rate (68%) is due to the influence of other factors not included in the study, it is also shown that the level of influence of the human capital investment variable on organizational sustainability was a good level, and this is indicated by the standard parameter index. Its value was (.57). Thus, the investment in human capital variable affects the organizational sustainability variable by (57%) at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample. The influence factor here is a significant value because the level of the (C.R.) indicator has achieved a high level of moral significance. Very significant through its value of (10.461) at the level of significance (.000), which is as shown in Table (1). Thus, a positive change of one unit from improving investment in human capital in the field at the level of the application environment will lead to an increase in the level of organizational sustainability by (57%). This result indicates that there is a significant effect of investment in human capital on organizational sustainability at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample.”

Thus, this establishes the possibility of accepting the main hypothesis.



(المصدر: Amos V.25 مخرجات برنامج)

Table (1): Parameters for Testing the Impact of Human Capital Investment on Organizational Sustainability.

Organizational sustainability	<---	Investing in human capital	.569	.327	.031	10.461	***
KN	<---	Investing in human capital	.738	1.038	.063	16.549	***
AB	<---	Investing in human capital	.705	1.068	.071	15.033	***
EX	<---	Investing in human capital	.688	1.026	.072	14.345	***
SK	<---	Investing in human capital	.593	.855	.077	11.157	***
SCE	<---	Organizational sustainability	.748	1.789	.105	17.031	***
SRE	<---	Organizational sustainability	.559	.923	.091	10.195	***
SSS	<---	Organizational sustainability	.420	.609	.087	7.011	***
SFR	<---	Organizational sustainability	.469	.679	.084	8.038	***

Source: Amos V.25 Program Output.

Based on the above, the sub-hypotheses of influence emanating from the main hypothesis can be tested as follows:

A. "Testing the first sub-hypothesis: (There is a significant effect of the skills dimension on organizational sustainability)."

Figure (2) shows the presence of a significant effect of the skills dimension on organizational sustainability, as we note that the value of the standard influence factor reached (0.12). This means that the skills dimension affects the organizational sustainability variable by (12%) at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample. This means that changing one unit of deviation from the skills dimension at Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample, will lead to a change in organizational sustainability by (12%). This value is considered significant because the value of the critical ratio (C.R.) shown in Table (2) is (2.182) significant value at the level of significance (0.029)."

"In light of what was mentioned above, the first sub-hypothesis emanating from the main hypothesis is accepted."

B. "Testing the second sub-hypothesis: (There is a significant effect of the capabilities dimension on organizational sustainability)."

Figure (2) shows the presence of a significant effect of the capabilities dimension on organizational sustainability, as we note that the value of the standard influence factor reached (0.24). This means that the capabilities dimension affects the organizational sustainability variable by (24%) at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample. This means that changing one unit of deviation from the capabilities dimension at Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample, will lead to a change in organizational sustainability by (24%). This value is considered significant because the value of the critical ratio (C.R.) shown in Table (2) is (4.026) significant value at significance level (.000)."

In light of what was mentioned above, the second sub-hypothesis emanating from the main hypothesis is accepted.

C. "Testing the third sub-hypothesis: (There is a significant effect of the knowledge dimension on organizational sustainability)."

Figure (2) shows the presence of a significant effect of the knowledge dimension on organizational sustainability, as we note that the value of the standard influence factor reached (0.28). This means that the knowledge dimension affects the organizational sustainability variable by (28%) at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample. This means that changing one unit of deviation from the knowledge dimension in Al-Mustaqbal university study sample will lead to a change in organizational sustainability by (28%). This value is considered significant because the value of the critical ratio (C.R.) shown in Table (2) is (4.383) significant value at significance level (0.000)."

In light of what was mentioned above, the third sub-hypothesis emanating from the main hypothesis is accepted.

D.. "Testing the fourth sub-hypothesis: (There is a significant effect of the experience dimension on organizational sustainability)."

Figure (2) shows the presence of a significant effect of the experience dimension on organizational sustainability, as we note that the value of the standard influence factor reached (0.18). This means that the experience dimension affects the organizational sustainability variable by (18%) at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample. This means that changing one unit of deviation in the experience dimension Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample, will lead to a change in organizational sustainability by (18%). This value is considered significant because the value of the critical ratio (C.R.) shown in Table (2) is (2.892) significant value at a significance level (0.004)."

"In light of what was mentioned above, the fourth sub-hypothesis emanating from the main hypothesis is accepted."

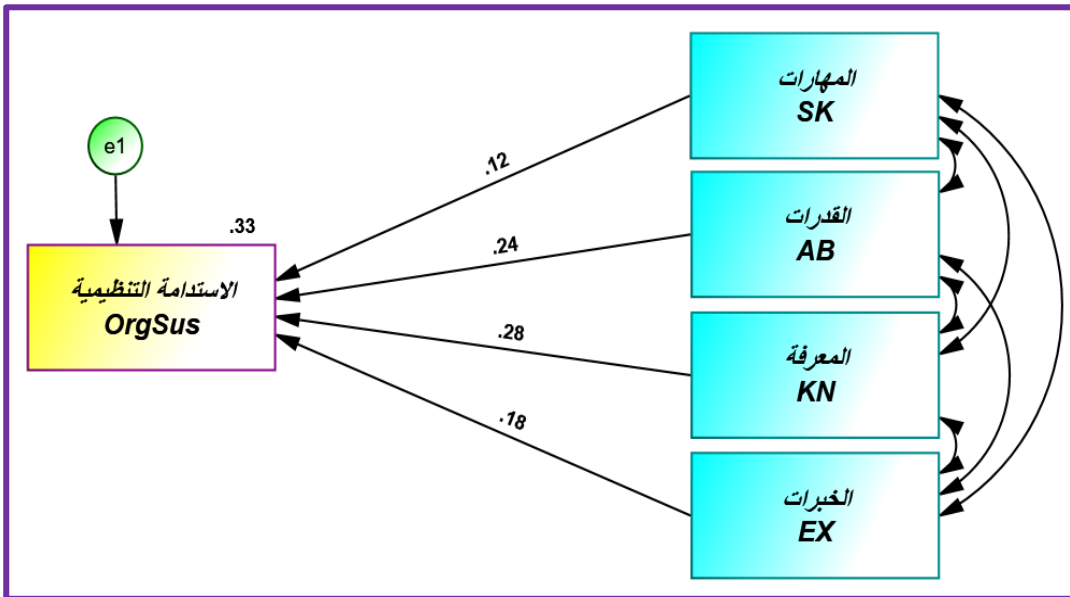


Figure (2): The Impact of the Dimensions of Investment in Human Capital on Organizational Sustainability.

"Source: Amos V.25 Program Outputs"

Table (2): Parameters of the Impact of the Dimensions of Investment in Human Capital on Organizational Sustainability.

Organizational sustainability	<---	Skills	.123	.049	.022	2.182	.029
Organizational sustainability	<---	Capacities	.241	.091	.023	4.026	***
Organizational sustainability	<---	Knowledge	.278	.114	.026	4.383	***
Organizational sustainability	<---	Experiences	.175	.067	.023	2.892	.004

"Source: Amos V.25 Program Outputs"

Section Four: Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The researchers reached a set of conclusions:

- 1- There is a significant effect of investment in human capital and its dimensions on organizational sustainability at the level of Al-Mustaqbal university, the study sample.
- 2- The results of the statistical analysis showed that organizational sustainability is moderately widespread at Al-Mustaqbal university, and this indicates the seriousness of the university administration towards entering the field of organizational sustainability.
- 3- The university administration's interest in organizational sustainability became clear, so it decided to invest in its human capital, especially enhancing skills, experience, and knowledge.
- 4- Al-Mustaqbal university was keen to enhance its investment in human resources, to achieve the sustainability of its university environment and take into account the clean environment, while being serious about raising awareness and participating in green activities, while working to sustain its financial resources.

4.2 Recommendations

- 1- The need to make more efforts at various environmental levels to push the university to achieve advanced levels of sustainability.
- 2- Work to diversify the university's funding sources, and work to transform it into a productive university that markets its intellectual and non-intellectual knowledge.
- 3- The necessity of working to achieve an environmentally friendly university, by increasing green areas, shifting towards clean energy, and conducting more research related to sustainability.

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