SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS STRATEGIES FOR FAST-FOOD RESTAURANT GROWTH: FAST-FOOD RESTAURANT MANAGERS' PERSPECTIVES IN LAKE REGION ECONOMIC BLOCK, KENYA

Henry Mogaka Nyamogosa and Dr. George Otieno Obonyo (Ph.D)

AJP

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS STRATEGIES FOR FAST-FOOD RESTAURANT GROWTH: FAST-FOOD RESTAURANT MANAGERS' PERSPECTIVES IN LAKE REGION ECONOMIC BLOCK, KENYA

Henry Mogaka Nyamogosa

A Postgraduate Student, Maseno University

Email: henrynyamogosa@gmail.com

Dr. George Otieno Obonyo (Ph.D)

Lecturer, Maseno University.

Email: goobonyo@maseno.ac.ke

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The goal of this study was to identify sustainable business strategies for fast-food restaurant growth.

Research design and methodology: To collect and analyze data for this study, an exploratory and descriptive design were used. A total number of 208 self-administered questionnaires were given to fast-food restaurant managers from the Lake Region Economic Block in Kenya. The selection of all 208 restaurant managers was conducted through stratification and proportionate sampling methods. The collected data was analyzed in SPSS using descriptive statistics and regression analysis.

Findings: The implemented sustainable business strategies for fast-food restaurant growth were identified as economic sustainability strategies, environmental sustainability strategies, and social sustainability strategies. The regression results revealed that implemented economic, social, and environmental sustainability strategies significantly (p =.001) influence fast-food restaurant growth and explained 10.9 percent of the variance in fast-food restaurant growth. The findings revealed a link between sustainable business strategies and fast-food restaurant growth.

Contribution to theory and practice: The newly acquired insights in this study will contribute to the academic literature on the adoption of sustainable business practices and their impact on fast-food restaurant growth. The findings of the study will aid in the creation of policies to address issues in the fast-food business. In addition, the study's findings will aid fast-food restaurant managers, who will be able to comprehend the role of sustainable business strategies in fast-food restaurant growth and, as a result, will be able to adopt and apply them to maintain and improve their business.

Keywords: *Sustainable business strategies, fast-food restaurant growth, Lake Region Economic Block, Kenya*

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, most businesses, including fast-food restaurants, recognize the value of sustainability in terms of earning a good reputation and gaining a competitive advantage (Kohi, 2020). Despite the fact that the concept of sustainability was first proposed in 1987 at the United Nations General Assembly, restaurants only recently realized its long-term benefits (Hutchinson et al., 2012). Customers interested in purchasing food products have led to increased restaurants that emphasize sustainable practices (Batat, 2020). Furthermore, customers are willing to pay a premium for products from fast-food restaurants that practice sustainability (Bonadonna et al., 2019). Fast-food restaurants are currently competing with other food outlets such as supermarkets (Kuokkanen et al., 2019), and with the belief that they cannot be sustainable due to the disposal nature of food and beverage containers (Hutchinson, Singh, & Walker, 2012), they have increased profits in the short term at the expense of the environment and society. However, with growing health concerns about fast-food restaurant products, increased environmental protection awareness, and more sophisticated customer needs, some of these fast-food restaurants are struggling to survive in the market (Duman et al., 2018; Ma et al., 2020; Mumbua, 2016; Thiemann & Roman-Alcalá, 2019).

The survival of fast-food restaurants in the market is inexorably connected to their growth (Chan & Nyam-Ochir, 2020). This necessitates the use of mixed-method strategies by fast-food restaurants in order to grow their market. As a result, the basis of fast-food restaurant growth is shifting slightly away from asset, revenue, and employment towards the growth in market size, resilience, profits, and consumer approval levels (Allen-Barnes, 2020). However, the growth of fast-food restaurants requires the implementation of sustainable business strategies. In light of this backdrop, the purpose of this exploratory study was to identify sustainable business strategies for the growth of fast-food restaurants in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Block. In this study, the term "fast-food restaurant growth" refers to sustained and improved fast-food restaurant revenues, customer approval levels, fast-food restaurant resilience, market size, and lower staff turnover rate. Within that context, the paper focuses primarily on the sustainability component, specifically on sustainable business strategies in fast-food restaurants. Three research questions were examined in order to identify and implement sustainable business strategies for fast-food restaurant growth.

RQ1: What sustainable business strategies are effected by fast-food restaurants for growth of fast-food restaurants in Lake Region Economic Block, Kenya?

RQ2: Which growth indicators do fast-food restaurant managers in Lake Region Economic Block, Kenya utilize as growth metrics for fast-food restaurants?

RQ3: Is there an influence of applied sustainable business strategies on the growth of fast-food restaurant?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainability, consumers and fast-food industry

Sustainability is a popular concept that includes environmental protection, economic growth, and social justice (Sandberg et al., 2019; Vu et al., 2017). Although sustainability is becoming more popular in various enterprises, research into business sustainability strategies in the field of hospitality management, particularly in the fast-food industry, is still in its early stages (Torlak et al., 2019). There are various points of view on sustainability and the fast-food industry (Gheribi,

2017). On the one hand, it is argued that the characterization of fast-food restaurants as disposing of food and beverage containers makes achieving sustainability difficult (Hutchinson et al., 2012). On the other hand, it is argued that sustainability practices in firms positively influence consumer attitudes toward purchasing the firm's products (Kohi, 2020). Environmental, social, and economic factors, among others, all have an impact on business sustainability (Vu et al., 2017). However, factor applicability in the real-life context varies, so firms, including fast-food restaurants, must adopt and implement business sustainability strategies that are appropriate for their context in order to achieve the best results (Murimi et al., 2021; Raab et al., 2018). Indeed, consumers are increasingly willing to purchase fast-food products from fast-food restaurants that value sustainability, particularly in developing countries (Batat, 2020). Hotels and restaurants are thought to contribute to climate change by producing waste, using plastics, consuming energy, and using harmful detergents (Mbasera et al., 2016). As a result, there is a need to ensure that restaurant businesses, including fast-food restaurants, are conducted ethically and environmentally friendly (Mbasera et al., 2016). Consumers are increasing pressure on fast-food restaurants to incorporate sustainable business models and practices into their operations to ensure environmental protection, social justice, and economic empowerment of the communities in which they operate (Raab et al., 2018).

The food environment is thought to influence consumer diet and eating habits (Pitt et al., 2017). Previous research has found that foods consumed in restaurants contain more calories, total fat, and saturated fat than foods prepared at home (Wellard-Cole et al., 2021). According to some, the large portion sizes and poor food quality of FFRs are major contributors to the global obesity epidemic (Chandon & Wansink, 2007). As public health concerns grew, mandatory nutrition labeling was implemented for restaurant chains with more than 20 locations (Kim & Nicolau, 2021). Concern for the foodservice industry's social and ethical responsibilities has grown rapidly in recent years. The demand for FFRs to protect the environment and local communities has increased (Nixon et al., 2015). FFRs that engage in sustainable practices have a competitive advantage over competitors (Tien & Hung Anh, 2018). Many FFRs have become greener as a result of implementing social and environmentally sustainable practices (Ottenbacher et al., 2019). Sustainability, as well as the use of locally grown and sourced meats and produce, have emerged as major trends in the restaurant industry (National Restaurant Association, 2020). To reduce negative environmental impacts, many restaurants have introduced locally grown, naturally antibiotic-free ingredients into their menus (Maynard et al., 2020). Some FFRs have joined the sustainable movement in order to support sustainable agriculture (Yoon et al., 2020). FFRs have recognized that they play a critical role in developing a healthy and sustainable eating environment in the face of rising public health concerns and environmental issues by sourcing ingredients from certified suppliers. Restaurants use local produce to help local communities, offer healthy menu options like low-calorie, whole-grain foods and half-portion options, and promote animal welfare and fair-trade produce (Ginani et al., 2020). As a result, embracing sustainability in fast-food restaurants necessitates that fast-food restaurant managers understand what needs to be done to ensure fast-food restaurant growth without jeopardizing environmental quality or social order.

Sustainability in restaurants

In restaurants, sustainability refers to the provision of organic, locally grown food items as well as the adoption of eco-friendly practices such as energy and water conservation (Duman et al., 2018; Franceschelli et al., 2018). In investigating restaurant sustainability, the terms green restaurants

and eco-friendly restaurants have been used (Han, 2020; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). The motivations of consumers to choose a specific restaurant have been the focus of sustainability in restaurants (Dastane & Fazlin, 2017; Maynard et al., 2020). Furthermore, some restaurants have focused on the examination of sustainable indicators in order to create a consumer perception of a sustainable business (Nosratabadi et al., 2019). Restaurant sustainability has been criticized for being weak, unstructured, and lacking in scientific evidence (Jacobs and Kloss, 2016). This is consistent with early research by Hutchison et al. (2012), which found that sustainability in restaurants had not been thoroughly investigated.

The aspects of food waste management, health issues, and the environment have been used to investigate the sustainability of restaurant businesses (Sakaguchi et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2019). Restaurant sustainability has been investigated in order to improve restaurant sustainability practices (Jang & Zheng, 2020; Jang et al., 2017; Kaljonen et al., 2020). The impact of sustainable business strategies on fast-food restaurant growth, on the other hand, has not been studied. Similarly, different types of restaurants were not differentiated during the study of restaurant sustainability (Raab et al., 2018). Studies, in particular, focus on the sustainability of dining restaurants and provide a general perspective on other types of restaurants such as casual dining, cafes, fast-food restaurants, and contemporary casual. Furthermore, studies in sustainability have concentrated on waste management in popular restaurants (Sirieix et al., 2017), restaurant corporate social responsibility, and food sustainability in family-owned restaurants (Higgins-Desbiolles & Wijesinghe, 2018). As a result, there was a need to gain insights into fast-food restaurant managers' definition and application of long-term business strategies for fast-food restaurant growth.

Perspectives of business sustainability strategies and fast-food restaurant growth

Scholars have investigated business sustainability strategies in relation to the expansion of fast-food restaurants. Rana and Paul (2017), for example, considered engaging suppliers across the board as one of the effective strategies for increasing the fast-food restaurant's purchasing power and, as a result, lowering the cost of purchasing food items. Sharma et al. (2014) express a similar viewpoint, arguing that restaurants sourcing local food items would improve the local economy and thus their ability to continue supporting the restaurant's growth. Collaboration, according to hospitality literature relevant to sustainability, plays a critical role in reducing Global Warming Potentials (GWP) footprint. According to Nosratabadi et al. (2020), fast-food restaurants that collaborate with food suppliers, local employees, and raw material producers through fair compensation and rewards reduce energy use and pollution, thereby contributing to lower operating costs and a lower carbon footprint. Torlak et al. (2019) discovered that supply chain control, customer satisfaction, price, and food quality are the key factors that drive restaurants, including fast-food restaurants, to source food locally. Torlak et al. (2019) also established that high-quality, low-cost food allows restaurants to perform well in terms of sales and profits. Lang and Lemmerer (2019) discovered that distance in transportation affects food quality in restaurants in their study. They discovered that food items sourced locally were of higher quality and contained fewer or no preservatives and chemicals, which is why many consumers prefer visiting restaurants that source their food locally.

According to studies, one of the key factors that gives a business a competitive advantage is sustainability. For example, Henshaw (2020) discovered that sustainable practices have a positive

impact on environmental sustainability in the fast-food industry. Similarly, Abdel-Shafy and Mansour (2018) reported in their study that recycling wastes in restaurants reduces the costs associated with waste disposal to landfills while also conserving resources that can be used in the future. This, in turn, ensures that the restaurants' assets grow. However, Sakaguchi et al. (2018) reported that restaurants continue to generate millions of wastes each year and dispose of them, despite various initiatives to reduce waste from packages such as reusing cups, plates, bowls, and cutlery. According to Vadakkepatt et al. (2021), this continuous generation of waste is due to the convenience that fast-food restaurant customers find in using disposable containers that can be easily disposed of once they become obsolete. Customers and investors, according to Edwards (2014), reward restaurants that embrace sustainable practices such as waste management and recycling. Similarly, Ishangulyyev et al. (2019) found that embracing environmental sustainability practices in restaurants allows for the identification of inefficiencies, thereby lowering costs and increasing outputs along the food value chain. Food chain restaurants embrace environmental sustainability strategies in order to persuade customers of the importance of purchasing food from sustainable businesses (Lerro et al., 2019).

The current world's increased emphasis on societal well-being has accelerated the adoption of the sustainability concept in the fast-food industry. Communities are being asked to weigh in on decisions affecting the internal operations of fast-food restaurants (Duman et al., 2018). According to the 2014 Global Responsibility Report, Starbucks provided loans to farmers, established support centers for them, and initiated carbon projects to improve environmental and social sustainability (Starbuck, 2014). Similarly, Ben and Jerry's in Vermont used fair trade ingredients and launched a sustainability program for daily animal farming (Fairtrade, 2017). Gheribi (2017) reported in their study that McDonald's uses corporate social responsibility policies to increase profits. In addition, because of its collaboration with the Research Hospital of St. Jude Children's Hospital, Domino's increased its revenues by approximately $38 million between 2004 and 2017 (Join Domino's in Supporting St. Jude, 2017). According to Hutchinson et al. (2012), Max restaurants developed a policy to ensure fairness and ethical dealings with their stakeholders. For example, the policy ensured proper size, weight, and convenient packaging materials (Hutchinson et al., 2012). Although several studies have identified and addressed economic sustainability factors that affect fast-food restaurant growth in terms of sustainability, there are few empirical studies that have addressed the need for sustained and improved fast-food restaurant growth as a result of the implementation of economic sustainability strategies. Similarly, while the relationship between economy, sustainability, restaurants, and their growth is confirmed in selected social science literature, there are few studies stated in the hospitality literature that specifically deal with sustainability and fast-food restaurant growth from a management perspective.

METHODS

Data collection

To collect and analyze data for this study, an exploratory and descriptive design was used. The design was chosen because it allows for the incorporation of findings into a theoretical framework and their application to other situations (Bell et al., 2019). Managers of fast-food restaurants in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Block made up the study's population. The sample size for the study was determined using stratified sampling. Proportionate sampling was used to obtain the required number of respondents from each stratum (county). To obtain proportionate samples from

each stratum, Van Dalen's (1979) formula was used. Proportionate samples were taken from the following counties: 14 Bungoma, 13 Bomet, 12 Homa Bay, 15 Kisii, 14 Migori, 12 Siaya, 18 Kericho, 15 Busia, 16 Nandi, 19 Kakamega, 25 Kisumu, 9 Nyamira, 15 Trans Nzoia, and 11 Vihiga. This area was chosen because, in recent years, local and international fast-food restaurants have entered the region, while others have left (Mumbua, 2016). In addition, there had been few studies in the hospitality management field, particularly in the fast-food industry in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Block.

In this study, a self-administered questionnaire was developed and used. The development of the questionnaire was guided by study variables, reviewed literature, and the UNWTO's indicators of sustainability. Questions pertaining to the study's objectives were quantified. Items from sustainable business strategies and fast-food growth indicators were combined to create statements that respondents rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (strongly agree). The value 5 was given more weight.

Sixteen items utilized to measure sustainable business strategies

1. Recycling
2. Water saving
3. Energy saving
4. Purchasing environmentally friendly products
5. Embracing eco-friendly practices among customers
6. Local labor
7. Local wages
8. Profitability and financial viability of the fast-food restaurant
9. Contribution to the growth of local economy
10. Engagement with suppliers across the board
11. Equitable treatment of employees
12. Involving the local population in business
13. Sponsoring community activities
14. Easy accessibility of fast-food restaurants by local people
15. Provision of authentic food and drink
16. Informing customers about local culture and history

Section I of the questionnaire focused on gathering demographic data from respondents, which included the fast-food restaurant manager's age bracket, level of education, gender, level of experience, and knowledge of sustainable business strategies. Section II, on the other hand, concentrated on addressing study variables. Prior to administering the questionnaires, the target respondents' consent was obtained. Target respondents were given a total of 208 self-administered questionnaires. 181 of the 208 self-administered questionnaires distributed were collected back. All 181 questionnaires returned were complete, resulting in a strong response rate of 87 percent.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, and frequencies) and multivariate statistics in IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The frequency distribution was used to analyze the respondents' demographic status. Means and standard deviations, on the other hand, were used to rank the implemented sustainable business strategies under study. Multivariate analysis, including factor and regression, was used to generate factor scores for sustainable business strategies from the original strategy ratings and identify a smaller number of variables that account for major variances in strategies. The acquired factor scores served as variables in the subsequent multiple regression analysis. To assess the suitability of factor analysis to the data, reliability alpha, measures of sampling (MSA), and correlation were used. In addition, factor analysis was used to determine the suitability and reliability of indicators of each latent variable. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to validate the factor model. F-statistics in regression were used to assess model fitness. T-values were used to assess the significance of each strategy in a factor structure. Only selected factor and regression analysis findings are presented in this article.

RESULTS

Demographic characteristics of respondents

According to Table 1, approximately 55.2 percent of respondents were male, while 44.8 percent were female. The sample included respondents aged 32 to 38 (28.2 percent), followed by those aged 25 to 31. (20.4 percent). Few respondents were between the ages of 46 and 65. 28.2 percent of these respondents had only been working in their fast-food restaurants for less than five years. 37.6 percent of those polled said they were familiar with sustainable business strategies. Table 2 summarizes the sample's distribution of respondents.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	100	55.2
	Female	81	44.8
	Total	181	100
Fast-food restaurant manager's age bracket	18 - 24 years	31	17.1
	25 - 31 years	37	20.4
	32 - 38 years	51	28.2
	39 - 45 years	34	18.8
	46 & above years	28	15.5
	Total	181	100
Level of education	O-level	27	14.9
	Certificate	23	12.7
	Diploma	28	15.5
	Degree	53	29.3
	Post graduate	28	15.5
	Any other level	22	12.2
	Total	181	100

Manager's experience	Below 5 years	51	28.2
	6 – 10 years	33	18.2
	11 – 15 years	26	14.4
	16 – 20 years	24	13.3
	21 – 25 years	29	16.0
	26 above years	18	9.9
	Total	181	100
Manager's level of knowledge on Sustainable business strategies	Lack	32	17.7
	Fair	41	22.7
	Good	68	37.6
	Excellent	40	22.1
	Total	181	100

Identifying of sustainable business strategies

On a 5-point scale, study participants were asked to identify sustainable business strategies implemented in fast-food restaurants for their growth. Table 3 summarizes the identification of sustainable business strategies. When the mean scores of the key constructs of study were compared, economic sustainability strategies were found to be the most implemented, followed by social sustainability strategies. The environmental sustainability strategies were identified as the least applied.

Table 2: Identifying of sustainable business strategies

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Economic Sustainability Strategies				
Employment of local residents in FFR	2	5	3.56	1.034
Purchase of local products	2	5	3.50	.964
Long-term financial viability and profitability plan	2	5	3.74	.939
Valuing of employees via payment and rewards	2	5	3.57	.990
Engagement of suppliers across the board	1	5	3.64	1.016
Mean			3.60	
Environmental Sustainability Strategies				
Recycling	1	5	2.73	1.042
Minimization of water consumption	1	5	2.60	1.182
Minimization of energy consumption	1	5	2.73	1.079
Purchase of environmentally friendly products	1	5	2.81	1.010
Creating awareness of eco-friendly practices	1	5	2.75	1.197
Mean			2.80	

Social Sustainability Strategies				
FFR supports at least one community activity or group	1	5	3.47	1.073
FFR informs customers about local culture and history	1	5	3.34	1.024
FFR provides traditional food and drink that is authentic	2	5	3.54	1.008
Local residents easily access FFR	2	5	3.37	1.017
Developed equality and equitable policy in managing employees	1	5	3.39	1.078
Involving local people in decision making process in business	1	5	3.54	1.025
Mean			3.44	

Ascertaining growth metrics for fast-food restaurants

Respondents were asked to determine growth indicators used as growth measures in their fast-food restaurant on a 5-point scale. The identified growth measures for fast-food restaurants in the Lake Region Economic Block are summarized in Table 4. Market share (*M= 3.25, SD = 1.30*) was identified as strongest indicator of growth in fast-food restaurants followed by staff turnover rate (*M=3.22, SD = 1.309*). Customer approval levels (*M= 3.16, SD = 1.274*) was identified as the weakest growth indicator.

Table 3: Ascertaining growth metrics for fast-food restaurants

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fast-food restaurant growth				
Profit generation in the FFR	1	5	3.18	1.293
Staff turnover rate in the FFR	1	5	3.22	1.309
Market share in the FFR	1	5	3.25	1.300
Customer approval levels in the FFR	1	5	3.16	1.274
Resilience to disasters and crisis in the FFR	1	5	3.19	1.299
			3.07	

Results of regression analysis

To generate factor scores for sustainable business strategies and growth indicators, exploratory factor analysis was performed using the principal component. To allow for further analysis, all items under each sustainable business strategies and growth of fast-food restaurant were reduced to a single factor score. To determine the impact of applied sustainable business strategies on fast-food restaurant growth, the single factor score for sustainable business strategies was regressed against fast-food restaurant growth indicators. The regression results showed that implemented economic, social, and environmental sustainability strategies as predictors and growth factors as dependent variables were appropriate (F value $(3, 177) = 7.251$, p =.001). Furthermore, the regression results revealed that implemented economic, social, and environmental sustainability strategies explained 10.9 percent of the variance in fast-food restaurant growth. The findings revealed a link between sustainable business strategies and fast-food restaurant growth.

DISCUSSION

Many scholars have written about sustainability in the hospitality industry research (Dastane & Fazlin, 2017; Torlak et al., 2019; Ukorebi, 2018; Warren, 2016). This exploratory study sought to identify long-term business strategies that can be used to boost fast-food restaurant growth. According to the mean ranking results, respondents identified economic sustainability strategies, social sustainability strategies, and environmental sustainability strategies as the implemented sustainable business strategies in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Block (Table 3). Nonetheless, some strategies were deemed more important than others. The mean of observed variables was used to rank fast-food restaurant growth. As growth indicators for fast-food restaurants in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Block, profit generation, staff turnover rate, market share, customer approval levels, and resilience were identified. According to the findings of the regression analysis, sustainable business strategies significantly predicted the growth of fast-food restaurants.

Economic, social, and environmental sustainability strategies

According to the findings, sustainable business strategies account for 10.9 percent of the variation in fast-food restaurant growth. This implies that economic, social, and environmental sustainability strategies are critical in promoting fast-food restaurant growth. These findings support the work of Bonadonna et al. (2019) and Franceschelli et al. (2018), who emphasize the importance of using economic and social sustainability models to give fast-food restaurants a competitive advantage. Similarly, the study supports Henshaw's (2020) study, which discovered that sustainability strategies positively affect fast-food industry sales in Rivers State, Nigeria. However, Ahmed et al. (2020) discovered contradictory results in their study. They stated that food production and services necessitate the use of more natural resources, which is directly related to environmental costs. In addition, Algarni et al. (2018) concluded in their study that ineffectively implementing environmental sustainability strategies would result in a 20% increase in operating costs. This implies that the fast-food restaurant's profit margin would be significantly reduced. Thus, the findings of this study confirm and demonstrate that the implementation of business sustainability strategies has an effect on the growth of fast-food restaurants. McDonald's employs corporate social responsibility policies in order to increase profits (Gheribi, 2017). This is demonstrated by their activities such as the provision of charities, education sponsorships, the embrace of local partnerships, the encouragement of conservation programs, and the provision of accountability reports. As a result, the findings of this study confirm that business sustainability strategies have an effect on fast-food restaurant growth, and fast-food restaurant managers must incorporate these strategies into their operations. According to Gheribi's (2017) study, the main benefit of implementing social sustainability strategies in a restaurant is increased sales. This study's findings confirms that embracing business sustainability strategies would lead to fast-food restaurant growth in terms of increased revenues, market share, customer approval levels, resilience, and lower staff turnover rate are also supported. Similarly, Hickel's (2019) study discovered that equitable salary payment distribution contributed to high financial returns, growth, and performance of businesses; thus, this study confirms the findings.

The study's findings highlight the importance of fast-food restaurants adopting and implementing sustainable business strategies. Adopting and implementing sustainable business strategies would boost fast-food restaurant growth by allowing customers and investors to reward them for being environmentally conscious (Edwards, 2014).

CONCLUSION

According to the study, sustainable business strategies differ from one fast-food restaurant to the next in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Block. Economic sustainability was found to be the most frequently used sustainable business strategy, followed by social sustainability strategies, and environmental sustainability strategies were found to be the least frequently used sustainable business strategy. This means that cost-cutting and environmental metrics in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Block are not guaranteed. In addition, the study concluded that market share, revenues, staff turnover rate, resilience, and customer approval levels can be used as growth metrics for fast-food restaurants. Finally, the study concluded that the implementation of sustainable business practices is essential and critical for the growth and continued competitiveness of fast-food restaurants.

RECOMMENDATION

This study recommend fast-food restaurants, particularly those in Kenya's Lake Region Economic Block, to consider the sustainable business strategies identified by fast-food restaurant managers in order to contribute to the growth of fast-food restaurants. Implementation of CSR policies by fast-food restaurants contributes to improved performance and financial returns (Hickel, 2019). Involving local residents in employment and local suppliers in food supply would help to accelerate the growth of fast-food restaurants.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is important to note the limitations of this study in terms of the study area and the study sample; therefore, the interpretation and application of the findings should take these limitations into account. Location, knowledge, technology, and policies, among other intervention factors, may influence how fast-food restaurant managers implement long-term business strategies for growth. As a result, more research is needed in this area, such as improving survey question wording to better link fast-food restaurant managers' knowledge of business sustainability strategies, technology, and fast-food restaurant location to fast-food restaurant growth. Because this exploratory study focused primarily on the perspectives of fast-food restaurant managers, there is a need for future research with a focus on guests to allow for a comparison analysis with the findings of this study.

REFERENCES

Abdel-Shafy, H. I., & Mansour, M. S. (2018). Solid waste issue: Sources, composition, disposal, recycling, and valorization. *Egyptian journal of petroleum*, *27*(4), 1275-1290.

Ahmed, Z., Asghar, M. M., Malik, M. N., & Nawaz, K. (2020). Moving towards a sustainable environment: the dynamic linkage between natural resources, human capital, urbanization, economic growth, and ecological footprint in China. *Resources Policy*, *67*, 101677.

Algarni, S., Saleel, C. A., & Mujeebu, M. A. (2018). Air-conditioning condensate recovery and applications—Current developments and challenges ahead. *Sustainable cities and society*, *37*, 263-274.

Allen-Barnes, V. P. (2020). Strategies for Small Restaurant Owner Success beyond 5 Years

Batat, W. (2020). Pillars of sustainable food experiences in the luxury gastronomy sector: A qualitative exploration of Michelin-starred chefs' motivations. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *57*, 102255.

Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research methods* (5th ed.). Newyork: Oxford University press.

Bonadonna, A., Alfiero, S., Cane, M., & Gheribi, E. (2019). Eating hamburgers slowly and sustainably: the fast food market in North-West Italy. *Agriculture*, *9*(4), 77.

Chandon, P., & Wansink, B. (2007). The biasing health halos of fast-food restaurant health claims: lower calorie estimates and higher side-dish consumption intentions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *34*(3), 301-314.

Chun, S. H., & Nyam-Ochir, A. (2020). The effects of fast food restaurant attributes on customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation using DINESERV scale. *Sustainability*, *12*(18), 7435.

Dastane, O., & Fazlin, I. (2017). Re-investigating key factors of customer satisfaction affecting customer retention for fast food industry. *International Journal of Management, Accounting and Economics*, *4*(4), 379-400.

Duman, G. M., Taskaynatan, M., Kongar, E., & Rosentrater, K. A. (2018). Integrating environmental and social sustainability into performance evaluation: A balanced scorecard-based grey-DANP approach for the food industry. *Frontiers in nutrition*, *5*, 65.

Edwards, D. (2014). *The link between company environmental and financial performance (Routledge Revivals)*. Routledge.

Franceschelli, M. V., Santoro, G., & Candelo, E. (2018). Business model innovation for sustainability: a food start-up case study. *British Food Journal*.

Gheribi, E. (2017). The activities of foodservice companies in the area of corporate social responsibility–on the Example of International Fast Food Chain. *Journal of Positive Management*, *8*(1), 64-77.

Ginani, V. C., Araújo, W. M. C., Zandonadi, R. P., & Botelho, R. B. A. (2020). Identifier of Regional Food Presence (IRFP): a new perspective to evaluate sustainable menus. *Sustainability*, *12*(10), 3992.

Han, H. (2020). Theory of green purchase behavior (TGPB): A new theory for sustainable consumption of green hotel and green restaurant products. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, *29*(6), 2815-2828.

Henshaw, A. G (2020). Green Supply Chain Management Practices and Environmental Sustainability: A Study of Fast Food Restaurants in Rivers State of Nigeria.

Hickel, J. (2019). The contradiction of the sustainable development goals: Growth versus ecology on a finite planet. *Sustainable Development*, *27*(5), 873-884.

Higgins-Desbiolles, F., & Wijesinghe, G. (2018). The critical capacities of restaurants as facilitators for transformations to sustainability. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*.

Higgins-Desbiolles, F., Moskwa, E., & Wijesinghe, G. (2019). How sustainable is sustainable hospitality research? A review of sustainable restaurant literature from 1991 to 2015. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *22*(13), 1551-1580.

Hutchinson, D., Singh, J., & Walker, K. (2012). An assessment of the early stages of a sustainable business model in the Canadian fast food industry. *European Business Review*.

Ishangulyyev, R., Kim, S., & Lee, S. H. (2019). Understanding food loss and waste—Why are we losing and wasting food?. *Foods*, *8*(8), 297.

Jacobs, G., & Klosse, P. (2016). Sustainable restaurants: A research agenda. *Research in Hospitality Management*, *6*(1), 33-36.

Jang, Y. J., & Zheng, T. (2020). Assessment of the environmental sustainability of restaurants in the US: The effects of restaurant characteristics on environmental sustainability performance. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, *23*(2), 133-148.

Jang, Y. J., Zheng, T., & Bosselman, R. (2017). Top managers' environmental values, leadership, and stakeholder engagement in promoting environmental sustainability in the restaurant industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *63*, 101-111.

Kaljonen, M., Salo, M., Lyytimäki, J., & Furman, E. (2020). From isolated labels and nudges to sustained tinkering: assessing long-term changes in sustainable eating at a lunch restaurant. *British Food Journal*.

Kim, E., & Nicolau, J. L. (2021). Impact of the Menu Labeling Act Upon the Market Value of Foodservice Firms. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, *45*(3), 447-473.

Kohi, K. (2020). Measuring the Effectiveness of Green strategies in the Fast Food Industry–a Consumer Attitude Perspective

Kuokkanen, A., Uusitalo, V., & Koistinen, K. (2019). A framework of disruptive sustainable innovation: an example of the Finnish food system. *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, *31*(7), 749-764.

Lang, M., & Lemmerer, A. (2019). How and why restaurant patrons value locally sourced foods and ingredients. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *77*, 76-88.

Lerro, M., Raimondo, M., Stanco, M., Nazzaro, C., & Marotta, G. (2019). Cause related marketing among millennial consumers: The role of trust and loyalty in the food industry. *Sustainability*, *11*(2), 535.

Ma, J., Wu, S., Shekhar, N. V., Biswas, S., & Sahu, A. K. (2020). Determination of physicochemical parameters and levels of heavy metals in food waste water with environmental effects. *Bioinorganic Chemistry and Applications*, *2020*.

Maynard, D. D. C., Vidigal, M. D., Farage, P., Zandonadi, R. P., Nakano, E. Y., & Botelho, R. B. A. (2020). Environmental, social and economic sustainability indicators applied to food services: A systematic review. *Sustainability*, *12*(5), 1804.

Mbasera, M., Du Plessis, E., Saayman, M., & Kruger, M. (2016). Environmentally-friendly practices in hotels. *Acta Commercii*, *16*(1), 1-8.

Mumbua, N. (2016). *Factors affecting the performance of franchisees in the fast food industry in Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).

Murimi, M., Wadongo, B., & Olielo, T. (2021). Mediation role of revenue management practices on the linkage between hotel determinants and financial performance of hotels in Kenya.

National Restaurant Association (NRA). (2020) State of the Restaurant Industry. Retrieved from https://restaurant.org/research/reports/state-of-restaurant-industry

Nixon, L., Mejia, P., Dorfman, L., Cheyne, A., Young, S., Friedman, L. C., ... & Wooten, H. (2015). Fast-food fights: news coverage of local efforts to improve food environments through land-use regulations, 2000–2013. *American journal of public health*, *105*(3), 490-496.

Nosratabadi, S., Mosavi, A., Shamshirband, S., Kazimieras Zavadskas, E., Rakotonirainy, A., & Chau, K. W. (2019). Sustainable business models: A review. *Sustainability*, *11*(6), 1663.

Ottenbacher, M. C., Kuechle, G., Harrington, R. J., & Kim, W. H. (2019). QSR customer sustainable behaviors and brand practice perceptions on willingness to pay a premium. *International Hospitality Review*.

Pitt, E., Gallegos, D., Comans, T., Cameron, C., & Thornton, L. (2017). Exploring the influence of local food environments on food behaviours: a systematic review of qualitative literature. *Public health nutrition*, *20*(13), 2393-2405.

Raab, C., Baloglu, S., & Chen, Y. S. (2018). Restaurant managers' adoption of sustainable practices: An application of institutional theory and theory of planned behavior. *Journal of foodservice business research*, *21*(2), 154-171.

Rana, J., & Paul, J. (2017). Consumer behavior and purchase intention for organic food: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *38*, 157-165.

Sakaguchi, L., Pak, N., & Potts, M. D. (2018). Tackling the issue of food waste in restaurants: Options for measurement method, reduction and behavioral change. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *180*, 430-436.

Sandberg, M., Klockars, K., & Wilén, K. (2019). Green growth or degrowth? Assessing the normative justifications for environmental sustainability and economic growth through critical social theory. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *206*, 133-141.

Sharma, A., Moon, J., & Strohbehn, C. (2014). Restaurant's decision to purchase local foods: Influence of value chain activities. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *39*, 130-143.

Sirieix, L., Lála, J., & Kocmanová, K. (2017). Understanding the antecedents of consumers' attitudes towards doggy bags in restaurants: Concern about food waste, culture, norms and emotions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *34*, 153-158.

St. Jude. *Join Domino's in Supporting St. Jude.* (2017). Available online at: https://www.stjude.org/get-involved/other-ways/partner-with-st-jude/corporate-partners/domino-s-pizza.html

Starbucks. *Global Responsibility Report* (2014). Available online at: https://news.starbucks.com/uploads/documents/FY14_GR_Report_British_English_Translation.pdf

Thiemann, L., & Roman-Alcalá, A. (2019). Fast Food Sovereignty: Contradiction in Terms or Logical Next Step?. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*, *32*(5), 813-834.

Tien, N. H., & Hung Anh, D. B. (2018). Gaining competitive advantage from CSR policy change: case of foreign corporations in Vietnam. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, *18*.

Torlak, N. G., Demir, A., & Budur, T. (2019). Impact of operations management strategies on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions at café-restaurants. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*.

Ukorebi, V. (2018). Fast Food Business Survivability Beyond 5 Years in Nigeria.

Vadakkepatt, G. G., Winterich, K. P., Mittal, V., Zinn, W., Beitelspacher, L., Aloysius, J., ... & Reilman, J. (2021). Sustainable retailing. *Journal of Retailing*, *97*(1), 62-80.

Van Dalen, D. (1979). *Understanding educational research.* New York: Mc Graw Hill, inc.

Vu, H. M., Chan, H. K., Lim, M. K., & Chiu, A. S. (2017). Measuring business sustainability in food service operations: a case study in the fast food industry. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*.

Wang, L. E., Liu, G., Liu, X., Liu, Y., Gao, J., Zhou, B., ... & Cheng, S. (2017). The weight of unfinished plate: A survey based characterization of restaurant food waste in Chinese cities. *Waste Management*, *66*, 3-12.

Warren, G. E. (2016). Small business strategies for sustainability beyond 10 years.

Wellard-Cole, L., Davies, A., & Allman-Farinelli, M. (2021). Contribution of foods prepared away from home to intakes of energy and nutrients of public health concern in adults: A systematic review. *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition*, 1-12.

Yang, Y., Bao, W., & Xie, G. H. (2019). Estimate of restaurant food waste and its biogas production potential in China. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *211*, 309-320.

Yoon, B., Chung, Y., & Jun, K. (2020). Restaurant Industry Practices to Promote Healthy Sustainable Eating: A Content Analysis of Restaurant Websites Using the Value Chain Approach. *Sustainability*, *12*(17), 7127.