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## **Accomplishing Organizational Performance through Strategic Planning Practices: Empirical Evidence from Selected Public Universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya**

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# Accomplishing Organizational Performance through Strategic Planning Practices: Empirical Evidence from Selected Public Universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya

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## Abstract

Organizational performance is a phenomenon that has attracted the attention of scholars over time. Considering its importance, most organizations, especially those in the public sector, take adequate steps to ensure proper management of their performance. Universities are one of the most important social organizations and secular institutions that support the economy's growth in nations. The growing uncertainty and turbulence in the modern business environment also impact higher learning institutions. Kenyan Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs) dismal performance in academics has been a concern. Hence, the study established whether adopting strategic planning influence the organizational performance of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Precisely, the study aimed to examine the effect of innovation, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and institutional culture strategies. The study was grounded in the balance scorecard model, resource-based view theory and the McKinsey 7-S framework theories. A descriptive survey design was adopted. A population of 1,701 senior management, middle, and administrative staff employees from three public universities, including Kenyatta University, the University of Nairobi, and the Technical University of Kenya, was used. The sampling approach for the research was a proportionate stratified and random technique and was used to select a random sample size of 324 participants. Data were collected using a semi-structured and self-administered questionnaire. The reliability test for the instrument yielded Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the constructs ranging from 0.77 to 0.89. The instrument achieved a response rate of 93.8 %. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of SPSS software version 29.0. The findings revealed that strategic planning measured by innovation, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and organizational culture practices had a significant impact on the organizational performance of the selected universities in Nairobi County, Kenya ( $Adj R^2 = 0.761$ ,  $F\text{-stat} = 41.052$ ,  $p < 0.005$ ). The study concluded that strategic planning positively impacted the performance of the university in terms of the index of the quality of services offered, the population of enrolled students and graduates, and the market share. The findings of the study contribute to the body of knowledge, thereby enriching the formulation of policies and core practices in the strategic planning process within higher learning institutions that can be adhered to and modified in case they interfere with the processes. Future researchers should focus on other sectors such as health, agriculture, water, and the private sector, considering the use of both financial and non- financial attributes of organizational performance.

**Keywords:** *Organizational Performance, Strategic Innovation, Resource Allocation, Stakeholder Involvement, Culture*

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## 1.0 Introduction

The centrality of performance in strengthening the organizational ability to realize success in the various strategic goals demands not only reaching immediate targets but also building the capacity for ongoing success. According to Nyoike and Bula (2023), performance has implications for organizational health and its survival, besides operating with the aim of making a profit and having sound performance. It has been affirmed that organizational performance is very pertinent to management and other stakeholders, such as suppliers, government, and shareholders, among others (Rahman & Akhter, 2021). In this regard, optimizing performance is a central goal for managers and decision-makers to achieve a competitive advantage and ensure success. Besides, the environments in which public, private, and non-profit organizations operate have become not only increasingly uncertain in recent years but also more tightly interconnected (Aila & Wanyama, 2022).

In this regard, changes anywhere in the system reverberate unpredictably throughout society. This increased uncertainty and interconnectedness requires a fourfold response and calls for the introduction of the latest approaches and administrative techniques and an attempt to employ them to achieve organizational excellence and community welfare (Ashithey, 2022). Beyond, in the intricate tapestry of modern organizations, according to Ahmed (2023), the thread of strategic planning is woven deeply into every aspect. There is no doubt that strategic planning plays a major role in the life of any institution, whether it is productive or educational, particularly as the world is witnessing developments in various fields of life (Endo et al., 2025). Biondi and Russo (2022), along with Mubanga and Lesa (2024), agree with Endo et al. (2025) and inform that strategic planning emerges as a guiding light, illuminating the path toward the provision of the basic direction and rationale for determining the focus of an organization; and also specifies how best organizations may decide on what to do and how best to do it.

Ahmed (2023) affirms that the success and good performance of organizations are centered on how the implementation, control, and evaluation of the strategic planning process are conducted. Garad et al. (2025) acknowledge that organizations with excellent strategy implementation processes had much sounder organizational performance compared to those with a poor or fair strategy implementation process. In this regard, strategic planning has inarguably become a major activity in both profit and not-for-profit organizations (Endo et al., 2025; Mubanga & Lesa, 2024). Besides, the dynamic nature of an organization's environment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century may lead to making the reality of strategic planning practically impossible and sometimes jeopardize organizational policies (Nyoike & Bula, 2023). For instance, It is well established that in the era of globalization, education is considered an axis that revolves around the fullness of human beings and forms an effective means that improves the status of the character of living patterns of individuals (Ashithey, 2022) and enables them to meet their basic needs while giving cognizance to the existing youth employment policies, and employment implications (Mubanga & Lesa, 2024).

Educational strategic plans play a pivotal role in guiding inclusive, positive, student-focused, and sustainable growth (Endo et al., 2025; Mubanga & Lesa, 2024). Thus, accountability for performance is central to the accountability agenda in higher education. High-performing academics are not only fulfilling their institutional roles with efficiency but also act as catalysts

for innovation and long-term competitive advantage in higher education institutions (Nyoike & Bula, 2023). In this regard, higher learning institutions in the public domain are evolving to exhibit business-like behavior to meet the demands of the market, as well as national and international competition

In Kenya, rapid growth in the higher education sector has been witnessed in the last decade. For instance, due to the establishment of many private satellite campuses in the central business districts in Nairobi, demand for higher education in public has intensified. Kenya has 74 universities, of which 31 are public; these operating with interim letters are 14, nine university constituent colleges in the public sector, and 5 in the private sector. There are 18 private chartered universities, and no university-registered private institution, according to the Commission for University Education (CUE, 2022a). In Nairobi City County, two leading universities and campuses are hosted in the county, including Kenyatta University and the University of Nairobi. Others in the county include Cooperative University College, TUK, and Multimedia University.

The current state of the Public university landscape in Kenya is undergoing profound changes and significant differences in service quality dimensions in education, prompted by the emergence of competitive private universities (Economic survey, 2023). For instance, Kenyatta University place<sup>d</sup> third after the University of Nairobi and Egerton University in Kenya (Webometrics ranking, 2021). In Africa, Kenyatta University was ranked 23rd out of 2,500 universities that were featured in the ranking. Similarly, performance of higher institutions holds paramount importance due to its role in driving social-economic development, and institutions are increasingly recognizing the significance of strategic planning and management in attaining set goals and objectives (Biondi & Russo, 2022; Udeh, 2023).

Besides, universities, in general, and in developing countries in particular, have faced significant challenges in recent years due to rapid global changes and developments in the business environment. High-efficiency and high-quality universities are now the ones capable of facing these challenges, competing, and staying in the market (Endo et al., 2025; Mubanga & Lesa, 2024). The catalytic role and the challenges hindering organizational performance of higher learning institutions have been presented from global, regional, and local perspectives. Common obstacles include limited resources, resistance to change, and the complexity of aligning diverse stakeholder interests (Ahmed, 2023; Garad et al., 2025).

Locally, reflection of performance in colleges and universities is enabled by strategic planning, which determines the scope of initiative implementation for positive changes in the future (Weyama, 2020). In higher learning institutions in Kenya, the conceptualization is also supported by Giteru and Bula (2023), who elaborate that the trend worldwide is for increased accountability and the need to identify mission and objectives, priorities, and targets for improving the performance of universities and their employees. However, myriad issues such as ineffective technology, low research capacity, expansion of university education challenges, and the quality of graduates produced have been a concern in Kenya's higher education sector (Ngugi *et al.*, 2021; King'oo *et al.*, 2021). This raises questions about whether integrated efforts in decision-making, focusing efforts, setting priorities, and data-driven decision-making in the Kenyan education sector are working as expected.

To confront these challenges, the concept of strategic planning has expanded in recent years to include shaping educational policies and practices that have a direct impact on student outcomes, and universities need to continue providing high-quality educational services (Mubanga & Lesa, 2024). The holistic nature of strategic planning thus enables institutions to create a cohesive educational environment. It is often proposed as a key tool for a more rational and systematic approach to bringing about the necessary changes for greater internationalization in institutional direction and daily operations (Ndebele & Mbodila, 2025).

As a result, researchers have presented a solid and convincing case for their choice of strategic plans and indicators that can have an outsized impact and potential to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency to become a source of superior performance. Past research by Chiu and Chai (2020) informs that to embrace digital transformation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, strategic innovation plays a pivotal role, and its implementation is meaningful in learning situations. These changes explain the ongoing attempt to find synergy with delivery and models, situational nature, and user-friendly organizational learning. Innovation strategy for education, for instance, in higher learning institutions, defines learning strategy, evaluates learning acquisitions in digital environments (Modise, 2020), innovates learning product solutions in line with student needs and profiles, and transforms universities without losing their identity (Mulinge & Arasa, 2017).

The existing body of management literature, for instance, Parthasarathy and Sethi (2018) conceptualized the strategic planning concept into organizational culture, which stipulates how given activities are stationed and how information moves between different levels to achieve goals and set objectives for the organization. The culture of an organization that has been shaped internationally, as Dahie et al. (2016) note, reaches its core and practice, affecting its aspects at all levels. Besides, George et al. (2019) maintain that many booming public and private sectors in an organization's mission guide its decisions to strengthen resource allocation. It refers to how a company develops a method of locating all its scarce resources for producing goods and services. The resource strategies monitor the required resources and their availability as paramount resource planning processes and investments (Bichii & Waruguru, 2023). Thus, management strategies for resource allocation satisfy clients and employees, leading to the successful delivery and production of project resources (Otiende et al., 2024).

Besides Klemeshev et al. (2019), along with Maqhubela (2022), the proximity of fostering organizational performance emphasizes that collaboration between universities and surrounding communities can lead to the fulfilment of strategic objectives, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of higher learning institutions. Stakeholders in academics are people who have an interest or are directly involved in the system to ensure the overall success of institutions. Ndebele and Mbodila (2025) also cited this strategic planning of bodywork to identify that applying the stakeholder Model to the context of higher education infers institutional success that goes beyond academic achievement to include persistence, graduation, and post-graduation outcomes such as career readiness and lifelong learning. It is more explicitly related to the context of learning institutions on which the contemporary study was based.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

In today's interconnected and globalized world, organizations wishing to survive, progress, and perform work in the best possible way must possess the ability to respond to the challenges that

may require a change in current strategies and focal points (Abraheem, 2023; Biondi & Russo, 2022). This is particularly the case with respect to higher education institutions in any nation, serving as a means of economic development, science and technology advancement, social transformation, and beneficial to various levels and the general well-being. This being the case, however, Higher education institutions in Kenya, such as those in Nairobi City County, have done relatively little to become more efficient, and there is widespread disappointment in academic performances (Nyoike et al., 2023). The inferior academic climate in the city-county universities has also seen a surge in academic fraud: fabricated references, plagiarism, and impersonation in exams. For instance, the benchmark for doctoral students' registration for a maximum of four years and part-time students for a maximum of six years, as stipulated in the Handbook for Postgraduate Students (2018 – 2022), is rarely met (Muthuuri et al., 2021).

CUE attests that the ratio of undergraduate transition to graduate programs is quite low at 9:1. The Kenyan Ministry of Education, through the Commission for University Education (CUE), in partnership with entities such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), among other organizations, has proposed a variety of approaches that prioritize improving learning outcomes in higher education institutions (CUE, 2022). Despite these interventions, the performance of higher learning institutions has been a concern. For instance, CUE guidelines and standards regulate a ratio of full-time teaching staff to 1:10 in applied sciences, 1:18 in social sciences, among others, as well as a 2:1 ratio for full-time staff to part-time staff for any programme. However, CUE released a report in 2022 that showed that most of the university's student-staff ratios were higher, with social sciences having a ratio of 40:1, even with part-time academic staff inclusion.

This is bound to raise reactions and, thus, the motivation to go deep into the higher learning institutions' capacity and the ability of these institutions to respond to challenges they face. Besides, it has been demonstrated that institutions with well-defined strategic plans are more likely to achieve higher levels of academic performance, student satisfaction, and operational efficiency (Biondi & Russo, 2022). These institutions tend to exhibit greater adaptability to change, improved resource allocation, and enhanced stakeholder engagement (Endo et al., 2025). Thus, strategic planning has become an obsession and is important for all people and institutions to match the requirements of the era. It is an indication of the evolution and maturity of administrative and strategic management.

In light of this, different studies have been conducted to discover the relevance of strategic planning practices, especially in higher learning institutions. Because of these studies, it is expected that a helpful connection between strategic planning and the performance of higher learning institutions was established. However, besides presenting the contextual gap (Hilliger et al., 2020; Blumenfeld et al., 2019), these studies adopted an explanatory design, thus presenting a methodological gap, and this design merely clarifies the conduct and tendencies of the variables. Other research has addressed that practices such as resource allocation, innovation, and stakeholders' participation influence performance (Ahmed, 2023; Endo et al., 2025; Mubanga & Lesa, 2024), besides leaving out other factors influencing the performance of universities, such as organizational culture, hence presenting a concept that is amongst the key variables for this study.

Although many studies have been done locally, they have analyzed the impact of strategic planning on performance in relation to other sectors. This study draws motivation from the escalating environmental changes in Kenyan universities. Against the backdrop, universities in Kenya have to undergo a significant paradigm shift in strategic planning. The goal of the research was to see how the presence of innovation, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and institutional culture strategies linkage influences the organizational performance of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To determine the effect of strategic innovation on the performance of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya
- ii. To examine the impact of resource allocation on the performance of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya
- iii. To determine the influence of stakeholders' involvement on the performance of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya
- iv. To determine how organizational culture influences the performance of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya

## 2.0 Review of Literature

In this section, theories, conceptual frameworks, and related works done by different scholars about the implications of strategic planning and organizational performance are assessed and discussed with references to different perspectives in various countries.

### 2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

This study employs three theoretical frameworks-Balanced Scorecard (BSC), Resource-Based View (RBV) and McKinsey 7-S Framework-to explain how strategic planning influences organizational performance in higher learning institutions.

#### 2.1.1 Balanced Scorecard Model

The study employed the Balanced Scorecard Model to underpin the dependent variable. Kaplan and Norton (1992) developed the balanced scorecard idea to focus on ways in which a strategy of an organization can encompass action to achieve an organization's strategic goals. According to the theory, four performance metrics are combined in the paradigm of a balanced scorecard, including financial, customer innovativeness, internal business, and learning (Kaplan & Norton, 1992). Business internal processes are evaluated by investigating operational efficiency, quality, and reliability of the core processes; learning and innovation through training and knowledge resources; customer perspectives through gauging how the organization performs from the standpoint of those it serves; and financial perspectives are evaluated on financial outcomes and resource stewardship (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

According to Burtseva and Chausow (2016), these approaches give insights and ideas to managers of an enterprise, helping them mirror what is truly of great help towards performance. In contrast to implementing the balanced scorecard in business organizations, the Balanced Scorecard is also

used in educational institutions as an evaluation and measuring method, especially in universities, for organizational reinforcement management. A stream of relevant literature suggests that in educational systems, BSC is used to clarify their mission and vision (Camilleri, 2021), establish operational efficiency in departments, operating units integration, and self-appraisal (Chen et al., 2009), accountability enhancement management (Al Jardali et al., 2021). However, balanced scorecards focus on the perspective of customers rather than finances in the sectors whose mission is for community service, like non-profit or public sectors (Schobel & Scholey, 2012).

The direction of customer perspective implication is that in the public sector, what an organization does on the financial side, the intention of internal processes and development supports customer perspectives. Consequently, the customer point of view implies advocating for the students and social organization, practitioners, community, and scholars (Camilleri, 2021; Schobel & Scholey, 2012). BSC was used to connect universities' performance by developing strategic planning to remain agile during change and define what they intend to achieve for learners' success and more significant organizational goals, thus anchoring the study.

### **2.1.2 Resource-Based View Theory**

The study also adopted the resource-based view (RBV) theory postulated by Penrose (1959), which argues that innovations attain sustainable competitive advantage through accumulating and using physical and intangible resources to serve consumer interests (Rantakari, 2010). A firm can have a peculiar capability to develop new skills to keep the firm at the same pace as others in the environment. Newbert (2008) notes that resource-based theory proposes that competitive advantage is not only influenced by resource and market dependencies but also by unique resources that an organization possesses through tangible and intangible resources and capabilities. Consequently, the other central construct of RBV is the establishment of organizational resources. According to Kor and Mahoney (2004), physical capital resources of organizations include equipment and finances, while human capital resources in firms include relationships, employee skills, trust and culture, and explicit management control systems. The theory was used to shed light on how higher learning institutions should allocate tangible resources in human resources, finance, and technology, and intangible resources in organizational culture through skills, reputation, and workplace environment to implement strategies to support academic performance. Thus, the theory anchored resource allocation and organizational culture variables.

### **2.1.3 McKinsey Framework Theory**

Moreover, the study adopted Peters and Waterman's (1980) McKinsey 7-S framework, which aims to provide clarity about associated decision-making processes through strategic planning. The strategic tool helps organizations to analyze their gaps, alignment issues, and inconsistencies. The 7S components are grouped into either hard or soft elements for driving successful initiative changes. According to Waterman, Peters, and Phillips (1980), complex elements are easily identified and tangible and impacted by systems, strategy, and structure. On the other hand, soft elements are intangible and are driven by styles, staff, shared values, and skills. Masfi and Sukartini (2022) infer that key benefits of the 7S model framework in organizations may include simplifying the planning process and change execution for initiatives.

For instance, the relationships between strategies and skills, strategies, systems, and styles establish a dedicated stakeholder engagement team or appointment of responsible individuals within existing teams. Within the context of complex elements of the 7S Model, underscoring the importance of systems, the approach fosters organizations' innovation capabilities from different viewpoints (Mukhamad et al., 2020). The McKinsey 7-S framework in the research steadily provided insights into how tests and streamlining processes and assigning responsibilities are conducted before they become available to the general public. McKinsey's 7-S framework sheds light on how stakeholder involvement identifies, clarifies, and fixes organizational goals and elaborates on how it might find its solution through consultation and knowledge sharing. It was also used to show rationales for establishing innovative goals, ways of improving processes, and satisfying prerequisites of innovation. Thus, the theory underpinned stakeholder involvement and strategic innovation.

## 2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Empirically, several researchers have demonstrated the effect of innovation, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and institutional culture strategies on organizational performance. Ali *et al.* (2022) study determined to explore ways in which the performance of private universities in Pakistan is influenced by strategic innovation. The study was based on past research and a literature review on the issues facing higher education institutions in Pakistan. The findings also inferred that private universities in Pakistan had used organizational innovation to promote teamwork, coordination, innovativeness, and learning.

Similarly, Kirabo *et al.* (2020) researched the effect of innovative strategy on Rwanda's project sustainability in the telecommunication sector using mixed methods. Findings stipulated that procedural and structural service innovation, skills, and product process innovation significantly positively correlated with the industry's performance. Besides, a telecommunication firm's measures of performance are different from a non-profit organization's focal points. Most recently, Sheemaka et al. (2025) examined ways in which strategic innovation influences the performance of private schools in Kajiado County, Kenya. To answer the study questions, a causal research design was used to quantify the study variables. Findings from correlational results inferred that improvement in strategic innovation leads to enhanced overall success of schools ( $r = 0.287$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). However, due to the use of a no-probability technique, this study sought to fill this gap by prioritizing the use of a random sampling approach that ensures a more representative and generalizable sample.

Numerous researchers have also documented the benefits of resource allocation strategic planning practice to organizational performance. Rahman and Akhter's (2021) empirical study aimed to determine how resource allocation in employees' skills, knowledge, educational level, and training level as human capital investments influences bank performance in Bangladesh. Research findings from the test of the hypothesis established that human capital initiatives significantly benefited businesses and the people employed within Janata Bank Limited. A broader perspective has been analysed by Elbanna and Abdel-Maksoud (2020), who researched the role of resource allocation and organizational performance representing oil-rich countries in the UAE. The findings demonstrate that if the oil and gas sector uses a financial and human resource allocation strategy, a significant improvement in performance will be attained. However, besides the conceptual bias

that characterized the study, the research used only financial and turnover-related indicators of performance, leaving out non-financial performance indicators, and therefore suffers from the inability to be generalized among non-profit organizations like public higher learning institutions in Kenya.

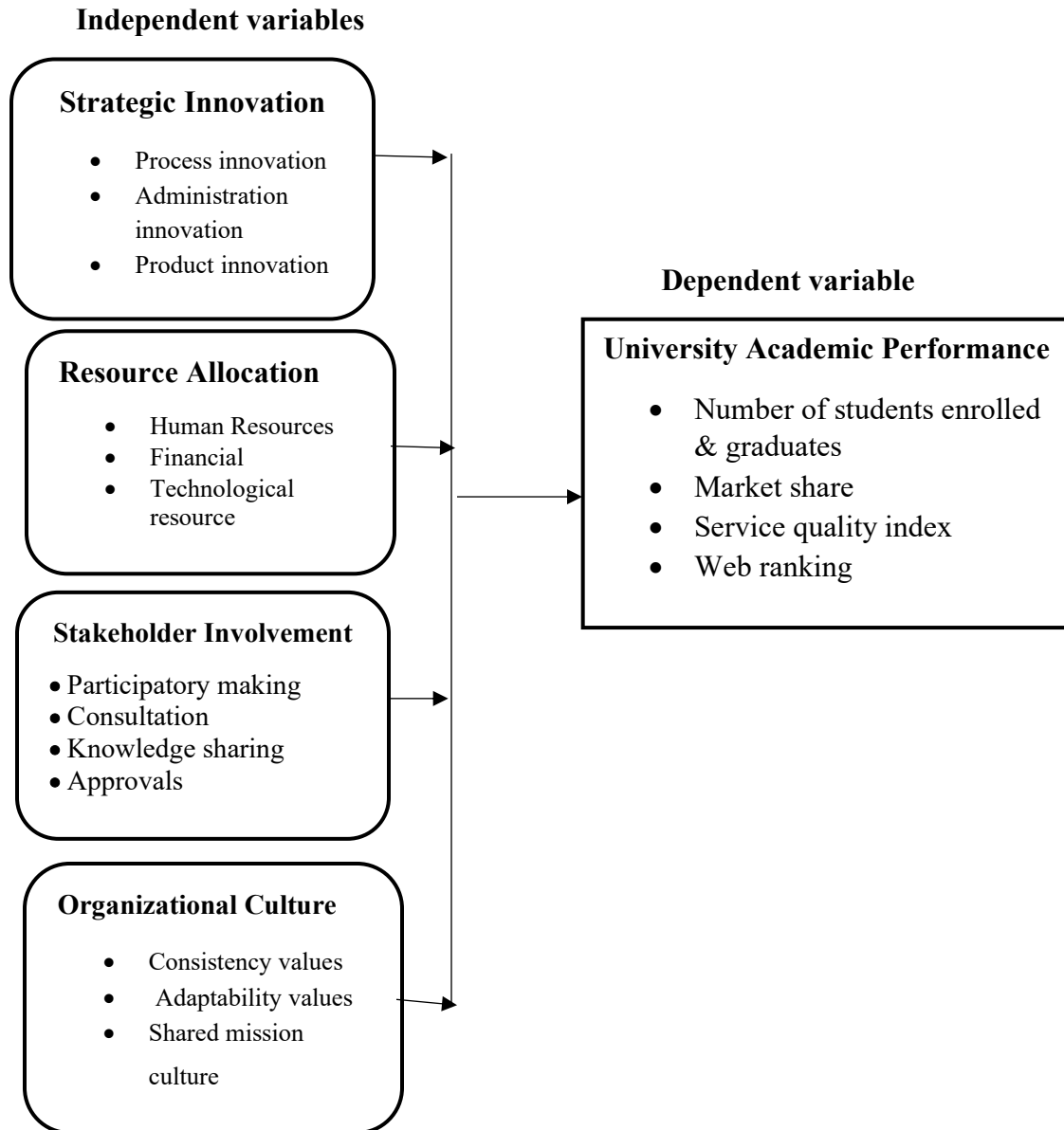
Moreover, studies by Irawan and Hartoyo (2022) and Iqbal et al. (2019) highlight that attention to stakeholders is significant in assessing the link between institutions' strategic planning and performance management, mainly defining the sensation in a feedback way driven by performance monitoring. Further, Danso *et al.* (2020) study on how stakeholders' knowledge, interaction, and adaptation constructs influence organizations in Ghana recommended that organizational management should engage stakeholders at work frequently to enhance outcomes. However, this study's explanatory variable was the stakeholder participation aspect of the strategic planning component, and left other conceptualized elements like innovation, culture, and stakeholder involvement that are key to university academic performance; thus, a motivation of this study was to fill these gaps. Further, due to geographical differences, the results can differ considerably and are prone to manipulation and errors.

Furthermore, numerous researchers have also documented the benefits of organizational culture interventions to performance. Al-Nasser and Jais (2022) proposed to establish the influence of organizational culture and performance using a case of universities in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. An important finding that emerged in this study is that the constructs being studied are significantly correlated. Besides the contextual bias that characterized the study, it applied a quantitative approach as a single data collection tool. This study incorporated quantitative and qualitative approaches to empirically determine the constructs' correlation in a case of higher learning institutions in Kenya.

In the same vein, Gebretsadik (2022) study in Ethiopia with a case of universities, and a comparative study by Ngugi et al. (2021) in Kenya concluded that continuously enhancing organizational culture competencies creates sustainable performance. It was suggested that the success of any given firm organization is founded on its culture, which considers factors and any global issues in meeting the set objectives. However, these studies should have considered how to sustain organizational performance. The conclusions that situations should be descended to the intended results will be helpful in this research focusing on a public university's strategic planning variable. The study sought a holistic view of the sustainable organizational performance of higher learning institutions.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the study's conceptual framework, which shows the interrelation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Strategic planning practices served as the independent variables. Organizational performance served as the dependent variable.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

### 3.0 Research Methodology

A descriptive study design was used to analyze the data. Creswell and Creswell (2017) and Sekaran and Bougie (2016) opine that a descriptive survey design method involves the creation of questionnaires or polls and distributing them to respondents for answering, which is then summarized and analysed to conclude the population of interest. Since descriptive survey design does not allow control of variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2014) and the study explored four variables, the design gave access to honest responses. Previous studies of a similar nature have successfully used this design (Chungyas & Trinidad, 2022; Giteru & Bula, 2023; Luhangala & Anyieni, 2019).

The study targeted 1,701 respondents from three public universities, including KU, TUK, and UoN in Nairobi County. The choice of these universities in Nairobi City County is hinged on the year of establishment of the universities since they have tacit approval and knowledge on strategic planning. They also have paramount cultures that necessitate the need for image recognition and pivotal practices. The study unit of observation comprised 324 management employees at the three selected universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya, categorized into senior-level, middle-level, and academic staff. The necessary data in this study were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. A semi-structured questionnaire is an approach that is more objective than any other data collection method (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The primary data was collected directly from the field's target population respondents. Also, qualitative or textual data were collected in which the respondents wrote their opinions or perspectives concerning the influence of specific variables being investigated in the study.

The empirical analyses were performed in two phases: data preparation and analysis. In the pre-processing phase, the study's psychometric properties were assessed, and the scales' reliability and dimensionality were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were first employed to characterize the main features of the quantitative data. Using descriptive statistics in the research helped present quantitative data description in a manageable or summary form (Bernard, 2017). Quantitative data was measured arithmetically using means and standard deviations. Thematic analysis involves qualitative data and involves data familiarization, coding themes generation, reviewing, naming, defining themes, and writing up (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

In order to set parameters or generalize findings beyond the sample studied and predict a broader population, inferential statistics was used and enabled a judgment of the probability that an observed difference between groups (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). It determined whether a particular strategic planning practice influences university academic performance.

The multiple regression model used and fitted was expressed as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

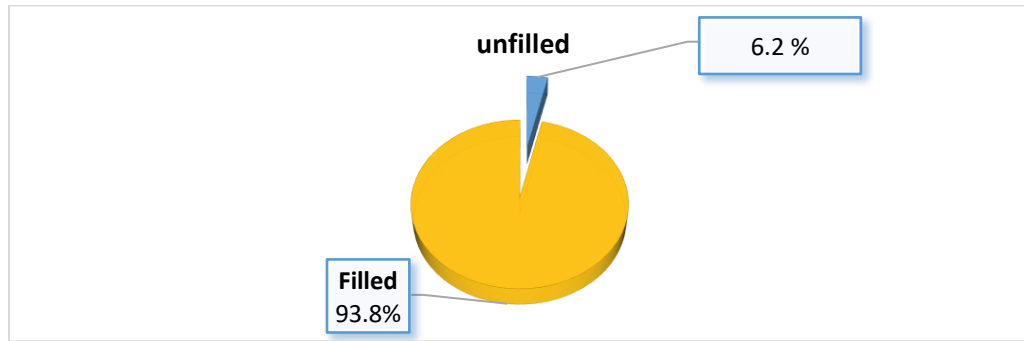
Where;

Y = Organisational performance (Dependent variable)

X<sub>1</sub> (1,) .....X<sub>4</sub> = Independent variables;  $\beta_0$  = constant (coefficient of intercept);  $\beta_1$ –  $\beta_4$  = the regression coefficient of the four variables; X<sub>1</sub> = strategy innovation; X<sub>2</sub> = Resource allocation; X<sub>3</sub> = Stakeholders' involvement; X<sub>4</sub> = Organisational culture;  $\epsilon$  = the error term

#### 4.0 Results and Discussion

The study considered 1,701 employees as the target population, with 324 employees captured as the sample size, grouped into the following strata: senior management, middle management, and support staff employees of TUK, UoN, and KU. Thus, the cumulative questionnaire tool dispensed to respondents across the three strata was 324. The analysis, as presented in Figure 2, details the study's response rate.



**Figure 2: Response Rate**

The study results displayed (Figure 2) highlight that of a total of 324 questionnaires, 304 respondents duly filled and completed, confirming a successful response of 93.8%, deemed acceptable for statistical analysis. On the other hand, 20 questionnaires that were incomplete or left unanswered were rejected. Respondents' busy schedules accounted for the unreturned questionnaires. The successful response rate was in tandem with suggestions by prior scholars' acceptable threshold (Bogner & Landrock, 2016; Kothari, 2004). According to suggestions by the sources, a sufficient minimum response rate in survey findings that ensures validity and reliability should be 50%, and the recommendations align with 93.8 % response rate obtained in this research. The relationships between the independent variables (innovation, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and institutional culture strategies) and the dependent variable (performance of selected public universities in Nairobi city county, Kenya) were evaluated using inferential statistics like correlation analysis and regression analysis. In order to quantify the study variables' degree of association, the researcher conducted Pearson's Correlation analysis to examine the relationships between the four dimensions of strategic planning and performance. The results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Correlation Matrix**

Variables	Innovation	Resource Allocation	Stakeholder Involvement	Organizational Culture	Organizational Performance
Innovation	1.000				
Resource Allocation	0.518**	1.000			
Stakeholder Involvement	0.648**	0.520**	1.000		
Organizational Culture	0.621**	0.831**	0.605**	1.000	
Organizational Performance	0.831**	0.406**	0.436**	0.630**	1.000
Significance (2-tailed)	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
N	304	304	304	304	304

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

Findings for the degree of correlation based on the variable's value are provided in Table 1. In interpreting the correlation coefficients, the study followed the suggestion of Alsaqr (2021). According to Alsaqr (2021), a correlation coefficient is bounded or increases from 0 to 1, with values of zero affirming no correlation. However, the correlation coefficient interim values are pivotally interpreted by convention (Hazra & Gogtay, 2016). Consequently, key agreement boundaries proposed in studies infer that poor correlation is treated by any values  $<0.30$ , moderate and fair treat values ranging between 0.3 and 0.5, interpretation of values as having good correlation ranges between 0.5 and 0.7, and above 0.7 may be regarded as strong correlation (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2017).

The findings show that the link between strategic innovation and organizational performance of the selected public universities had a high association and strongly correlated, indicated by an  $r$ -value of 0.831. The  $p < .001$  affirms sufficient evidence that suggests that the linear correlation between the two variables observed is significant. Moreover, resource allocation had a mild and fair correlation with organizational performance ( $r = 0.406$  and  $p < .001$ ); stakeholder involvement and institutional performance had a moderate correlation at  $r$ -value of 0.436 and  $p$ -value  $< .001$ ); and organizational culture had a good and strong correlation, indicated by  $r$ -value of 0.630 and  $p$ -value  $< .001$ ). Arbitrarily, the findings reveal that considering the 0.05 cut-off points, where all variables'  $p$ -values are  $p < 0.001$  (5% significance), the standard level enables the conclusion that there is evidence of greater statistical compatibility against the variables tested. The research further conducted regression analysis aimed at determining the structure and true impact of each predictor variable (strategic planning) on the outcome variable (academic performance). The analysis enabled the study to provide statistical evidence to support the theoretical and empirical review, fill gaps in the literature, and offer evidence-based recommendations. The model summary results, analysis of variance, and results of the regression confidence are highlighted.

**Table 2: The Model Summary**

Model	$R$	$R$ Square	Adjusted $R$ Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.880 <sup>a</sup>	.773	.761	.04381

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic innovation, Resource Allocation, Stakeholder Involvement, Organizational Culture.

From the analysis as presented in Table 2, the model explains how substantial variance in organizational performance of public universities can be traced or ascribed to four determining constructs of the independent variables: strategic innovation, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and organizational culture. Based on the general linear model in multiple regression, the  $R$ -squared and the adjusted  $R$ -squared statistical metrics are derived, which are determined by the addition of independent variables in the model. According to Ijomah (2019),  $R$ -squared metrics measure the outcome variables' proportion of variance that is justified by the regression models' predictor variables.

Besides, since the metric values increase or stay the same when there is an addition of predictor variables, the adjusted  $R$ -squared penalizes predictor variables that are irrelevant in the model, and only increases when added predictors have predictive accuracy in the model. Thus, in determining

whether the model fits the data effectively, significantly, and enables explanation of the outcome variable, the study used adjusted *R*-squared statistical metrics. Findings from the model indicate that the adjusted *R*-squared value was 0.761, which implies that the regression model fits the data well and suggests that the selected strategic planning constructs are meaningful, which contributes to explaining organizational performance variability. The findings indicate that these factors can explain 76.1% of the performance variation.

The adjusted *R*-squared closely matches the *R*-squared, and the standard error of the estimate (0.4381) indicates a substantial deviation between the observed organizational performance values and those predicted by the model. The regression model indicates that the four strategic planning practices included are significant positive predictors of performance. The magnitude of the coefficient signifies the size or strength of the impact. Additionally, the results suggest that other variables not covered in the research or included in the model accounted for 23.9%. After the researcher confirmed the fit, the residuals were examined to support or reject the fit.

**Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).**

Model	Sum of Squares	<i>Df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	64.237	4	16.059	41.052	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
Residue	116.969	299	.391		
<b>Total</b>	<b>181.206</b>	<b>303</b>			

The ANOVA table 3 substantiates that the independent factors pivotally and strongly predicted the dependent variables. The significance of the model is revealed by the *F*-value of 41.052, *p*-value (<.001), and a level of significance of .001<sup>(b)</sup>. Consequently, the findings extend to the conclusion that organizational performance of public universities was positively and remarkably conditioned by the adoption or acceptance of at least one strategic planning component, such as innovation, resource allocation, stakeholders' involvement, and organizational culture.

**Table 4: Coefficients and Significance**

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized t	Sig.
	Coefficients			
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	
(Constant)	.639	.197		3.251 .001
Innovation.	.167	.057	.162	2.919 .004
Resource A.	.118	.045	.139	2.625 .009
Stakeholder I.	.140	.035	.408	3.966 .000
Org. Culture.	.147	.038	.154	3.863 .000

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

Using the SPSS tool, the researcher generated results that provided detailed insights into the coefficients (unstandardized) for the constant beta value that constitutes the outcome variable estimated mean score. According to Table 4, four of the objectives are statistically significant, including the relationships among strategic innovation, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and organizational culture on organizational performance in public universities, with a 0.639 (63.9%) effect size.

Findings highlighted in Table 4 indicate that if strategic innovation, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and organizational culture are kept constant, the organizational performance of public universities would be 0.639 (63.9%). Results suggest that a shift in one unit of strategic innovation would raise public universities' organizational performance by 0.167 units. Every unit change in performance can explain a 0.118 unit change in resource allocation. In the same vein, when organizational culture strategic planning is increased by 1 unit, improvement in university is increased by 0.147 units and vice versa, and a shot of 0.140 unit change in stakeholders' involvement can be explained for every unit change in organizational performance. In the final step, the study fitted a model to test whether the strategic planning composite (X) predicted organizational performance (Y). Therefore, the model adopted becomes:

$$Y = 0.639 + 0.167X_1 + 0.118 X_2 + 0.140 X_3 + 0.147X_4$$

The results above revealed that the t-value for innovation was positive at 2.919, with a significance value of 0.004. Therefore, strategic innovation significantly and positively impacts the organizational performance of public universities. In accordance with the present results, prior research, for instance, Chiu and Chai (2020) reported that, to embrace digital transformation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, strategic innovation plays a pivotal role at the educational level in developing and implementing meaningful learning situations. These study findings reflect those of Falqueto (2020), who clarifies that taking part in strategy innovation enables the examination and explanation of each decision, coupled with either case studies, data, or projections. Moreover, the results support evidence from the observation by Kirabo *et al.* (2020) study, which found that procedural and structural service innovation, skills, and product-process innovation were significantly positively correlated with the industry's performance.

The regression model further found that universities' performance is significantly related to strategic resource allocation planning. This is affirmed by a t-value of 2.625 with a significance level of 0.009. This finding aligns with a study by Elbanna and Abdel-Maksoud (2020) examining the role of resource allocation capabilities in public organizations and organizational performance. They found that the strategic management resource allocation setup directly affected production, and that these strategic allocation plans made it easier for the firm to set objectives and priorities. This finding is supported by Rahman and Akhter (2021), Ali and Ogolla (2022), and Otiende *et al.* (2024), who argue that for organizations to succeed, it is paramount to have the right tools, sufficient funding, and competent personnel. This means that a firm should have all materials available to ensure that each stage of the project is carried out as expected and documented.

The study also found that the stakeholders' involvement variable significantly and positively impacts universities' organizational performance, since the t-value was at 3.966 and a significance level of 0.000. The findings align with the Irawan and Hartoyo (2022) study, which found that stakeholder involvement and an organization's overall performance indicate that corporations and

multiple organizations should take appropriate actions to meet the needs of all parties and achieve lasting success. The study results support earlier findings by Gianiodis and Meek (2020), Iqbal et al. (2019), and Irawan and Hartoyo (2022), who found that stakeholders' involvement in strategic planning enables knowledge sharing, interaction, and adaptation, generating new ideas and providing knowledge resources for performance.

Also, the regression model for organizational culture indicated that the coefficient is 0.147 and the p-value is 0.000, below the .05 level of significance. The finding that organizational culture positively affects the performance of higher learning institutions supports and is associated with the work of other studies in this area (Villanca, 2023; Köse & Korkmaz, 2019; Ngugi et al., 2021), who linked organizational culture and organizational performance of higher learning institutions through alignment, effectiveness, and leadership. Moreover, the findings are consistent with the views of Joseph and Kibera (2019), which culture refers to the socially constructed attributes of an organization, grounded in shared values, norms, and beliefs, and that it continuously seeks to improve its expertise in the marketplace.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

In accordance with the study's findings, higher learning institutions seeking to improve performance, as measured by the quality of services offered, the population of enrolled students and graduates, and market share, must adopt strategic planning in their organizations. To improve the organizational performance of public universities in Kenya, three higher learning institutions in the public sector: Kenyatta University, UoN, and TUK have adopted key strategic planning practices selected in this study. Regarding strategic innovation, the study concludes that focusing on curriculum and instructional development, the open or distance learning setup, and competitive pricing of academic programs are essential components for higher learning institutions' sustainable initiatives. In academic curriculum innovation, the study concludes that adopting different learning designs reflects the vision for education by indicating the health and well-being, values, knowledge, and skills to be taught to students. This is because any institution's foundation lies in its innovative planning, especially in higher education, where the caliber of its administration, research, and teaching directly impacts its performance.

Given the results obtained on strategic resource allocation planning and on organizational performance of public universities, the study infers that the selected higher learning institutions have heavily relied on human, technological, and financial resources, which have had a significant impact on the distribution of resources and, hence, success. The investigation concluded that the generation of substantial levels of university performance was possible through the adoption of appropriate resources. The conclusions resonate with the postulates of the central construct of RBV, that competitive advantage is not only influenced by resource and market dependencies but also by unique resources that an organization possesses through tangible and intangible resources and capabilities. As noted by Barney (1991), the categorization of organizational resources on RBV's tangible resources infers physical assets used by organizations to produce products and services, while intangible resources are those that are hard to quantify, touch, or see, like knowledge and skills.

Further on, the stakeholder involvement strategic plan for organizational performance in public universities was pivotal to success, as indicated by the learning process and feedback on

curriculum, teaching methods, and institutional policies. The research deduces that attention to stakeholders is significant in assessing the link between institutions' strategic planning and performance management, mainly defining the sensation in a feedback way driven by performance monitoring. This is because it enables the establishment of responsibility and the bolstering of institutional legitimacy, thereby raising the university's international standing and increasing its research output. The conclusions resonate with the postulates of McKinsey's 7-S framework, which shed light on how stakeholder involvement identifies, clarifies, and fixes organizational goals, and on how it might find solutions through consultation and knowledge sharing. Regarding organizational culture, the study concludes that socially constructed attributes, grounded in shared values, norms, and beliefs, that are dynamic and rapidly changing, enable organizational performance. The study concludes that an organization's culture in strategic planning facilitates smooth cooperation across departments, and employees can emphasize a set of skills and beliefs that shape interactions between employees and management.

## **6.0 Policy Recommendations**

The researcher provides directions and submissions to assist all managers and directors of higher learning institutions in Kenya with the mandate to draft strategic plans, policies, or regulations. These recommendations would significantly enhance current knowledge of these bodies. Based on the findings, the study implies that strategic innovation, resource allocation, stakeholders' involvement, and organizational culture influence the performance of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The findings emerged as a resounding affirmation of the significant and positive influence of all four independent variables on performance. Therefore, the recommendations are that higher learning institutions' management should include strategic planning across the sector in administration, process, and product innovation, to ensure high performance continues. Other businesses and companies should adopt strategic planning to improve their performance.

## **7.0 Limitations and Future Research Directions**

This study acknowledges the following limitations. Firstly, while the survey unveiled major strategic planning practices used in public sector higher learning institutions in Kenya for academic performance, further research on strategic planning strategies should be replicated in private IHLs to fortify the practical applicability of the presented recommendations. Moreover, the design used (descriptive research design), which is ideal for understanding what a phenomenon or situation is or where it occurs, has a limited ability to establish causality, requiring future research within the same context to be conducted using designs such as correlational or longitudinal designs with the capability of establishment of causality and the manipulation of variables to enrich theoretical and practical contribution to the important area. Finally, the conceptual scope of the operationalization of the independent variable was limited by the four organizational performance components in public institutions of higher learning. Other models offer a broader set of components that could enhance data quality, including financial and KPI components. It is therefore suggested that future research could expand the set of components investigated under the organizational performance component.

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