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Abstract

This paper has discussed the effects of strategic management practice on the performance of the Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs) that are based in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The particular dimensions of strategic management explored included strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategic control. The analysis was pegged on the Resource-Based View, Strategic Management Theory, Contingency Theory, and the Balanced Scorecard model. The research design used was descriptive and 30 mature SACCOs that were at least three years old were identified out of a population of 176 licensed SACCOs in Nairobi City County. The methodology used was census and structured questionnaires were used to collect the data by administering them to 210 senior and operational managers, where 164 valid responses were obtained indicating a response rate of 78.1. Pilot testing was done to determine the reliability of the instruments and Cronbach alpha of the individual constructs were found to be 0.69-0.73 and the reliability of the questionnaire as a whole was found to be 0.86. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression were used to analyse quantitative data, and qualitative data based on open-ended questions were analysed by thematic analysis. The results showed that the strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategic control played a positive and significant role in SACCO performance. Correlation analysis showed that all strategic practices had strong positive correlation with performance ($r = 0.68$ to 0.76 , $p < 0.01$). The regression analysis of individual practices revealed that each strategic practice is a predictor of performance, and strategy implementation has the greatest variance ($R^2 = 0.578$). The four strategic practices were found to explain 67.6 percent of the variance of performance ($R^2 = 0.676$, $F(4, 159) = 83.52$, $p < 0.001$). Strategy implementation ($= 0.40$), strategic intent ($= 0.28$), strategy formulation ($= 0.13$), and strategic controls ($= 0.11$) were the strongest predictors, which validated that strategic management practices are important determinants of the performance of SACCOs in Nairobi City County. The research findings conclude that strategic management practice is an important determinant of SACCO performance. It advises SACCO management to improve strategy implementation mechanisms, improve strategic control systems, improve stakeholder involvement in strategy formulation, and frequently communicate strategic intent to all members and staff.

Keywords: Strategic Management Practices, Performance, Savings and Credit Cooperatives, Nairobi City County, Kenya

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1.0 Background of the Study

Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs) are significant in economic development, particularly in developing nations such as Kenya. As member-owned financial institutions, they mobilize savings, provide cheap loans, and create investment opportunities for members. Through these services, SACCOs foster financial inclusion by reaching people who may lack access to formal banking services, especially rural and low-income communities. Consequently, they help alleviate poverty and enhance living standards (Aduda & Obondy, 2021). However, many SACCOs still face challenges in achieving and maintaining high performance. Their operating environment has become increasingly competitive and dynamic due to technological changes, strict regulatory requirements, and competition from commercial banks and microfinance institutions. These conditions make it difficult for SACCOs to remain competitive and sustainable, hence the need for effective management approaches that can help them respond to environmental change and improve performance.

Strategic management practices are important in improving organizational performance and sustainability. Strategic management is a methodical process through which organizations develop, execute, and appraise strategies to meet long-term goals. These practices include environmental scanning, strategic planning, resource allocation, strategy implementation, and performance evaluation. Through strategic management, organizations match internal resources with external opportunities and threats, thereby enhancing decision-making, operational effectiveness, and overall organizational performance (Camuffo et al., 2024; Sinnaiah et al., 2023). In SACCOs, strategic management can improve governance structures, strengthen risk management systems, and support the development of new products and services that respond to member needs. These improvements contribute to member satisfaction and organizational sustainability (Aduda & Obondy, 2021). Therefore, strategic management remains essential in helping SACCOs improve competitiveness, efficiency, innovation, performance monitoring, continuous improvement, and sustainable long-term performance.

Globally, SACCOs and similar cooperative financial institutions are important in enhancing financial inclusion and economic empowerment. These member-owned institutions provide convenient and community-based financial services, especially to underserved communities, while promoting democratic governance, shared responsibility, and equal access to resources. In the Americas, credit unions are well-established, particularly in the United States and Canada. The United States alone has more than 5,000 credit unions with over 124 million members, providing savings, loans, investment opportunities, financial literacy, and affordable credit services (Kyazze et al., 2020). Their focus on member welfare rather than profit maximization strengthens trust and local economic resilience. This shows that cooperative financial institutions offer an alternative to traditional banking systems by supporting communities through accessible financial services, member-centered development, community-based financial solutions, and shared local economic responsibility.

In Europe and Asia, cooperative financial institutions also play a strong role in financial and

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socioeconomic development. In Europe, cooperative banks and credit unions are powerful financial sector players, especially in countries such as Germany, France, and the Netherlands. The European Association of Co-operative Banks represents about 4,200 cooperative banks in 21 European countries, serving more than 87 million members (McKillop et al., 2020). These institutions support rural and underserved regions, small business development, and community access to credit. In Asia, the cooperative movement has grown significantly in countries such as India, Japan, and South Korea. India has over 900,000 cooperative societies with more than 230 million members (Kyazze et al., 2020). These cooperatives operate in agriculture, dairy, housing, finance, and healthcare, supporting inclusive growth and sustainable development.

In Africa, SACCOs are vital to financial inclusion, savings mobilization, and socioeconomic development. They have become a viable community-based financial model, especially for populations underserved by formal banking institutions. In East Africa, SACCOs have shown strong growth over the past two decades, with countries such as Ethiopia, Rwanda, and South Africa strengthening their cooperative movements. Ethiopia has over 19,000 SACCOs and more than six million members, making it one of the largest cooperative networks on the continent (Aduda & Obondy, 2021). These institutions are important in rural and agricultural communities, where formal banking remains limited. Through affordable credit, savings facilities, and financial literacy programs, SACCOs contribute to poverty reduction, household income stability, local economic development, and the resolution of enduring socioeconomic challenges in the region (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2022).

West Africa and Southern Africa also demonstrate the importance of SACCOs in economic empowerment, although performance varies by region. In West Africa, countries such as Ghana and Nigeria have adopted policy frameworks that support cooperative development as part of broader financial sector reforms. Ghana has more than 3,000 registered SACCOs and over one million members, with cooperatives supporting agriculture, microfinance, small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurship, job creation, and income diversification (Aduda & Obondy, 2021; World Bank, 2023). In Southern Africa, Malawi has more than 600 SACCOs and about 300,000 members, supporting rural populations and smallholder farmers (Gondwe, 2022). However, poor governance, low technology usage, poor capitalization, and limited capacity building remain major barriers to sustainable growth, prompting greater attention to regulatory reforms, digital transformation, institutional strengthening, and modernization (WOCCU, 2021).

In Kenya, the cooperative movement is critical to economic growth and social well-being. The country has more than 15,000 registered cooperatives, many of which are SACCOs (KUSCCO, 2023). SACCOs mobilize savings and provide affordable credit to members who may otherwise face difficulty accessing formal financial services. SASRA approved 176 deposit-taking SACCOs and 176 non-deposit-taking SACCOs to operate in Kenya between 1 January and 31 December 2026, bringing regulated SACCOs to 352 (SASRA, 2026). Despite this significance, SACCOs face governance, strategic management, regulatory compliance, and financial performance challenges. Poor internal control, ineffective risk management, undercapitalization, poor

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governance, technological change, and competition from commercial banks and digital financial service providers continue to pressure SACCOs to modernize operations and adopt good strategic management practices and stronger oversight systems (SASRA, 2022; World Bank, 2023).

The performance of SACCOs in Kenya is measured through both financial and non-financial indicators. Financial indicators include profitability, liquidity, asset quality, and capital adequacy, while non-financial indicators include member satisfaction, operational efficiency, service quality, and social impact (Aduda & Obondy, 2021). Recent performance has been mixed, with some SACCOs recording growth in membership, loan portfolios, and asset bases, while others face operational and financial difficulties. Some regulated SACCOs struggle to meet capital adequacy and liquidity requirements, while low capitalization and asset quality concerns affect stability and sustainability (SASRA, 2022; World Bank, 2023). In Nairobi City County, performance differences are linked to governance quality, strategic orientation, institutional capacity, technology adoption, and regulatory compliance, making strategic management practices essential for improving competitiveness, sustainability, financial inclusion, and long-term SACCO performance (SASRA, 2024; World Bank, 2023).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs) in Nairobi City County play an important role in mobilizing savings and providing affordable credit to members working in public institutions, private organizations, clinics, pharmaceutical companies, insurance firms, and other formal sector organizations. Since the cooperative sector is a major pillar of Kenya's socioeconomic development, financially sound and well-managed SACCOs are necessary for improving members' financial welfare and supporting wider economic productivity. However, recent trends show declining financial stability in the SACCO sector. SASRA (2021) reported that average return on assets declined from 5.2% in 2016 to 3.1% in 2019. In addition, SACCOs that failed to meet minimum statutory core capital requirements increased from 26 in 2016 to 45 in 2019, leaving only 55% adequately capitalized by 2019 (Mbogo, 2020).

In addition to declining financial indicators, the SACCO sector faces strategic and governance weaknesses that threaten long-term sustainability. Increased competition has pushed some SACCOs to prioritize expansion and dividend distribution at the expense of financial soundness. This has encouraged risky practices such as borrowing to fund dividends and paying dividends from members' deposits instead of actual surpluses. Between 2021 and 2023, financial mismanagement cases were reported, including losses of over KES 13 billion linked to governance failures in the Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (Otieno, 2025; Fintech Team, 2025). Empirical evidence further shows that several SACCOs experience strategic management weaknesses, including absence of long-term strategic plans, poor governance structures, low technology adoption, and poor capitalization (Rutto & Miroga, 2020; Mbogo, 2020).

Although literature on SACCO performance is increasing, important gaps remain. Theoretically, most studies examine SACCO performance generally and do not adequately capture the sector's

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specific dynamics. Methodologically, many studies rely on secondary regulatory data, with limited primary research on internal strategic planning and control practices (Njoroge & Makori, 2024). Contextually, Nairobi City County presents unique conditions, including high operating costs, intense financial market competition, and strict regulatory enforcement, which may influence SACCO performance differently from rural settings (Kinyua, 2021). Therefore, empirical evidence on the relationship between strategic planning and control practices and the financial performance of SACCOs in Nairobi City County remains inadequate. This study seeks to fill these conceptual, methodological, and contextual gaps by generating evidence to enhance strategic management, financial performance, sustainability, and competitiveness of SACCOs in Kenya.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- i. To determine the effect of strategic intent on the performance of SACCOs in Nairobi City County.
- ii. To examine how strategy formulation contributes to the performance of SACCOs in Nairobi City County.
- iii. To assess the role of strategic implementation in enhancing the performance of SACCOs in Nairobi City County.
- iv. To evaluate the contribution of strategic control to the performance of SACCOs in Nairobi City County.

2.0 Literature Review

The chapter is a review of literature on the practice of strategic management and its impact on the performance of the Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs).

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The Resource-Based View (RBV) was advanced by Barney (1991) and later developed by other scholars such as Barney et al. (2021). The theory states that organizational performance and long-term competitive advantage are not determined only by market positioning, but also by the internal resources and capabilities owned and used by an organization. These resources may be tangible, such as financial capital, physical infrastructure and technology, or intangible, such as leadership knowledge, governance systems, organizational culture, brand name and member loyalty. The theory informed this study by showing how SACCOs can improve performance when they properly develop and use internal resources such as qualified staff, competent boards, strong internal controls, adequate capitalization, information systems and committed membership. It therefore linked strategic management practices to better resource use, governance, efficiency and sustainability.

Strategic Management Theory was developed through the works of strategic management scholars who explain how organizations achieve performance through clear direction, planning, implementation and control. The theory states that organizations must first establish strategic intent

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by defining their mission, vision and long-term objectives. This is followed by strategy formulation, where internal capabilities and external conditions are analyzed to develop suitable plans. The theory also emphasizes strategy implementation, where plans are translated into activities, policies, structures and resource allocation. Finally, strategic control is used to monitor performance, compare actual results with planned outcomes and take corrective action. This theory informed the study by providing a basis for examining how strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategic control influence SACCO performance. It showed that organized strategic processes improve planning, execution, accountability, adaptability and long-term institutional performance.

Contingency Theory was developed by management scholars who argued that there is no single best way to manage all organizations. The theory states that effective management depends on how well organizational strategies, structures and control systems fit the internal and external environment in which the organization operates. It emphasizes flexibility, responsiveness and alignment with factors such as regulation, competition, technology, organizational size, resources and stakeholder expectations. This theory informed the study by showing that SACCOs in Nairobi City County must adjust their strategic management practices to their specific operating conditions. Since SACCOs operate in regulated and competitive financial markets, their planning, implementation and control systems must respond to prudential requirements, technological change, member expectations and market competition. The theory therefore supported the need to examine strategic practices as situation-sensitive factors affecting SACCO performance.

The Balanced Scorecard was developed by Robert Kaplan and David Norton as a strategic performance management framework. The theory states that organizational performance should not be measured using financial indicators alone, but through a balanced set of financial and non-financial measures. It focuses on four main perspectives: financial performance, customer or member satisfaction, internal business processes, and learning and growth. These perspectives help organizations connect strategy with measurable performance outcomes. The theory informed this study by providing a framework for understanding SACCO performance beyond profitability, liquidity, capital adequacy and loan portfolio quality. It also helped explain the importance of member satisfaction, service delivery, internal controls, compliance, staff development, technology adoption and organizational learning. Therefore, the Balanced Scorecard supported the assessment of how strategic management practices contribute to financial performance, operational efficiency, member value and institutional sustainability among SACCOs.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework.

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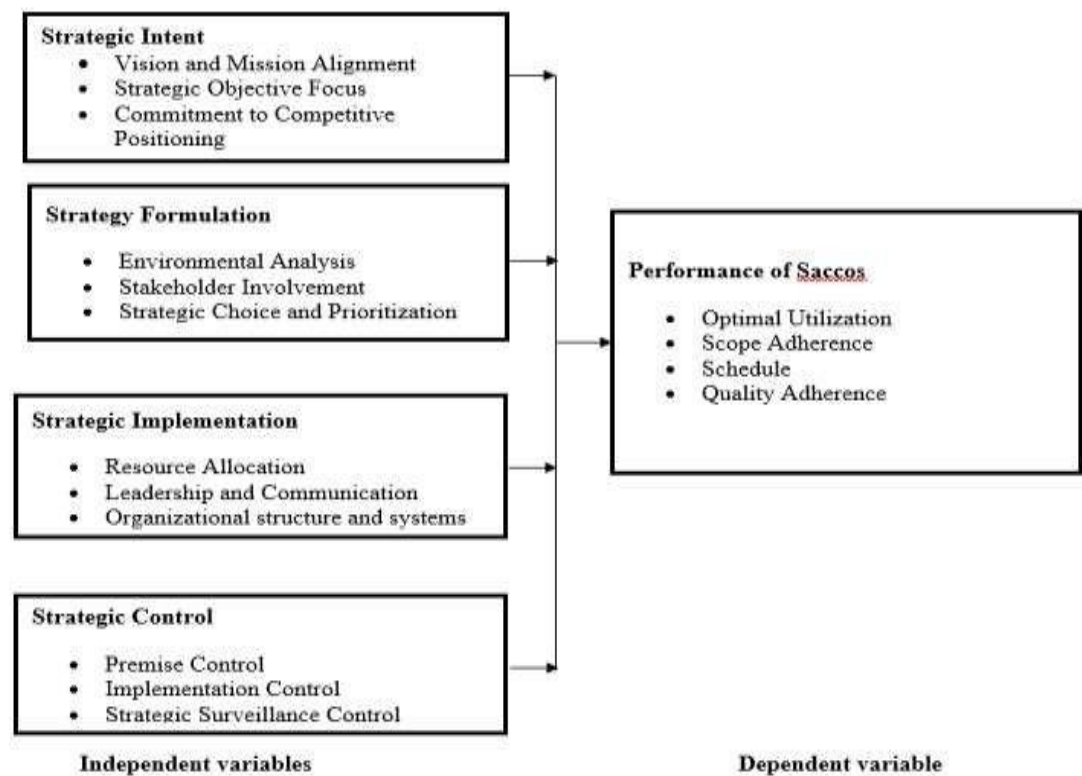


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.3 Empirical Review

Empirical research provides evidence-based information on the relationship between strategic management practices and organizational performance. Previous studies show that effective strategic management enhances operational efficiency, governance, service delivery, and sustainability in financial institutions, including SACCOs (Grant, 2022; Hitt et al., 2022; World Bank, 2023). Strategic intent has been shown to play a core role in defining organizational direction, decision-making, and performance outcomes. It provides a sense of direction, structures operations, and motivates stakeholders toward long-term objectives. Organizations with clear vision and mission statements are more focused, allocate resources better, and maintain stronger strategic focus (Hitt et al., 2022; Grant, 2022; David & David, 2023). In SACCOs, strategic intent enhances coordination among management, boards, and members, thereby improving governance, accountability, institutional resilience, and performance (SASRA, 2022; Kinyua & Muturi, 2021;

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World Bank, 2023).

Strategy formulation helps to connect strategic intent with operational execution. Empirical studies show that organizations that undertake systematic environmental scanning and strategic planning are able to develop more effective and flexible strategies (David & David, 2023; Wheelen et al., 2022). Environmental analysis enables institutions to identify external opportunities and threats while also understanding internal strengths and weaknesses, leading to better decision-making and preparedness (Kaplan et al., 2021; World Bank, 2023). Studies further show that stakeholder involvement in strategy formulation improves commitment, transparency, ownership, and alignment across organizational levels (Raimo et al., 2021; Mwilu & Njuguna, 2022). In SACCOs, incorporating stakeholder perspectives in strategic decisions strengthens governance and improves implementation outcomes. Strategic choice and prioritization also enhance performance by ensuring that scarce financial, human, and technological resources are directed toward high-value activities (Grant, 2022; Kinyua, 2021).

Strategic implementation determines whether planned strategies are translated into performance outcomes. Empirical evidence confirms that even well-designed strategies may fail when implementation is weak, especially where operational discipline, leadership commitment, and resource alignment are lacking (David & David, 2023; Hitt et al., 2022). SACCOs that integrate strategic priorities into daily operations achieve better efficiency, improved service delivery, and stronger institutional performance (SASRA, 2022; World Bank, 2023). Leadership is a major determinant of successful implementation because leaders communicate goals, motivate employees, reduce resistance to change, and demonstrate commitment to strategic priorities (Grant, 2022; Mwilu & Njuguna, 2022; Raimo et al., 2021). Implementation is also influenced by organizational structures and systems, since clear reporting relationships, integrated ICT systems, and supportive policies help institutions execute strategic initiatives consistently and monitor performance effectively (World Bank, 2023; SASRA, 2022).

Strategic control ensures that organizational activities remain aligned with planned objectives and that corrective measures are taken when deviations occur. Empirical studies show that institutions with formal control systems, including internal audit, risk management frameworks, and performance measurement systems, demonstrate greater accountability, transparency, and flexibility (Hitt et al., 2022; Wheelen et al., 2022; Otley, 2021). Continuous monitoring and evaluation also improve responsiveness to environmental changes. SACCOs that regularly review strategic assumptions, track performance indicators, and adjust operations according to regulatory requirements or market conditions are better positioned to remain competitive and institutionally stable (Grant, 2022; World Bank, 2023). Performance measurement tools such as the Balanced Scorecard also help organizations monitor both financial and non-financial measures, leading to stronger governance, improved decision-making, and long-term sustainability (Kaplan et al., 2021; SASRA, 2022; Wheelen et al., 2022).

Performance reflects the extent to which institutions efficiently and effectively achieve their objectives. Empirical evidence shows that performance depends on both financial and non-

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financial aspects, including operational efficiency, service quality, governance effectiveness, and member satisfaction (Kaplan et al., 2021; World Bank, 2023). In SACCOs, operational performance is important because it shows how well strategic management practices are integrated into daily operations and aligned with institutional objectives. Efficient use of financial, human, and technological resources improves productivity, lowers costs, and strengthens competitiveness (Grant, 2022; Kinyua & Muturi, 2021). Performance is also influenced by clear strategic plans, defined scope, implementation schedules, and quality standards. When SACCOs implement initiatives on time, maintain service quality, and comply with regulatory requirements, they improve operational efficiency, member confidence, institutional credibility, and long-term sustainability (SASRA, 2022; World Bank, 2023; David & David, 2023).

3.0 Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design to examine the role of strategic management practices in the performance of SACCOs in Nairobi City County. This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to assess current organizational practices, relationships, and perceptions without manipulating variables. The study focused on strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, strategic control, and perceived operational performance indicators such as service delivery efficiency and member satisfaction. The target population comprised SACCOs operating in Nairobi City County, where many regulated SACCO headquarters are located. The study applied a minimum three-year operational requirement to ensure institutional stability and availability of valid performance data. Census sampling was used for the 30 mature SACCOs, while purposive sampling selected knowledgeable senior and operational managers who were directly involved in strategic management practices and organizational performance within their institutions.

Structured questionnaires were used as the main data collection instrument to gather standardized information on strategic management practices and organizational performance. The questionnaires used a five-point Likert scale to convert perceptions into numerical data suitable for correlation and regression analysis. Pilot testing was conducted among three SACCOs outside the main study to assess clarity, relevance, accessibility, and completeness of the instrument. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, while validity was ensured through expert review and alignment with the conceptual framework. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics, normality tests, correlation, multicollinearity tests, and multiple regression, while qualitative responses were analyzed thematically. Ethical procedures included university approval, acquisition of a research permit, informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality, and use of the collected data strictly for academic purposes.

4.0 Data Analysis and Presentation

This chapter summarizes the analysis, interpretation and presentation of the results of the data obtained. It includes the response rate, demographics of the respondents, reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, normality tests, correlation analysis, multicollinearity diagnostics, regression

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analysis and discussions.

4.1 Response Rate

One hundred and ten questionnaires were handed out to senior managers and operations managers in 30 SACCOs in the Nairobi City County. Of these 164 were duly filled and returned, or a response rate of 78.1. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2023) regard a response rate of 70 percent and above as excellent in self-administered questionnaires in business research. Equally, Hair et al. (2022) affirms that a response rate of 70 percent and above will greatly minimize non-response bias and increase the generalizability of the results. Consequently, the response rate of 78.1% that was obtained in this research is satisfactory to carry out statistical analysis and generalization.

Table 1: Response Rate

Category	Number	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires Distributed	210	100.0
Questionnaires Returned	164	78.1
Unreturned or Invalid	46	21.9

4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

This section provides the descriptive statistics of each of the five study variables namely, the strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, strategic controls and the organizational performance. Each variable had 6 items rated on a five-points Likert scale with 1 indicating Not at all and 5 indicating Very large extent. The analysis will cover the mean and standard deviation of each item and then a discussion of the results. The means differ among items, with some having moderate levels (around 3.0), some high levels (around 4.0), and some very high levels (above 4.5). This difference represents the various realities of the various SACCOs and gives a balanced perspective of strategic management practices in Nairobi City County.

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Intent

The measure of strategic intent employed six items that evaluated the degree to which SACCOs exhibit clear vision and mission, articulate strategic direction, alignment of departmental objectives, operational plans that translate the objectives, clarity of roles among employees and contribution to member satisfaction. The respondents rated each item on a five-point Likert scale with 1 meaning Not at all and 5 meaning Very large extent. Table 2 shows the standard deviation and mean of each item in strategic intent.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Intent Items

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
The SACCO has a clearly documented vision and mission statement	4.85	0.42
The SACCO's vision and mission are well communicated to all members and staff	4.18	0.65
Departmental goals are aligned with the SACCO's overall strategy	3.95	0.70
Strategic objectives are translated into operational plans	3.42	0.88
I clearly understand my role in achieving the SACCO's strategic goals	4.05	0.68
The SACCO's strategic intent has contributed to improved member satisfaction	3.25	0.92

The results of Table 2 show that the respondents had different perceptions concerning various elements of strategic intent. The most mean score was on the statement "The SACCO has a well-documented vision and mission statement" (M = 4.85, SD = 0.42), implying that almost all SACCOs have formalized their vision and mission statements to a very high degree. The discovery aligns with Hitt et al. (2022), who suggested that the strategic management in contemporary organizations is based on documented vision and mission statements. Strong consensus of the respondents on this item is presented by the low standard deviation (0.42). The second largest mean was The SACCO has a vision and mission clearly communicated to all members and staff (M = 4.18, SD = 0.65), which means that the strategic direction is also well communicated. Saunders et al. (2023) believe that vision and mission should be communicated effectively to make sure everyone in the organization knows and strives to achieve shared objectives.

High levels of practice were also expressed by "I have a clear understanding of my role towards the realization of the strategic goals of the SACCO" (M = 4.05, SD = 0.68) and "Departmental goals are aligned with the overall SACCO strategy (M = 3.95, SD = 0.70). The mean scores were lowest in the following areas: Strategic objectives are translated into operational plans (M = 3.42, SD = 0.88) and The SACCO strategic intent has resulted in better member satisfaction (M = 3.25, SD = 0.92). These results show that SACCOs are good in documenting and communicating their vision, but there are moderate difficulties in converting the strategic goals into operational plans to be implemented and in getting a direct view of the increase in member satisfaction. Grant (2022) notes that the disconnect between the strategic goals and operational strategies is a typical issue in most organizations, especially in the cooperative industry. These items have higher standard deviations (0.88 and 0.92), which implies that there is more variation in the responses, which implies that certain SACCOs are better in these aspects than others (Pallant, 2023).

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Descriptive Statistics for Strategy Formulation

The six items used to measure strategy formulation evaluated the stakeholder involvement in the planning process, environmental scanning, integration of operational insights, integration of departmental feedback, operational realities reflected in strategic plans, and operational risks considered during planning. The mean and standard deviation of each item are provided in Table 3 in strategy formulation.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Strategy Formulation Items

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
The SACCO involves relevant stakeholders in the strategic planning process	4.32	0.60
The SACCO conducts environmental scanning before formulating strategies	3.82	0.78
Operational insights from departments are considered during strategy formulation	4.58	0.52
Feedback from departments is incorporated into strategic plans	4.15	0.66
Strategic plans reflect operational realities of the SACCO	3.98	0.69
Risks at the operational level are considered during strategic planning	3.38	0.90

Table 3 results indicate a difference in the items of strategy formulation. The highest mean ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.52$) was achieved in the item "Operational insights from departments are taken into consideration when formulating strategies" which implies that SACCOs highly value the need to include frontline operational knowledge in strategic planning. This conclusion confirms Grant (2022), who claimed that operational reality-based strategies have a higher chance of successful implementation. The mean of $4.32(SD=0.60)$ of stakeholder involvement in strategic planning showed that SACCOs involve the relevant stakeholders actively in the planning processes. Hitt et al. (2022) state that stakeholder engagement increases the quality of strategies and buy-in. Strategic plans are reflected in feedbacks of departments ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.66$) and strategic plans are reflected in operational realities ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.69$) both show high levels of practice. The least mean scores were recorded in the case of Environmental scanning before formulating strategies ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.78$) and risks at the operational level are considered during strategic planning ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 0.90$). According to Grant (2022), environmental scanning plays a vital role in identifying opportunities and threats, and those organizations that do not conduct it can develop strategies that are not aligned with the external environment. The larger risk consideration standard deviation (0.90) implies that there is a wide range of variability in the operational risk treatment within SACCOs as a part of the planning (SASRA, 2024).

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Descriptive Statistics for Strategy Implementation

The implementation of strategy was measured with six items, which evaluated allocation of resources, communication of strategic plans, roles and responsibilities, realism of implementation schedules, leadership support and frequent monitoring of progress. The mean and the standard deviation of each item in strategy implementation are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Strategy Implementation Items

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
The SACCO allocates adequate resources for implementing strategic plans	3.65	0.84
Strategic plans are clearly communicated to all teams and members	4.48	0.56
Roles and responsibilities during implementation are clearly defined	4.75	0.46
Implementation timelines are realistic and consistently followed	3.88	0.72
Leadership provides strong support and commitment during strategy implementation	4.95	0.32
The SACCO monitors progress regularly during strategy implementation	3.48	0.88

Table 4 shows some interesting trends in the practices of implementation. The highest mean ($M = 4.95$, $SD = 0.32$) was observed in "Leadership provides strong support and commitment during strategy implementation" which means that there is almost universal strong support in leadership. Hitt et al. (2022) claim that the most important element of strategy implementation is leadership support since leaders distribute resources, eliminate barriers, and inspire employees. The standard deviation is very low (0.32) which means that there is a high level of agreement among respondents. Roles and responsibilities during implementation are clearly defined ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 0.46$) and Strategic plans are clearly communicated to all teams and members ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 0.56$) also display very high levels of practice. These data indicate that SACCOs are good at role definitions and communication of plans (Grant, 2022). Nevertheless, The SACCO tracks progress on a regular basis when implementing strategic plans ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.88$) and The SACCO allocates sufficient resources to the implementation of strategic plans ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.84$) had the lowest means. This means that there is a high degree of leadership commitment, moderate resource allocation and progress monitoring, and significant variation in these variables across SACCOs (Hair et al., 2022). This observation is in line with the resource-based view that suggests that insufficient resources may constrain how an organization can implement its strategies successfully (Hitt et al., 2022).

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Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Controls

The measurement of strategic controls was based on six items that evaluated the setting of key performance indicators, routine monitoring of performance, feedback provision, corrective measures, risk identification and management and performance tracking system effectiveness. The mean and standard deviation of each item of strategic controls are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Controls Items

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
The SACCO has established key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure strategic progress	4.42	0.58
Departmental and organizational performance is regularly monitored	4.08	0.70
Feedback on performance outcomes is provided to relevant teams	3.95	0.72
Corrective actions are taken when performance deviates from strategic plans	3.32	0.92
Operational risks are identified and managed effectively	4.22	0.62
Performance tracking systems are effective in informing strategic decisions	3.75	0.80

Table 5 provides the results that demonstrate variability in strategic control mechanisms. The highest mean ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.58$) was obtained in "The SACCO has established KPIs to measure strategic progress" which implies that the majority of the SACCOs have developed performance measurement systems. Grant (2022) states that KPIs are critical in monitoring the progress of strategy. "Operational risks are identified and managed effectively" ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.62$) and "Departmental and organizational performance is regularly monitored" ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.70$) also indicate high levels of practice. This observation aligns with SASRA (2024) which has highlighted risk management requirements of licensed SACCOs. But, the lowest mean ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.92$) was obtained at the item "Corrective actions are taken when performance is not in line with strategic plans" so SACCOs are less concerned with corrective action. The greater standard deviation indicates a high level of variation between institutions (Field, 2022). This observation implies that there is a significant domain that SACCO leaders need to enhance.

Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Performance

The performance of the organization was determined by six items that evaluated steady growth, satisfaction among the members, total growth in membership and assets, productivity of the organization, competitive stance and attainment of strategic goals within the scheduled durations. Table 6 shows the means and standard deviation of each item in the area of organizational performance.

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Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Performance Items

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
The SACCO has experienced consistent growth over the past three years	4.28	0.62
Member satisfaction has improved due to strategic management practices	3.85	0.75
The SACCO has experienced overall growth in membership and assets	4.58	0.52
Operational efficiency has improved as a result of strategic practices	3.68	0.82
The SACCO's competitive position in the market has strengthened	3.98	0.69
The SACCO has achieved most of its strategic objectives within planned timeframes	3.45	0.86

Table 6 results indicate that perceived performance is different when it comes to various indicators. The highest mean ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.52$) was obtained in the SACCO and this is an indicator that there has been good growth performance in terms of membership and assets. This finding is consistent with the World Bank (2023) report that the SACCO subsector in Kenya has been steadily growing in the last 10 years. High levels of performance can also be seen in consistent growth over the past three years ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.62$) and The SACCO has been able to strengthen its competitive position in the market ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.69$). Nonetheless, "The SACCO has met most of its strategic goals within planned periods" had the smallest mean ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.86$), which means that SACCOs are expanding, yet they might struggle to meet certain strategic goals within planned periods (Grant, 2022). The moderate to high levels of improvement reported by "Operational efficiency has improved as a result of strategic practices" ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.82$) and "Member satisfaction has improved due to strategic management practices" ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.75$) represent significant improvement, but with significant variation across institutions (Pallant, 2023).

Qualitative Analysis of Open-Ended Responses

Two open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to capture respondents’ views on challenges affecting the implementation of strategic management practices and possible ways of improving them. A total of 164 respondents provided written responses, which were analysed thematically. The qualitative analysis complemented the quantitative findings by giving deeper contextual insight into how strategic management practices are experienced within SACCOs in Nairobi City County. The responses helped explain practical issues behind the statistical results, especially in areas such as resource allocation, monitoring systems, stakeholder involvement, technology use, leadership, and change management. This approach allowed the study to move beyond numerical scores and capture the lived organizational realities affecting strategy implementation. The findings therefore strengthened the interpretation of the study by showing

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not only what respondents rated, but also why certain strategic management practices were difficult to implement effectively.

Challenges Facing Implementation of Strategic Management Practices

The main challenges facing implementation of strategic management practices were inadequate resource allocation, resistance to organizational change, weak monitoring and evaluation systems, limited stakeholder involvement, and technological constraints. Inadequate resources were the most frequently reported challenge, mentioned by 52 respondents, representing 31.7%. This showed that SACCOs may have strategic plans but lack sufficient financial, human, and technological resources to implement them fully. Resistance to change was reported by 38 respondents, or 23.2%, especially where long-serving staff preferred old working methods. Weak monitoring and evaluation systems were identified by 31 respondents, or 18.9%, showing that some SACCOs develop plans but do not consistently track progress. Limited stakeholder involvement accounted for 14.6%, while technological constraints accounted for 11.6%. These challenges indicate that implementation weaknesses are both resource-based and organizational across the institutions studied.

Suggestions for Improving Strategic Management Practices

Respondents suggested several ways of improving strategic management practices in SACCOs, with strengthening resource allocation being the leading recommendation. This was mentioned by 45 respondents, representing 27.4%, who emphasized the need to set aside and protect specific budgets for strategic projects. Enhancing communication and stakeholder engagement followed with 38 respondents, or 23.2%, showing the need for regular communication of strategic progress to members and staff. Improving monitoring and evaluation systems was suggested by 32 respondents, or 19.5%, with emphasis on dashboards, real-time tracking, and regular reviews. Investing in technology was recommended by 28 respondents, representing 17.1%, especially through modern integrated systems for performance, financial data, and member feedback. Building leadership capacity was mentioned by 21 respondents, or 12.8%, highlighting the need for continuous training among board members and senior managers.

Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings showed strong consistency between the two sets of results. The qualitative themes on inadequate resource allocation and weak monitoring systems supported the lower quantitative mean scores for resource allocation and progress monitoring. Similarly, the qualitative recommendation on leadership capacity building complemented the quantitative finding that leadership support was one of the stronger areas in strategy implementation. The qualitative responses also added detail that could not be fully captured through closed-ended questionnaire items, particularly on how resistance to change, stakeholder exclusion, technology gaps, and weak follow-up systems affect strategic management in practice. Overall, the combined findings showed that SACCOs in Nairobi City County have made progress in adopting strategic management practices, but implementation is still affected by

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resource constraints, monitoring weaknesses, stakeholder participation gaps, technology limitations, and the need for stronger leadership development.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

This section presents the correlation analysis conducted to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between strategic management practices and organizational performance among SACCOs in Nairobi City County. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was used because the study sought to establish whether strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategic controls were associated with organizational performance. The analysis was important because it provided an initial indication of whether improvements in strategic management practices were linked to improved SACCO performance before conducting regression analysis. A positive correlation means that an increase in a strategic management practice is associated with an increase in organizational performance. The results are presented in Table 7, showing the relationship between each independent variable and organizational performance, as well as the interrelationships among the strategic management variables.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	Strategic Intent	Strategy Formulation	Strategy Implementation	Strategic Controls	Organizational Performance
Strategic Intent	1.00				
Strategy Formulation	0.65**	1.00			
Strategy Implementation	0.70**	0.60**	1.00		
Strategic Controls	0.62**	0.64**	0.67**	1.00	
Organizational Performance	0.73**	0.68**	0.76**	0.69**	1.00

The results in Table 7 show that all the strategic management practices had strong, positive, and significant relationships with organizational performance. Strategy implementation had the strongest relationship with organizational performance, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.76$, showing that SACCOs that implemented strategies more effectively were more likely to report better performance. Strategic intent also had a strong positive relationship with organizational performance, with $r = 0.73$, meaning that clear direction, vision, and mission were closely associated with improved performance. Strategic controls had a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.69$, while strategy formulation had $r = 0.68$. These findings indicate that all four practices were important, although strategy implementation showed the closest association with SACCO

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performance. The positive correlations also suggest that the practices work together in strengthening overall institutional outcomes.

4.4 Regression Analysis

This section presents the regression analysis conducted to determine the predictive influence of strategic management practices on organizational performance. Regression analysis was necessary because correlation only shows association, while regression shows the extent to which each strategic management practice predicts SACCO performance. The analysis was divided into simple regression and multiple regression. Simple regression examined the individual influence of strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategic controls on organizational performance. Multiple regression then examined the combined effect of the four strategic management practices on SACCO performance and identified the strongest predictor among them. The results therefore helped in determining whether each independent variable made a statistically significant contribution to performance. The section presents the simple regression results, model fitness summary, ANOVA results, regression coefficients, regression equation summary, and hypothesis testing results.

Simple Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression was conducted to establish the individual predictive influence of each strategic management practice on organizational performance. This analysis examined each independent variable separately to determine how much variation in SACCO performance could be explained by strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategic controls. The purpose of this analysis was to identify whether each practice was useful on its own in explaining performance outcomes before combining all variables in the multiple regression model. The results are presented in Table 8 using R Square, Adjusted R Square, standardized beta, t-value, and p-value. R Square shows the proportion of variation in organizational performance explained by each variable, while the beta value shows the strength and direction of the relationship. The p-value was used to determine whether the individual predictive influence was statistically significant.

Table 8: Simple Regression Analysis Results

Independent Variable	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Strategic Intent	0.533	0.530	0.730	13.62	< 0.001
Strategy Formulation	0.462	0.459	0.680	11.81	< 0.001
Strategy Implementation	0.578	0.575	0.760	14.92	< 0.001
Strategic Controls	0.476	0.473	0.690	12.13	< 0.001

The results in Table 8 show that each strategic management practice individually and significantly

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predicted organizational performance, since all p-values were less than 0.001. Strategy implementation explained the highest variation in SACCO performance, with R Square = 0.578. This means that 57.8% of the variation in organizational performance could be explained by strategy implementation alone. Strategic intent explained 53.3% of the variation, while strategic controls explained 47.6%, and strategy formulation explained 46.2%. The beta values were also positive for all variables, showing that improvement in any strategic management practice was associated with improvement in organizational performance. Strategy implementation had the strongest beta value of $\beta = 0.760$, followed by strategic intent at $\beta = 0.730$, strategic controls at $\beta = 0.690$, and strategy formulation at $\beta = 0.680$.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the combined and relative predictive power of strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategic controls on SACCO performance. Unlike simple regression, which tested each practice separately, multiple regression examined how the four variables jointly explained organizational performance. This analysis was necessary because SACCO performance is not influenced by one practice alone, but by the interaction of different strategic management practices. The model fitness summary was used to determine how well the combined model explained changes in performance. The ANOVA results tested whether the overall regression model was statistically significant, while the regression coefficients showed the unique contribution of each independent variable after controlling for the other variables. The results are presented in Tables 9, 10 and 11.

Table 9: Model Fitness Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.822	0.676	0.668	0.58

The model fitness results in Table 9 show that the combined strategic management practices had a strong positive relationship with organizational performance, as indicated by R = 0.822. The R Square value of 0.676 means that strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategic controls jointly explained 67.6% of the variation in SACCO performance in Nairobi City County. This indicates that the four practices were strong predictors of organizational performance when considered together. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.668 further shows that the model would explain about 66.8% of the variation in the wider population after adjusting for the number of predictors. The standard error of 0.58 indicates the average distance between the observed and predicted performance scores. Overall, the model had strong explanatory power.

Table 10: ANOVA: Overall Model Significance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	112.45	4	28.11	83.52	< 0.001
Residual	53.52	159	0.34		
Total	165.97	163			

The ANOVA results in Table 10 show that the overall multiple regression model was statistically significant, $F(4, 159) = 83.52$, $p < 0.001$. This means that the model using strategic intent, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategic controls predicted organizational performance better than a model without these predictors. The regression sum of squares was 112.45, while the residual sum of squares was 53.52, showing that a large portion of the variation in performance was explained by the strategic management variables. Since the p-value was below 0.05, the model was considered statistically significant. These findings confirm that the combined influence of the four strategic management practices was meaningful in explaining SACCO performance. Therefore, the model was suitable for further interpretation using regression coefficients.

Table 11: Regression Coefficients

Variable	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta (β)	t	p-value
Constant	0.28	0.11		2.55	0.012
Strategic Intent	0.26	0.05	0.28	5.20	< 0.001
Strategy Formulation	0.12	0.05	0.13	2.40	0.017
Strategy Implementation	0.38	0.06	0.40	6.33	< 0.001
Strategic Controls	0.10	0.04	0.11	2.50	0.013

The regression coefficients in Table 11 show that all four strategic management practices had positive and statistically significant effects on SACCO performance. Strategy implementation was the strongest predictor, with $\beta = 0.40$ and $p < 0.001$. This means that, when all variables were considered together, implementation made the greatest contribution to performance. Strategic intent was the second strongest predictor, with $\beta = 0.28$ and $p < 0.001$, indicating that clear strategic direction also contributed strongly to performance. Strategy formulation had $\beta = 0.13$ and $p = 0.017$, while strategic controls had $\beta = 0.11$ and $p = 0.013$. Although these two predictors had smaller effects, they were still statistically significant. Therefore, each strategic management

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practice made a unique contribution to organizational performance among SACCOs in Nairobi City County.

The regression equation derived from the coefficients was: $Y = 0.28 + 0.26X_1 + 0.12X_2 + 0.38X_3 + 0.10X_4 + \varepsilon$. This means that when strategic intent increases by one unit, SACCO performance increases by 0.26 units, holding other variables constant. When strategy formulation increases by one unit, performance increases by 0.12 units. A one-unit increase in strategy implementation leads to a 0.38-unit increase in performance, making it the most influential predictor. A one-unit increase in strategic controls leads to a 0.10-unit increase in performance. The positive coefficients show that improvement in all four strategic management practices improves SACCO performance. However, the effect is strongest for strategy implementation, followed by strategic intent, strategy formulation, and strategic controls.

5.0 Conclusion

The research results in a conclusion that the combination of strategic management practices significantly positively affects performance of the SACCOs in Nairobi City County and accounts more than two-thirds of the performance variation. Strategy implementation is the most important practice of SACCO performance compared to strategic intent, strategy formulation, and strategic controls. This observation highlights the importance of strategic implementation of strategic plans in the success of organizations as opposed to planning. In particular, the research finds that SACCOs are good at capturing the vision and mission statements and providing good leadership support in the implementation process, but are weak in converting strategic goals into operational strategies, performance versus plans monitoring, and taking corrective action when performance is off track. These areas are the gaps that are missed in order to enhance performance. The paper also concludes that the environmental scanning and consideration of operational risks in strategy formulation are still weak practices that need to be reinforced.

6.0 Recommendations

The study has the following recommendations based on the findings and conclusions. To begin with, SACCO management needs to reinforce its strategic goals into operational plans by creating action plans that are detailed in nature with responsibilities, specific timing, and resource allocation. Second, SACCOs are encouraged to put in place regular progress monitoring systems such as monthly implementation reviews and quarterly performance dashboards in response to the poor monitoring practices that were found during the research. Third, SACCOs ought to improve their corrective action systems by putting in place specific guidelines on corrective action response in the case of performance deviation, such as specification of action and follow-up monitoring levels. Fourth, the formal monitoring of political, economic, social, technological, and competitive forces influencing the SACCO industry should be enhanced by environmental scanning practices. Fifth, as strategic implementation was found to be the best predictor of performance, SACCO regulators and umbrella associations ought to emphasize capacity-building initiatives that are based on strategy execution skills among managers and board members. Sixth, policymakers ought to

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contemplate making SACCOs report strategic performance measures in addition to the financial measures so as to promote a more systematic strategic management. Lastly, SACCOs would be well advised to invest in constant communication of strategic intent to all stakeholders and incorporate member satisfaction monitoring in their strategic dashboards. Although the current support level of leadership is high, making the support institutionalized by accountability frameworks will guarantee the effectiveness of the implemented support in the long run.

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