



Strategic Management and Performance of Commercial Parastatals in Kenya: A Case of Kenya Electricity Generating Company

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ABSTRACT

Strategic management practices are essential in enhancing the performance of organizations. Ideally, organizations that adopt these practices achieve their goals efficiently and effectively. This study aimed to assess strategic management practices and the performance of commercial parastatals in Kenya: a case of Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen). The specific objectives of the study were to evaluate the information technology adoption, strategic partnerships, customer experience management, and team management on the performance of KenGen. The study was anchored on the stakeholder theory, agency theory, and resource-based theory. Descriptive research design was used for the study. The target population included managers of Legal Procurement, Human Resource, Finance, Operations, ICT, Strategy/innovation, Commercial services and Business unit departments at KenGen's head office in Nairobi. The sampling method used was stratified random sampling. The sample size included 121 staff members working in various departments at KenGen's head office in Nairobi. Data was collected using a self-administered structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics analysis and linear regression analysis was used to analyze and present the data findings. This was augmented by percentages, frequency distributions, means, and standard deviation. Tables and figures were used to present the findings of the study. The study findings indicated that IT Adoption and Strategic partnerships have strong, statistically significant positive effects (coefficients: 0.644 and 0.665, p-values: 0.000). Strategic team management also shows a significant positive impact (coefficient: 0.456, p-value: 0.000). While Strategic Customer experience management has a smaller yet statistically significant effect (coefficient: 0.181, p-value: 0.015). The study concluded that IT adoption is highly regarded but can have both positive and negative consequences due to barriers like limited infrastructure and skills gaps. Additionally, strategic partnerships, customer-centric approaches, and effective team management were identified as key factors that positively influence the performance of commercial parastatals in Kenya. Therefore, the study recommends that for KenGen to leverage ICT transformation, it should enhance its ICT infrastructure, foster innovation, and upskill employees, with timeline so has to improve the organization performance. Additionally, establishing a partnership task force and customer experience management team, along with leadership training and diversity-focused hiring, will enhance overall organizational capabilities

Keywords: Customer Experience Management, Information Technology Adoption, Strategic Management Practices, Strategic Partnerships, Team Management, KenGen

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Commercial parastatals are critical for the delivery of public services, creation of jobs, and play an important part in the nations' economic development. Parastatals are state-owned enterprises that operate as autonomous business entities (Kamemba, 2019). The performance of commercial parastatals has recently been a major worry for stakeholders and policymakers. While some parastatals have achieved remarkable success, others have struggled to remain financially sustainable. This has led to the question of what factors contribute to their performance. According to Kofi, (2022) one potential factor is the use of strategic management practices.

Globally, the market has become extremely competitive as a result of growing external pressures and consumer demands for superior goods and services. The creation of a best practices blueprint that can be used by all organizations, regardless of the environments in which they function, has proven to be quite difficult (Bogers, et al. 2019). This is because different observers can sense their own realities through a variety of "objective realities" and conceptual lenses, even when it comes to issues that may be based on concrete or empirical facts. This has led to effective strategic management practices which are critical for organizations to remain innovative, meet customer needs, and maintain their market position.

In South America, strategic management practices are essential for organizations looking to navigate the region's diverse economies, political systems, and regulatory environments (Gallardo, Thunnissen & Scullion 2020). Effective strategic management practices enable organizations to identify and capitalize on opportunities, manage risks effectively, and build sustainable business models.

Economic benefits are accrued through strategic management practices by reducing waste, managing costs, and lowering environmental risks (Bryson, et al. 2022). Breweries in Ghana, for example, have implemented green supply chain strategies, reducing waste, enhancing product quality, and lowering environmental liabilities, all while remaining competitive. Innovation is another path to gaining a competitive edge through strategic management (Bryson, et al. 2022).

Kenya's remarkable economic growth in recent years can be attributed to various factors, including political stability, a dynamic private sector, and favorable government policies (Kuria & Mose, 2019). However, organizations operating in Kenya must embrace effective strategic management practices to thrive in this rapidly changing economic and regulatory landscape. One significant advantage of strategic management practices in Kenya is their ability to help businesses identify and seize opportunities in a rapidly evolving market (Osano, 2019).

In a business environment, organizations in Kenya, like elsewhere, face various risks, such as economic downturns, regulatory changes, or cybersecurity threats (Osano, 2019). The Equity Bank example highlights that they managed regulatory changes effectively in their expansion, showcasing how strategic management practices can help organizations proactively identify and mitigate such risks.

Strategic management practices are also instrumental in fostering a culture of innovation in Kenya. As the economy grows, organizations that can innovate and adapt quickly are more likely to succeed (Kuria & Mose, 2019). Equity Bank, for example, has implemented social responsibility initiatives aimed at improving financial inclusion, particularly for women and small entrepreneurs. Such initiatives are the result of effective strategic management practices that align business goals with social and environmental sustainability, contributing to Kenya's economic development and societal well-being.

The limited research on this study presents a critical research opportunity to investigate the extent to which strategic management practices can be applied in commercial parastatals to improve their performance. Policymakers, managers, and other stakeholders can benefit greatly from a greater knowledge of the variables influencing the application of these techniques and their effect on parastatal performance. This study aimed to fill this gap by analyzing the effect of strategic management practices on the performance of commercial parastatals in a developing country environment.

1.1.1 Information technology adoption

The adoption of information technology (IT) has brought about significant transformations in corporate operations, increasing operational efficiency through the automation of manual processes. Integration of IT solutions, including networks, data management systems, hardware, and software, has resulted in enhanced accuracy and productivity. This has allowed employees to shift their focus from repetitive and time-consuming tasks to more strategic and value-adding duties, fostering innovation and growth within organizations (Alhashmi, Salloum & Mhamdi, 2019).

1.1.2 Strategic partnerships

According to Hoosain, Paul and Ramakrishna (2020) strategic alliances have developed as an essential component of effective corporate strategies. These collaborations allow organizations to exploit one other's strengths, resources, and skills to achieve common goals. Organizations can access new markets, grow their client base, and enter previously untapped niches by cooperating with partners who have complementary expertise.

Strategic collaborations require effective communication, trust, and goal alignment. Establishing explicit agreements, establishing duties and responsibilities, and maintaining open lines of communication promote a healthy and productive collaboration, maximizing the potential for mutual advantages and long-term success. Collaboration and coordination are essential for strategic partnerships to develop (Clauss, et al. 2019).

1.1.3 Strategic customer experience

Organizations recognize the importance of strategic customer experience as a crucial differentiator in today's competitive business landscape (Holmlund 2020). Companies that prioritize customer experience realize the importance of providing memorable and enjoyable experiences throughout the customer journey. Organizations may develop and provide personalized experiences that meet and exceed customer needs by getting a thorough understanding of customer expectations, preferences, and pain spots.

A strategic approach to customer experience entails connecting customer experience activities with overall corporate strategy and objectives. This necessitates a customer-first approach across all touchpoints, departments, and procedures (Rahimian, et al. 2020).

1.1.4 Strategic team management

Strategic team management is critical to organizational success because it successfully organizes, leads, and develops teams to meet strategic goals. The first step in a strategic approach to team management is to connect team goals with the larger organizational plan. This guarantees that team efforts are directed towards tasks that contribute to the organization's long-term success. To handle specific difficulties and stimulate innovation, effective team creation entails assembling individuals with various talents and knowledge (Mulandi & Ismail, 2019).

Team leaders are crucial in strategic team management. They offer direction, foster communication and collaboration, and encourage team members to take ownership of their job. Effective team leaders promote a culture of trust and mutual respect by encouraging open and transparent communication. They provide feedback and appreciation to team members in order to improve performance and motivate individuals. Furthermore, strategic team

management entails identifying and developing talent. Recognizing individual skills and giving opportunities for professional development promotes a high-performing team culture in which individuals may contribute their best efforts and reach their greatest potential (Mulandi & Ismail, 2019).

1.1.5 Kenya Electricity Generating Company

Kenya Electricity Generating firm (KenGen) is a significant Kenyan power generating firm that was founded in 1954 (Kabeyi 2020). It has developed as a big actor in the country's energy sector, considerably contributing to electricity generation. KenGen boasts a varied mix of energy sources, including hydroelectric, geothermal, thermal, and wind energy, thanks to an extensive portfolio of power plants. Its entire installed generation capacity of KenGen is 1,904 MW, of which over 86% is drawn from green sources: hydro (826 MW), geothermal (799 MW), thermal (253 MW) and wind (25.5 MW) thus ensuring a consistent and long-term source of energy for Kenya (Kabeyi & Olanrewaju, 2021).

Additionally, KenGen has been at the forefront of Kenya's development of geothermal energy. It is a major geothermal power producer in Africa because it runs several geothermal power facilities in the Olkaria geothermal field. Kenya is committed to sustainable development and reducing its dependency on fossil fuels, which is why it places such a strong focus on renewable energy. KenGen has made investments in wind energy projects, notably the Ngong II and Ngong III wind power stations, in addition to its focus on geothermal and hydroelectric electricity. KenGen contributes to the nation's objective of increasing the proportion of clean energy sources in the mix of electricity generation by diversifying its renewable energy programmes (Kabeyi & Olanrewaju, 2021).

The corporation is actively engaged in corporate social responsibility, contributing to sustainable development and the well-being of local communities through various community development programs, environmental conservation initiatives, and support for education and healthcare projects. KenGen's regional influence extends to countries like Ethiopia and Djibouti, making it a significant player in the broader East African energy landscape (Kabeyi, 2020).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Strategic management practices are essential in enhancing the performance of organizations. Ideally, organizations that adopt these practices achieve their goals efficiently and effectively. The commercial parastatals in Kenya would implement strategic management practices to achieve their objectives, satisfy their stakeholders, and stay competitive (Kuria & Mose, 2019).

The performance of most of commercial parastatals in Kenya, particularly KenGen, has been negatively impacted by subpar strategic management techniques in the current environment (Apunda & Ndede, 2020). The truth is that implementing strategic management practices in management will be difficult for commercial parastatals in Kenya. The parastatals operate in a complex environment characterized by bureaucratic procedures, political interference, and inadequate resources.

Many of these parastatals have failed to achieve their objectives, struggle to remain competitive, and are often criticized for poor service delivery (Brian Jobrube, & Kepha, 2021). Factors such as poor governance, weak financial management, and inadequate human resource management have contributed to the poor performance of these organizations. Despite efforts by the government to reform these organizations, they continue to face challenges that hinder their performance stakeholders (Kamemba, 2019).

According to Okoth, Chepkilot and Zakayo, (2021) the performance of Kenya's commercial parastatals has been negatively impacted by the country's inadequate strategic management methods. The creation of strategic planning, organizational reorganization, and improvement of the governance and financial management systems are a few of these activities. However, despite these attempts, many commercial parastatals continue to function poorly. There is still a gap in the research regarding the causes of these firms' subpar strategic management practices and how to address them in order to raise performance (Kimeo & Achuora, 2020).

The gaps in the existing research are evident in the lack of a comprehensive understanding of the root causes behind subpar strategic management practices within Kenya's commercial parastatals, an absence of empirical evidence supporting claims about the impact of these practices on performance, and a dearth of research justifying the ineffectiveness of the measures already in place. These gaps warrant further research to pinpoint specific causes, assess the efficacy of current strategies, and propose evidence-based solutions to enhance the performance of these organizations.

1.3 General Objective of the study

The general objective of the study was to assess the effect of strategic management practices on performance of commercial parastatals in Kenya.

1.3.1 Specific Objective of the study

- i. To assess the effect of information technology adoption on performance of commercial parastatals in Kenya.
- ii. To explore the effect of strategic partnerships on performance of commercial parastatals in Kenya.
- iii. To examine the effect of strategic customer experience management on performance of commercial parastatals in Kenya.
- iv. To assess the effect of strategic team management on performance of commercial parastatals in Kenya.

2. Literature review

2.1. Technology information adoption

Lee, et al. (2022) analysed the effects of IoT adoption's advantages and disadvantages on Malaysia's supply chain efficiency and organizational effectiveness. 216 businesses in Malaysia's manufacturing and service sectors provided data for the study, which employed a quantitative research design. Utilizing structural equation modelling, the data was examined. The study discovered that IoT deployment significantly improves organizational performance and supply chain performance in Malaysia. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of information technology adoption on performance of KenGen context.

Chege, Wang and Suntu, (2020) studied how Kenyan business performance is affected by information technology innovation. The study used a quantitative research methodology and a survey method to collect data from 219 enterprises in Kenya's manufacturing and service sectors. The findings showed how IT innovation positively impacts operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and financial performance. Although the study was conducted in a Kenyan context, it covered business performance is affected by information technology innovation and performance of KenGen is not in this category, the findings from the study cannot be extrapolated to performance of KenGen.

Al-Waeli, et al. (2020) investigate the influence of internal control, which acts as a moderator, on the financial performance of Iraqi industrial enterprises using accounting information systems (AIS). The paper claims that AIS has a large and positive impact on the financial health of Iraqi industrial enterprises. The study adds to the body of literature by providing empirical evidence on the impact of AIS on financial performance in the context of Iraqi industrial firms, in addition to highlighting the role of internal control systems in strengthening this link. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of information technology adoption on performance of KenGen context.

Manaseer, Maqableh and Alrowwad, (2019) examine how information technology affects the efficiency of Jordanian public institutions. The authors used survey information gathered from 154 employees of Jordanian public bodies to conduct a quantitative analysis. They examined the data and put their theories to the test using structural equation modelling. According to the report, IT improves organizational effectiveness in Jordanian government agencies. The study found in particular that IT positively affects operational effectiveness, which in turn positively affects financial success. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of information technology adoption on performance of KenGen context.

Hoosain, Paul and Ramakrishna, (2020) investigated the impact of 4IR on the manufacturing industry in the United States. The authors conducted a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews with 15 manufacturing industry experts in the United States. The study identified a need for more research on the impact of fifth industrial revolution (5IR) on small and medium-sized enterprises in the United States. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of information technology adoption on performance of KenGen context.

The study by Okoboi and Mawejje, (2016) was to examine the impact of the adoption of power factor correction technology on electricity peak demand in Uganda. The study utilized a quantitative research methodology to investigate the impact of power factor correction technology on electricity peak demand in Uganda. The findings of the study indicated that the adoption of power factor correction technology had a significant positive impact on electricity peak demand in Uganda. The implementation of this technology resulted in a reduction in peak demand levels, leading to a more balanced load distribution and improved efficiency within the electricity grid. While the study shed light on the positive impact of power factor correction technology on electricity peak demand in Uganda, research gap pertains to the economic implications of power factor correction technology adoption. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of information technology adoption on performance of KenGen context.

2.2 Strategic partnerships

Clauss, et al. (2019) explored the link between innovative business models, strategic agility, and company success. The authors used survey information gathered from 205 German companies to conduct quantitative research. They used a case study to analyse the data and put their theories to the test. The study also discovered a strong correlation between business model innovation and company success, as well as a favourable relationship between strategic agility and both of these factors. These results show that innovative business models and flexible strategic thinking are essential elements of effective corporate performance. The study contributes to the body of knowledge in this field by offering empirical evidence for the connection between strategic agility, business model innovation, and firm success. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of strategic partnerships on performance of KenGen context.

George, Walker and Monster, (2019) the study tried to conduct a meta-analysis of prior studies to ascertain the association between organisational success and strategic planning. A meta-analytic study methodology was used to analyse 97 studies that looked at the connection between organisational performance and strategic planning. Strategic planning was found to have a significant impact on organisational performance, suggesting that it is a moderately effective strategy for enhancing organisational performance. This study fills a research hole in the literature by offering a thorough meta-analysis of other studies that looked at the connection between organisational effectiveness and strategic planning. Additionally, it adds to the scant body

of knowledge regarding the efficiency of strategic planning in both the public and private sectors. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of strategic partnerships on performance of KenGen context

Masindi Mafini and Mutekwe,(2020) study aimed to provide insights into the impact of supply chain management practices on the performance of the utility and identify areas for improvement. The study employed a quantitative research approach and used a survey questionnaire to collect data from employees within the South African public electricity utility. The study found a positive relationship between supply chain management practices and corporate performance in the South African public electricity utility. While the study provided valuable insights into the relationship between supply chain management practices and corporate performance in a South African public electricity utility, the study focused on a single industry (electricity utility), and thus, the findings may not be generalizable to other industries. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of strategic partnerships on performance of KenGen context

2.3 Customer experience management

Holmlund, (2020) this study sought to develop a strategic framework for customer experience management (CEM) in the age of big data analytics. The study used a qualitative research methodology and conducted in-depth analyses of the literature on CEM and big data analytics. A conceptual framework was developed based on the findings of the thematic analysis, which was utilised to evaluate the data. This paper fills a research gap in the body of literature by providing a strategic framework for CEM in the age of big data analytics. It also contributes to the scant literature on the use of big data analytics in conjunction with CEM, which is fragmented and lacks a comprehensive framework. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of strategic customer experience management on performance of KenGen context

Rahimian, et al. (2020) systematic review of theoretical underpinnings was conducted with the goal of developing a customer experience management (CEM) framework for the hotel industry. The study used a thematic analysis method to examine 51 papers from various academic databases. The study discovered that these factors interact and have an impact on one another, and that for CEM to be implemented successfully in the hotel business, all factors must be considered. This study fills a research hole in the body of knowledge by offering a thorough CEM framework for the hotel sector. Although there is current research on CEM in the hotel business, it is frequently dispersed and lacks a logical structure. This study adds to the scant body of literature by presenting a methodical and comprehensive framework for CEM in the hotel sector. This study however was not in a Kenyan cultural context and therefore, there is no guarantee that similar findings will be obtained in the case of strategic customer experience management on performance of KenGen context.

Chepngetich, Ouma and Aila, (2019) analysed how customer experience factors affect spending habits in Kenyan hotels. 384 guests who had recently stayed at a hotel in Kenya were surveyed as part of the study to gather data. The study used descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to examine the data. The most important factors in determining buying behaviour were found to be reliability and responsiveness in particular. This study fills a knowledge gap by providing actual data on the effects of customer experience characteristics on purchase behaviour in Kenyan hotels. Although the study was conducted in a Kenyan context, it covered customer experience factors affect spending habits in Kenyan and performance of KenGen is not in this category, the findings from the study cannot be extrapolated to performance of KenGen.

Makudza, (2020) examined how improving client loyalty in the banking sector can be achieved through customer experience management. 400 Zimbabwean bank clients were surveyed using a structured questionnaire as part of the study's quantitative methodology. On the supplied data, a structural equation modelling analysis was done. According to the poll, in the banking sector, effective customer experience management significantly increases client loyalty.

Kihama and Wainaina, (2019) analysed the connection between employee productivity and performance review comments in the water and sewage industries in Kiambu County, Kenya. Using a descriptive research approach, the study included 218 employees from Kiambu County's water and sewage firms as its sample size. The study found a positive and significant association between the water and sewage sectors in Kiambu County and employee productivity as assessed by performance reviews. However, further research could explore the effectiveness of different types of feedback and the role of employee characteristics in the feedback process. Although the study was conducted in a Kenyan context, it covered customer experience factors affect spending habits in Kenyan and performance of KenGen is not in this category, the findings from the study cannot be extrapolated to performance of KenGen.

Tesfaye, (2020) examined the impact of service quality delivery on customer satisfaction within the context of Ethiopia Electric Utility in Assagirt Woreda, Ethiopia. The study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The study revealed that service quality dimensions, including reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles, significantly influenced customer satisfaction in Ethiopia Electric Utility. Although the study shed light on the relationship between service quality delivery and customer satisfaction in Ethiopia Electric Utility, there is a research gaps that could be addressed in future studies. The study focused on a specific geographic location (Assagirt Woreda), and the findings may not be representative of the entire country or other utility sectors

2.4 Team management

Mulandi and Ismail, (2019) examined team management in inventory management techniques affect the operation of Kenyan commercial state corporations. Quantitative research methodology was used in the study. The sample consisted of 252 individuals from 12 commercial state corporations

in Kenya. The study clarifies the value of inventory management practises for Kenya's commercial state companies, but it did not investigate the specific challenges that these enterprises face in implementing these practises. Although the study was conducted in a Kenyan context, it covered team management inventory management techniques in Kenyan and performance of KenGen is not in this category, the findings from the study cannot be extrapolated to performance of KenGen.

Lerai, Rintari and Moguche, (2023) the operational efficacy of team management in Kenya's parastatals with a commercial base was investigated in relation to strategic planning. As part of the study's descriptive research approach, 200 employees of various commercial-based parastatals in Kenya were polled using a questionnaire. Regression analysis was used to analyse the acquired data. In Kenya's parastatals with a commercial base, the study discovered a significant correlation between organisational effectiveness and strategic planning. Although the study was conducted in a Kenyan context, it covered operational efficacy of team management in Kenyan and performance of KenGen is not in this category, the findings from the study cannot be extrapolated to performance of KenGen

Kamau and Simiyu, (2019) examined how team management in financial management affected the performance of Kenya's commercial state-owned firms. A descriptive research design and a sample of 109 respondents from 18 commercial state-owned businesses in Kenya were employed in the study. Descriptive was used to evaluate the data, which were gathered via a structured questionnaire. The success of Kenya's commercial state-owned firms was found to be significantly positively correlated with financial management methods. However, more investigation is required to examine the variables that prevent these organizations from implementing financial management methods effectively.

Paais and Pattiruhu, (2020) examined motivation, leadership, and corporate culture effects on worker performance and satisfaction. The survey polled employees across a range of Indonesian businesses to learn more about motivation, leadership, organisational culture, job satisfaction, and employee performance. There were 200 questionnaires distributed in all, and 168 valid replies were examined using structural equation modelling. The findings demonstrated that employee performance and happiness are significantly positively impacted by motivation, leadership, and business culture. Further investigation is required to ascertain how other factors, which may affect employee performance and satisfaction in various contexts and industries.

Mojambo Tulung and Saerang, (2020) examined, between 2014 and 2018, the effect of senior management team characteristics on Indonesian banks' use of technology. Secondary data was used in the study, which employed a quantitative research approach, and was taken from the annual financial reports of the chosen businesses. The sample included 27 Indonesian banks, and multiple regression was used to examine the data. The study's conclusions indicate that the size, diversity, and average tenure of the senior management team in particular had a major impact on how well Indonesian banks fared in the digital era.

Butuacquah-Mensah, (2019) examined the impact of embedded generation on Ghana's power grid, with a specific focus on the case of Ghana Grid Company Limited (GRIDCo). The study utilized a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. Quantitative data were obtained through system performance monitoring data provided by GRIDCo, which included measurements of grid stability, power quality, and reliability indicators. The data were analysed using statistical techniques such as trend analysis and regression analysis to assess the impact of embedded generation on the power grid. The study revealed that the integration of embedded generation, particularly from renewable energy sources, had both positive and negative impacts on Ghana's power grid. The positive effects included the diversification of the energy mix, reduced reliance on fossil fuels, and improved grid resilience.

2.5 Performance of commercial parastatals

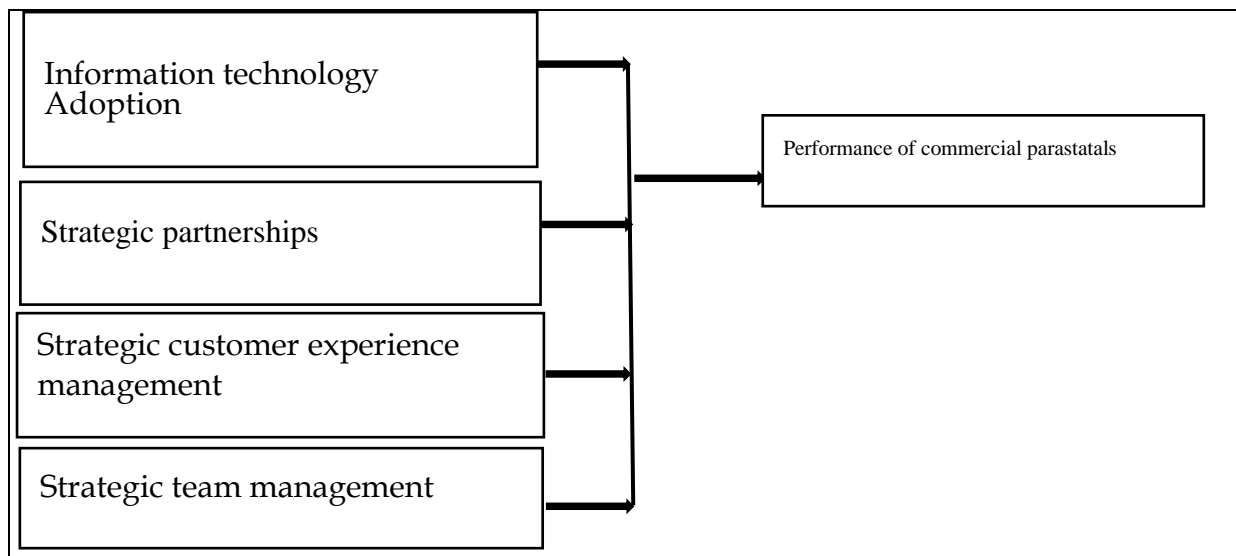
Commercial parastatals operate in sectors with varying degrees of competition and regulatory frameworks. Research indicates that parastatals facing competition from private enterprises tend to perform better due to the need to be efficient and customer-oriented (Holmlund,2020). Conversely, parastatals operating in monopolistic or heavily regulated industries may face challenges such as lack of innovation, high costs, and limited flexibility. These challenges impede their performance and hinder their ability to adapt to changing market dynamics. Also, sound financial management practices are vital for the success of commercial parastatals.

Research suggests that prudent financial planning, budgeting, and monitoring are necessary for efficient resource allocation and cost control (Paais & Pattiruhu,2020). However, several studies have highlighted issues such as irregular financial reporting, weak internal controls, and mismanagement of funds. These factors have a detrimental impact on the financial performance and sustainability of parastatals in Kenya, hindering their ability to operate effectively.

Equally, political interference has been identified as a significant factor hampering the performance of commercial parastatals in Kenya. Research suggests that frequent changes in leadership, political appointments based on patronage rather than merit, and interference in decision-making processes contribute to inefficiency, corruption, and lack of continuity within these organizations (Ngugi,2020). Political influence often leads to conflicting priorities and objectives, which hinder the effective implementation of strategic plans and hinder the overall performance of parastatals.

Similarly, the role of competent and motivated human resources cannot be overstated in achieving high performance. Studies indicate that recruiting and retaining skilled professionals, providing adequate training and development opportunities, and implementing performance-based reward systems are critical (Rahimian, et al. 2020). However, parastatals in Kenya have faced challenges in attracting and retaining top talent due to low salaries, limited career advancement opportunities, and bureaucratic structures. These factors contribute to a lack of motivation and hinder the parastatals' ability to perform optimally.

2.6 Conceptual framework



3. Research design and methodology

The research design employed in the study was a descriptive research design. This choice was justified as the study aimed to provide a comprehensive description of the traits, tendencies, and perspectives related to commercial parastatals' strategic management practices and their impact on performance, with KenGen as the primary case study. Descriptive research was well-suited for this exploration since it allows for in-depth data collection and analysis, making it ideal for understanding the complexities of strategic management and performance evaluation within the Kenyan public sector (Sileyew,2019). This research design aligns with the study's objectives by enabling a thorough examination of the subject, ultimately contributing to a holistic understanding of the relationship between strategic management and performance in KenGen and similar commercial parastatals in Kenya.

In this study, the study focused on customer relationship, information communication and technology, operations, finance, human resource, marketing, strategic planning departments and managers at KenGen head office in Nairobi as show in table 2 below;

Table 1: Target Population

Departments	No. of staff	Percentages
Managers	10	2.2
Legal	5	1.1
Procurement	54	12.1
Human Resource	56	12.5
Finance	45	10.1
Operations	67	15.0
ICT	47	10.5
Strategy/innovation	56	12.5
Commercial services	56	12.5
Business	51	11.4
Total	447	100

Source: Researcher

Using a proportionate approach, a specific number of participants from each department was randomly selected based on the department's size within the total population. This approach ensures that no department is over or under-represented in the sample, enhancing the overall representativeness and reducing the potential for bias. Stratified random sampling with a proportionate approach was, therefore, a suitable and justifiable method for selecting participants in this study, as it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the organization's various departments and their perspectives on strategic management and performance.

Using the Krejcer and Morgan table, the ideal sample size for this study was established (Brown, 2022). The sample size was calculated using the below formula taken from Suri (2020).

$$n = p \cdot (1-p) \cdot (z/E)^2$$

Where; n is the quantity of the sample,

With $p=0.5$ [for a 50% population proportion (447)]

$z \approx 1.282$ (for an 80% confidence level)

and $E=0.05$ (for a $\pm 5\%$ margin of error)

then value for n will be 121 participants.

A self-administered questionnaire was the study's main source of data. The questionnaire comprised closed-ended questions based on the objectives of the study.

Using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 23.0), descriptive statistics was used to analyse the quantitative data, which was collected through closed-ended questions. Percentages, frequency distributions, means, and standard deviation was used to present the data's findings. Tables where needed, were used to present the study's findings. The study used linear regression analysis to look at how the study variables relate to one another. The analysis of linear regression was advantageous to the study since it will help the researcher look at the historical correlations between the independent and dependent variables. The fundamental benefit of regression analysis is that it can demonstrate how much changes in the independent variables affect the dependent variable.

The following was the specification for the regression model;

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \epsilon$$

Where;

Y = performance of commercial parastatal

X_1 = IT Adoption

X_2 = strategic partnerships

X_3 = strategic customer experience management

X_4 = strategic team management

β_0 = Constant

$\beta_1 - \beta_4$ = Coefficients of independent variables

ϵ = Error term

4.0 Research findings

Out of a total of 121 questionnaires, 117 were returned, which corresponds to a response rate of approximately 96.69%. On the other hand, 6 questionnaires were not returned, accounting for the remaining 3.31% of the total.

4.1 Information technology adoption and performance of commercial parastatals

Table 2: Information Technology (IT) Adoption

Statements on Information Technology Adoption	Mean	Std. Deviation
Robust IT adoption can transform the effectiveness, innovation, security, and interoperability of commercial parastatals, driving high performance, growth, and success in the marketplace.	4.27	1.127
Strategic IT adoption can enhance the effectiveness, innovation, security, and interoperability of commercial parastatals, leading to improved performance and competitive advantage.	4.25	1.136
The impact of IT adoption on commercial parastatal performance can be mixed, as it can improve effectiveness and innovation but may also pose security and interoperability challenges.	4.14	1.146
Inadequate IT adoption can negatively impact the effectiveness, innovation, security, and interoperability of commercial parastatals, resulting in suboptimal performance and limited growth.	4.32	1.143
Poor IT adoption can severely hamper the effectiveness, innovation, security, and interoperability of commercial parastatals, leading to poor performance and negative outcomes.	4.17	1.322
Average mean	4.23	

According to the findings in table 2 above, on average of the respondents, strongly believe in the transformative power of robust IT adoption, as indicated by a mean score of 4.27. They also hold strategic IT adoption in high regard, with a mean score of 4.25, suggesting its potential to enhance various facets of commercial parastatals, including effectiveness, innovation, security, and interoperability, thereby leading to improved performance and competitive advantage. However, there is acknowledgment that the impact of IT adoption can be mixed, with a mean score of 4.14, signifying its potential to bring

both benefits and challenges, particularly in terms of security and interoperability. Furthermore, inadequate or poor IT adoption is seen as detrimental, with mean scores of 4.32 and 4.17, respectively, indicating the perceived negative consequences on effectiveness, innovation, security, interoperability, and overall performance within commercial parastatals. The average, these perceptions converge around a mean score of 4.23, underscoring the importance of strategic and robust IT adoption for realizing positive outcomes and competitive advantages in this sector. This finding was in line with the study of Chege, Wang & Suntu, (2020) that found out that IT innovation positively impacts operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and financial performance.

4.2 Strategic Partnerships and Performance of Commercial Parastatals

Table 3: strategic partnerships

Statements on strategic partnerships	Mean	Std. Deviation
The performance of commercial parastatals can be considerably improved through strategic alliances that foster synergy.	4.10	1.109
The success of strategic partnerships in commercial parastatals depends on partner alignment.	4.06	1.101
In order for strategic partnerships in commercial parastatals to succeed, collaboration between partners is crucial.	4.36	1.185
The performance of commercial parastatals can be improved by co-creation amongst partners, which is a potent method for fostering innovation.	4.29	1.225
Strategic alliances can, when done right, dramatically improve the performance of commercial parastatals.	4.26	1.254
Average mean	4.21	

According to the findings in table 3 above, the study found out that partnerships can significantly enhance the performance of commercial parastatals through the cultivation of synergy, evidenced by a mean score of 4.10. Moreover, partner alignment emerges as a critical determinant of strategic partnership success, as underscored by a mean score of 4.06. Collaboration between partners is deemed crucial for the success of strategic partnerships in commercial parastatals, reflecting a mean score of 4.36. The mean score of 4.29 highlights the potential of co-creation among partners as a potent avenue for fostering innovation and driving improved performance. Additionally, the statement that well-executed strategic alliances can substantially improve the performance of commercial parastatals is supported by a mean score of 4.26. Overall, these perceptions converge around an average mean score of 4.21, collectively underscoring the transformative potential of strategic partnerships when partner alignment, collaboration, and innovative co-creation are effectively harnessed to positively impact the performance of commercial parastatals. This finding was in line with the study of Clauss, et al. (2019) who discovered a strong correlation between business model innovation and company success, as well as a favorable relationship between strategic agility and both of these factors.

4.3 Strategic Customer Experience Management and Performance of Commercial Parastatals

Table 4: Strategic customer experience management

Statements on Strategic customer experience management	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organization that prioritizes responsiveness in customer experience management tend to perform better than those that do not.	4.32	1.143
Empathy is a critical component of customer experience management in organization performance.	4.10	1.109
Consistency in customer experience management is essential for organization to maintain a positive reputation and retain customers thus improves its performance	4.13	1.118
Clear communication is vital for successful customer experience management in organization performance.	4.37	1.157
Customer satisfaction and loyalty are key drivers of organization success, and a strong focus on customer experience management can help to differentiate an organization from its competitors	4.17	1.322
Average mean	4.22	

According to the findings in table 4. above, the organizations prioritizing responsiveness in customer experience management tend to outperform those that do not, as reflected in a mean score of 4.32. The importance of empathy in customer experience management, as indicated by a mean score of 4.10, underscores its role in enhancing organizational performance. Additionally, maintaining consistency in customer experience management is deemed essential for upholding a positive reputation, retaining customers, and ultimately improving performance, with a mean score of 4.13. Clear communication is recognized as a vital component for successful customer experience management and its positive impact on organizational performance, as highlighted by a mean score of 4.37. Furthermore, the strong linkage between customer satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational success is underscored, with a mean score of 4.17, emphasizing how a robust focus on customer experience management can differentiate an organization from its competitors. Collectively, these insights converge around an average mean score of 4.22, reaffirming the central role of strategic customer experience management in enhancing the performance of commercial parastatals. This finding was in line with the study of Holmlund, (2020) that found out that effective management of

customer data, the generation of actionable insights through analytics, and the orchestration of the customer experience across all touchpoints are necessary for the successful deployment of CEM in the age of big data analytics.

4.4 Strategic Team Management and Performance of Commercial Parastatals

Table 5: Strategic team management

Statement on Strategic team management	Mean	Std. Deviation
Empowering team members leads to engagement, motivation, and productivity, which can positively impact the performance of commercial parastatals.	4.14	1.136
Creating a culture of accountability among team members is crucial for achieving common goals and maintaining high performance in commercial parastatals.	4.27	1.127
Embracing diversity in team management leads to innovation, adaptability, and better customer service in commercial parastatals.	4.32	1.257
Engaged team members collaborate more effectively and work towards common goals, which can improve the performance of commercial parastatals.	4.10	1.109
The effectiveness and financial performance of commercial parastatals can be significantly impacted by effective team management since it fosters effective leadership, teamwork, and goal achievement	4.13	1.118
Average mean	4.19	

From the findings in table 5 above, the study found that empowering team members, leading to engagement, motivation, and productivity, can indeed yield a positive impact on the performance of commercial parastatals, reflected in a mean score of 4.14. Creating a culture of accountability among team members is perceived as crucial for achieving shared objectives and upholding high performance, as emphasized by a mean score of 4.27. The acknowledgment of the value of diversity in team management is evident in a mean score of 4.32, highlighting its role in fostering innovation, adaptability, and enhanced customer service within commercial parastatals. Moreover, the correlation between engaged team members and effective collaboration in achieving common goals, thereby enhancing performance, is affirmed by a mean score of 4.10. The potential impact of strategic team management on the effectiveness and financial performance of commercial parastatals is emphasized through its facilitation of effective leadership, teamwork, and goal achievement, as indicated by a mean score of 4.13. These insights converge around an average mean score of 4.19, collectively highlighting the pivotal role of strategic team management in elevating the performance of commercial parastatals through empowerment, accountability, diversity, collaboration, and effective leadership. This finding was in line with the study of Lerai, Rintari and Moguche, (2023) that found out that strategic planning has a considerable impact on the financial and non-financial performance of these parastatals.

4.5 Performance of Commercial Parastatal

Table 4.4.5: performance of commercial parastatal

Statement on performance of commercial parastatal	Mean	Std. Deviation
The organization's ability to optimize processes and reduce waste and improve customer satisfaction.	4.27	1.127
There are high customer retention rates in the organization.	4.27	1.127
The commercial parastatal is performing better than industry standards in terms of sustainability showing promising signs of success.	4.17	1.322
The commercial parastatal is meeting industry standards in terms of growth.	4.06	1.101
The commercial parastatal is making some efforts towards market share.	4.36	1.185
Average mean	4.23	

From the findings of table 6 above, the study found out that the organization has the ability to optimize processes, reduce waste, and improve customer satisfaction, as indicated by a mean score of 4.27. This is closely aligned with the perception of high customer retention rates within the organization, also scoring a mean of 4.27. Furthermore, the organization is seen as showing promise in terms of sustainability, performing better than industry standards in this regard, with a mean score of 4.17. However, there's room for improvement in terms of growth, as the organization is perceived as meeting industry standards in this aspect, with a mean score of 4.06. On a more positive note, the commercial parastatal is making commendable efforts towards gaining market share, as reflected in the highest mean score of 4.36. The average mean scores of 4.23, collectively suggesting that the commercial parastatal is performing well and showing potential for continued success in various aspects of its operations, including customer satisfaction, sustainability, and market share expansion.

Inferential Statistics,

Model Summary

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.963 ^a	.928	.925	.21063

The model exhibits a high level of explanatory power, with an R-squared value of 0.928 (Adjusted R-Square = 0.925), indicating that it accounts for 92.8% of the variance in performance of KenGen. It is important to acknowledge that there were additional factors beyond the four considered in this model that may contribute to enhancing KenGen's performance. As Suri, (2020) suggests, even a lower R-squared value ranging from 0.10 to 0.20 is deemed acceptable in social science research. This implies that the identified four factors: IT Adoption, strategic partnerships, strategic customer experience management, and strategic team management, collectively explain 92.8% of the relationship under investigation. The remaining 7.2% of the variance in performance of KenGen was attributed to other unexamined factors that exert influence strategic management practices on performance of KenGen not studied in this study.

ANOVA

Table 8: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	63.584	4	15.896	358.302	.000 ^b
	Residual	4.969	112	.044		
	Total	68.552	116			

To assess the significance of the dependent variable, an F-test was employed with a significance level $\alpha = 0.05$. The F test statistic of =0.05 with degree of freedom in the numerator $df=K-1$, therefore $5-1=4$, and denominator $df=n-k$, thus $117-5=112$ is 2.03. As a result, because $358.302 > 2.03$, the regression model is clearly significant. Therefore, the significance level, denoted as Sig., is exceptionally low at .000b, signifying an extremely strong statistical significance thus, model was right to be applied to estimating performance of KenGen.

Coefficients of Regression

Table 4.14: Coefficients of regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.129	.216		.596	.553
IT Adoption	.644	.078	.330	8.266	.000
Strategic partnerships	.665	.047	.947	14.223	.000
Strategic Customer experience management	.181	.073	.185	2.463	.015
Strategic team management	.456	.087	.325	5.227	.000

$$y = .129 + .644x_1 + .665x_2 + .181x_3 + .456x_4 + \varepsilon$$

The analysis of the coefficients yields the following significant findings:

The intercept (Constant) stands at 0.129, representing the expected outcome variable value when all predictor variables are zero.

Concerning "IT Adoption," the unstandardized coefficient is 0.644, indicating that a one-unit increase in IT Adoption corresponds to a 0.644 increase in the outcome variable. The high t-statistic of 8.266 and a p-value of 0.000 indicate strong statistical significance.

For "Strategic partnerships," the unstandardized coefficient is 0.665, implying a 0.665 increase in the outcome variable with a one-unit change. The notably high t-statistic of 14.223 and a p-value of 0.000 signify strong statistical significance.

"Strategic Customer experience management" exhibits an unstandardized coefficient of 0.181, signifying a 0.181 increase in the outcome variable with a one-unit change, while the t-statistic of 2.463 results in a p-value of 0.015, confirming its statistical significance.

Conversely, for "Strategic team management," the unstandardized coefficient is 0.456, suggesting a 0.456 increase in the outcome variable with a one-unit change. The t-statistic of 5.227 and a p-value of 0.000 reiterate its strong statistical significance.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

In this study conducted in KenGen four key objectives were explored to understand their influence on the performance of commercial parastatals. First, information technology adoption was found to have a transformative potential, with both positive and negative consequences, and key barriers included limited IT infrastructure and resistance to change. Second, strategic partnerships were seen to significantly enhance performance through synergy, with partner alignment, collaboration, and well-executed alliances as critical factors for success. Third, prioritizing customer-centric approaches in strategic

customer experience management led to better performance, emphasizing elements such as empathy and clear communication. Lastly, effective strategic team management, which included empowering team members and promoting collaboration, positively impacted performance by enhancing communication and decision-making within commercial parastatals.

Recommendations

To harness the transformative potential of IT adoption, KenGen should focus on upgrading its IT infrastructure, fostering a culture of innovation, and providing regular IT training to bridge skill gaps. This involves conducting an IT audit, allocating a dedicated budget, and ensuring security protocols and interoperability. A Partnership Task Force should be promptly established to identify potential partners, formalize agreements, and conduct biannual collaboration reviews to ensure successful strategic partnerships. A dedicated Customer Experience Management (CEM) team should be formed, emphasizing empathy and responsiveness in customer interactions, and implementing feedback mechanisms and training programs for consistency. In parallel, KenGen should develop leadership training programs, adopt a diversity-focused hiring strategy, and initiate team-building activities to enhance team collaboration and motivation, all supported by senior management and facilitated by HR. These strategic initiatives, guided by specific timelines, aim to enhance KenGen's overall performance and sustainability.

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