STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHERS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own original work and has not been submitted for examination or award of a degree in any other university.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear wife, Elizabeth Mumbe, and my children, David Sila and Michael Muasa, who have been very supportive and a continuous source of great motivation throughout my academic journey. God bless you for standing with me during this tough but rewarding endeavour.

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ABSTRACT

Performance is one of the challenges facing organizations in today's dynamic business environment with strategic leadership being viewed as one of the best leadership styles fit for such organizations to survive. The broad objective of this study was to determine the influence of strategic leadership on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to establish the influence of strategic direction, discuss the influence of organizational culture, and assess the influence of resource portfolio on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. The study also sought to examine the combined influence of strategic leadership on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. The study was anchored on Strategic Leadership Theory, positivist philosophy, and correlational research design respectively. The target population for the study was 218 staff who included the top leaders, managers, and technical staff in the publishing and production departments of 32 educational publishers operating in Nairobi County that were registered members of the Kenya Publishers Association. Quantitative data was collected using a closed-ended questionnaire administered on 139 respondents in 9 companies which were selected using purposive sampling technique. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 29 for descriptive and inferential statistics and the results were presented in tables. The results of the study showed that, among the indicators of strategic leadership, strategic direction had the highest correlation with performance ($r=0.734$, $r^2=0.539$) followed by organizational culture ($r=0.726$, $r^2=0.527$) and then resource portfolio ($r=0.718$, $r^2=0.516$). A combination of the three indicators of strategic leadership increased the correlation with performance ($r=0.829$, $r^2=0.687$). The findings of this study support the need to put strategic leaders in charge of educational publishers and equip them with the necessary skills in providing strategic direction, nurturing organizational culture, and managing organizational resources.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIC	:	Africa Inland Church
ANOVA	:	Analysis of Variance
BSC	:	Balanced Scorecard
CBC	:	Competency Based Curriculum
CBE	:	Competency Based Education
KPA	:	Kenya Publishers Association
Ltd	:	Limited
MSMEs	:	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NACOSTI	:	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
NIC Bank	:	National Industrial Credit Bank
NGOs	:	Non-Governmental Organizations
PAC	:	Pan Africa Christian
PCA	:	Principal Component Analysis
SACCOs	:	Savings and Credit Cooperatives
SD	:	Standard Deviation
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Fund

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Balanced Scorecard

This is a model developed by Kaplan and Norton (1996, in Ng'ang'a, 2018) as a framework to translate a firm's vision and strategy into a set of performance measures. The performance of an organization is viewed from four perspectives (Kaplan & Norton, 1996, in Munyao et al, 2020), namely: Financial perspective (how an organization looks to shareholders), Customer perspective (how the customers see an organization), Internal business processes perspective (what an organization must excel at), and Learning and growth perspective (whether an organization can continue to improve and create value). In this study, the balanced scorecard is used as a way of measuring an organization's performance.

Educational Publishers

This refers to the publishing businesses aimed at providing books to primary and secondary schools (Kovač & Šebart, 2019). In this study, the term educational publishers was used to mean publishers who supply books to primary and secondary schools in Kenya as opposed to trade publishers whose target audience is the general population, and academic publishers whose target audience is higher educational institutions.

Organizational Culture

This is a set of shared philosophies, assumptions, expectations, attitudes, values, and norms that bind an organization together (AlSaied & Alkhoraif, 2024). In this study, organizational culture was used to define how members of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya think, feel, and act as they interact with one another and with their external environment.

Organizational Performance

This is the ability of an organization to achieve its goals, which ensures its growth and long-term survival (Demeke & Tao, 2020). The term was used to refer to the ability of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya to efficiently utilize their resources in order to realize their objectives and keep the stakeholders satisfied.

Resource Portfolio

This includes capital, human resource and technology that an organization mobilizes and utilizes to perform its functions (Ng'ang'a, 2018). In this study, resource portfolio encompassed the essential resources that an educational publisher operating in Nairobi County in Kenya employs in order to perform optimally.

Strategic Direction

It is the formulation and attainment of an organization's vision, mission, core values and objectives (Ng'ang'a, 2018). In this study, the term strategic direction was used to mean the path educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya take to meet their goals.

Strategic Leadership

This refers to a leader's resolve to fulfil responsibilities in a proactive, forward-thinking way that guarantees a secure future for everyone in an organization (Li et al., 2022). In this study, strategic leadership was used to embody the style of leadership that points educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya in the right direction, nurtures the necessary organizational culture, and ensures prudent use of available resources.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

This study attempted to establish the link that exists between strategic leadership and the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County, Kenya. Chapter One provides a background to the study, the statement of the problem, the general as well as the specific objectives of the study, the research hypotheses, and the assumptions of the study. Towards the end, the chapter provides the justification of the study, the study's significance and scope, and the limitations and delimitations. The chapter then ends with a summary.

Background to the Study

The problem of unsustainable performance of organizations has been experienced across the globe. As Ebele et al. (2023) found out, the world's largest organizations proactively install top management team positions to sustain performance. The phenomenon of poor organizational performance is evident among publishers the world over. A study by Clark (2013) on the sudden rise and fall of Douglas & McIntyre attributed the demise of the Western Canadian regional educational publisher to pedagogical change, competition from American subsidiaries and other multinational firms, limitations on access to capital funding, and a change in Ministry of Education textbook policies.

Rens et al. (2021) article on why most African companies fail puts the blame solely on entrepreneurs and their poor performance in terms of business execution. Shercliff (2015) examined the state of publishing in West Africa with a focus on Nigeria, and reported that the sale of books is impeded by poor reading culture as only less than 10 percent of the population buys books after they have left school or

college because the people seek entertainment in the form of home movies, social media, and television. A more recent study by Paul and Olumuyiwa (2024) found a strong correlation between customer loyalty and organizational performance of publishing companies in the south-western region of Nigeria, which underscored the need for leadership that would nurture customer loyalty as a fundamental driver for sustained profitability and organizational success in the publishing industry.

A few studies have been conducted in Kenya in the past about the woes of publishers with a focus on how leadership can pull them out of their difficult situations. Mauti (2025) found that the Kenyan publishing industry faces significant challenges due to the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) transition, government tendering policies, digital competition, and increased market competition. The research recommends the implementation of a strategic customer relationship management framework as the key solution to the obtaining disruptions, which includes enhanced customer communication, proactive customer service, strategic customer segmentation, regional market expansion, digital content integration, and brand and image building.

Moruri et al. (2020) sought to link employees' performance to organizational factors in the publishing department of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Kenya. They concluded that for organizations to enhance employee performance and improve their productivity, there is a need to focus on employee skills development, employee motivation programs, career development initiatives, recognition systems, and the promotion of a culture of openness. The prescribed interventions on publishers' failures require proactive stewardship by top leadership, hence the need to carry out a

study on the influence of strategic leadership on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Educational publishers play a very important role in their effort of supporting education systems through the provision of learning materials that, consequently, contribute to improved learning. In Nairobi County in Kenya, companies including those in the publishing industry, conduct business in a very competitive and rapidly changing business environment (Musamali et al., 2019; Mnyazi & Makhamara, 2023). This calls for a strong and effective leadership to ensure organizational performance and sustainability.

Despite the importance of strategic leadership, many educational publishers in Nairobi County in Kenya have continued to register inconsistent performance manifesting in reduced profitability, low employee morale, and challenges in adapting to digital publishing emerging trends. For example, in a previous study that was conducted to determine the effect of recycling strategy on performance of publishing firms in Kenya, Muo and Sei (2023) discovered that the majority of the publishing firms were facing performance challenges as a result of increasing cost as well as scarcity of raw materials for publishing and losses occasioned by many of the published materials not being bought. In another study to determine the influence of working capital management on the financial performance of Longhorn Publishers Limited in Kenya, Daudi (2021) found out that the organization was facing performance challenges brought about by piracy and taxation. If these challenges are not dealt with now, publishing companies will continue to close down with many of their employees losing income.

This study also became necessary because previous studies had not addressed existing conceptual, contextual, methodological, and knowledge gaps. Conceptually, Alayoubi et al. (2020) conducted a study to determine the role of strategic leadership practices and their relationship to improving the quality of educational service in Palestinian universities while Haessler (2020) did a study on strategic decisions between short-term profit and sustainability in Germany. The two studies used different concepts as was used in the current study, therefore raising a conceptual gap that was filled in this study by using strategic leadership and performance as the main variables.

Yet, other scholars investigated varying concepts such as growth of customer base (Waihenya et al., 2018), and strategy implementation (Muasya, 2017) and their relationship to strategic leadership. In another study, Mauti (2025) used customer relations management as its independent variable while the current study used strategic leadership as the independent variable. It is worth noting that none of the above studies focused on the influence of strategic leadership on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya and, therefore, presenting a conceptual gap that the current study sought to fill.

Contextually, the majority of the researchers had done their studies in other contexts than where the current study was carried out. For example, El-Aidie et al. (2021) studied the role strategic leadership played in tourism sustainability and competitiveness in the United Arab Emirates, Muasya (2017) researched on the role of strategic leadership in effective strategy implementation in Somalia, while Mukhezakule and Tefera (2019) investigated the relationship between corporate strategy, strategic leadership and sustainable performance in aviation industry in South Africa. The above studies present a contextual gap in that they were done in

different contexts and not in educational publishing organizations in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Regarding methodological gaps, the majority of the previous studies had used different methods from the ones selected for this study. For instance, some of the previous studies had employed the descriptive research design (Munyao, 2021), and explanatory research design (Mailu & Kariuki, 2022), while the current study will use correlational research design, which puts particular focus on the change that would occur in the performance of organizations in response to the interventions by strategic leaders of such organizations.

On knowledge gaps, a considerable attention has been given to the challenges faced by enterprises in information technology, communications and financial services sectors with no particular focus on educational publishing industry (Suryono et al., 2020). Additionally, quite a good number of studies had been done on general publishing firms in Kenya. For instance, Mauti (2025) conducted a study to establish the influence of customer relationship management practices on the performance of publishing firms in Kenya. The study covered publishing firms in general as opposed to educational publishers as was the case in the current study. This therefore meant that, the findings could not adequately be applied in the educational publishing firms.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to determine the influence of strategic leadership on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Establish the influence of strategic direction on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

2. Discuss the influence of organizational culture on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.
3. Assess the influence of organizational resource portfolio on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.
4. Examine the combined influence of strategic leadership on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Research Hypotheses

This study sought to test the following null hypotheses:

H_{01} Strategic direction has no significant influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

H_{02} Organizational culture has no significant influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

H_{03} Organizational resource portfolio has no significant influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

H_{04} Strategic leadership has no significant combined influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Assumptions of the Study

There were various assumptions that this study made. Firstly, the study assumed that there exists a significant positive relationship between strategic leadership and the performance of educational publishing organizations in Nairobi County, Kenya. Secondly, this study assumed that it is the top executives in the publishing organizations that make the most defining strategic decisions that boost their

organizations' performance. It was further assumed that organizational environment of educational publishers in Nairobi County in Kenya would remain relatively stable during the period of data collection so that it would not significantly distort the findings of the study. It was also assumed that the data collection instruments that were used in the study were reliable and valid in assessing the influence that strategic leadership practices had on organizational performance. Again, it was assumed that the performance indicators used in this study such as financial perspective and customer perspective among others adequately represent the performance of educational publishing firms. Lastly, it was assumed that the data collected from sampled educational publishing firms were representative of the broader population of educational publishers in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Justification for the Study

From a theoretical perspective, this study is justified because it extends strategic leadership theory to the educational publishing industry where its influence will be tested. As Maharani et al. (2024) explain, although leadership theories such as the Upper Echelons Theory, Strategic Leadership Theory, and Resource-Based View Theory emphasize leadership as a key player in determining organizational performance, much of previous studies are generally conceptualized and majorly done from Western countries. The study, therefore, adds theoretical strength to the existing body of knowledge by carrying it out in a context-specific framework; in this case, educational publishers in Nairobi County in Kenya.

From an empirical justification perspective, a majority of previous studies on strategic leadership and performance have majorly been conducted in sectors such as County Governments (Hantiro & Maina, 2020) and micro and small enterprises (Kimani, 2015), leaving the educational publishing sector empirically under-

researched despite its role in and contribution to human capital development through the provision of instructional materials. Generally, there is limited empirical evidence that links strategic leadership practices such as strategic direction, organizational culture, and resource portfolio in publishing industry in Kenya. This study is therefore justified for it sought to fill a critical knowledge gap by generating evidence-based insights specific to educational publishers that are operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Contextually, this study was justified because Nairobi County, where the study was conducted, serves as a key hub for Kenya's publishing industry for it hosts major local and international publishers. This context characterized by curriculum reforms, digital transformation, heightened competition, and regulation by government agencies calls for strategic leadership capable of navigating uncertainty, innovation, and sustainability (Qiao & Hong, 2024). Doing the study in Nairobi County enables the capturing of leadership practices where the publishing industry is most concentrated besides generating findings that are directly relevant to policy and publishing industry stakeholders.

Moreover, previous empirical studies on the relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance to a great extent have been conducted in other contexts. For example, Orenge et al. (2024) carried out a study with the aim of determining the role of strategic leadership management on the performance of non-profit organizations in Kenya. Although this study used similar concepts like the ones used in the current study, the context was non-profit organizations in Kenya while the current study was done in educational publishers in Nairobi County, Kenya. This presented a contextual gap that this study sought to fill. The absence of studies that have been done in the context of educational publishers in Nairobi County in Kenya

presents a knowledge gap that limits leaders and policy makers in developing policies from an informed stand-point that can contribute to organizational improvement. The adverse effect of this is that educational publishers may remain both ineffective and misdirected making them lose revenue and profit and, consequently, close down.

Significance of the Study

This study on the influence of strategic leadership in educational publishers in Nairobi County in Kenya would benefit several stakeholders such as researchers, policy makers, and organizational leaders. To researchers and policy makers, it would open up an often-ignored frontier of inquiry into the need for strategic leadership that steers publishing organizations to success. To organizational leaders and stakeholders in publishing, it would enhance leadership by painting a true picture of the environment educational publishers operate in, exposing the real reason for their stagnation and collapse, and suggesting intervention measures to lift organizations to high performance levels. It would emphasize the need to put strategic leaders in charge of publishing businesses and equip them with the necessary skills and experience in strategy formulation and implementation, cultivation of organizational culture, and resource mobilization and management. The study would also inspire further inquiry at a local level and in an area that constitutes a base for knowledge dissemination.

Scope of the Study

This study confined itself to educational publishing organizations domiciled in and operating in Nairobi County in Kenya, focusing on the role strategic leadership plays in ensuring that such organizations perform well. In terms of theory, this study primarily relied on Strategic Leadership Theory, while the philosophical approach

was positivism due to the quantitative nature of the study. Strategic Leadership Theory and positivism research philosophy were best suited for this study.

This study sought to determine the influence of strategic leadership on the performance of educational publishing organizations in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study had two variables: strategic leadership as the independent variable and performance of educational publishing organizations as the dependent variable. Strategic leadership was measured using strategic direction, organizational culture, and resource portfolio (Mintzberg, 1994, in Munyao, 2021). The performance of educational publishers was measured using the four elements of the Balanced Scorecard which are financial perspective, customer perspective, internal business processes perspective, and learning and growth perspective (Kaplan & Norton, 2006, in Munyao, 2021). Using more variables could make the study too wide to manage and produce reliable results.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations are 'imposed' restrictions concerning the chosen research design, statistical model constraints, funding constraints, or other factors beyond the researcher's control. In contrast, delimitations are restrictions that, although within the researchers' control, are consciously set by the researchers themselves as the boundaries or limits of their work so that their study's aims and objectives do not become impossible to achieve (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019).

A major limitation was the inability of the researcher to be involved in certain relevant processes in the organizations targeted. These include meetings, strategic planning, hiring and training of staff, and research and development to improve product offering and service delivery. This was overcome by seeking permission to

access photocopies, scans and screenshots of relevant documents on the said processes.

The accuracy of the data collected was likely to be limited by the supply of inaccurate and insufficient information. This would occur if the respondents or participants failed to understand the questions fully or decided to censor such information to cover up certain failures in their organizations. This limitation was overcome by impressing it upon the respondents to give adequate data that would contribute to the development of ideal solutions to their industry woes.

The researcher limited oneself to strategic leadership among educational publishers in Nairobi County in Kenya. The focus on educational publishers rather than on all publishing businesses could be explained in the sense that educational publishing was, at the time of this study, the mainstay of most publishing companies in Kenya due to the provision of government funds to the Ministry of Education to procure books for basic education schools. The choice of publishers in Nairobi County was influenced by the fact that most of these publishers were domiciled or had representative offices in Kenya's capital city. Further, publishers registered with KPA were targeted due to their traceability, particularly because their membership in the umbrella publishing association was encouraged – and at times demanded – by the book evaluation regulatory body, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development.

Chapter Summary

This chapter on the introduction and background to the study started by presenting the background to the study followed by the statement of the problem. The chapter also presented the general as well as the specific objectives of the study, the research hypotheses, the study assumptions, justification, significance, and scope. The

chapter also presented the limitations and delimitations of the study before concluding with a chapter summary. The following chapter is on literature review.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter on literature review starts by presenting conceptual literature review guided by the variables of the study (strategic leadership and performance) followed by empirical literature review which is presented based on the objectives of the study while using the funnel-shape approach. The chapter also presents the theories that underpin the study under the theoretical framework section. The conceptual framework that illustrates the relationship between the variables and their measurable elements is also presented in the chapter. The chapter identifies the research gaps regarding the relationship between strategic leadership and performance as it pertains to educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. The chapter then ends with a summary.

Conceptual Literature Review

The following sub-section provided a conceptual literature review of both strategic leadership and performance and their corresponding measurable elements.

Strategic Leadership

Samimi et al. (2022) have noted a persistent lack of consensus on the concept of Strategic Leadership. They have attempted to address this discord by offering an integrative framework of strategic leadership which provides answers to the questions of what strategic leadership is, what strategic leaders do, why they do it, and how they do it. Strategic leadership, they write, refers to leadership at the top levels of an organization.

Strategic leadership, the independent variable in this study, is measured using five elements; determining strategic direction, establishing balanced organizational

controls, managing the organization's resource portfolio, sustaining an effective organizational culture, and emphasizing ethical practices (Ng'ang'a, 2018; Munyao et al., 2020). However, three of these aspects were discussed in this study as they affect the quest for and bear significant influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers. These are strategic direction, organizational culture, and resource portfolio.

Strategic direction entails formulating and attaining an organization's vision, mission, core values and objectives (Ng'ang'a, 2018). As Munyao et al. (2020) argued, strategic direction plays a pivotal role in increasing performance. A study by Muasya (2017) demonstrated that strategic leadership is vital for strategy implementation. Strategic leaders steer their organizations in the right direction since they are the vision-bearers of such organizations, and as such, they spearhead the planning process to ensure productivity.

An organization devoid of a culture can be equated to a tall building without columns to hold the walls and slabs together. According to Assoratgoon and Kantabutra (2023), organizational culture is a set of shared philosophies, assumptions, expectations, attitudes, values, and norms that bind an organization together. It is the glue that joins people together giving them a unity of purpose. With such unity, the people are able to adapt to the external environment and achieve internal integration (Norman et al., 2022), which gives them the impetus to overcome or even forestall any difficult circumstances in their quest for high performance.

Resources are to an organization what fuel and essential oils are to a motorized vessel, for without them, the organization's clarity of direction and solidity of culture will come to nought. Ng'ang'a (2018) identifies such elements of an

organization's resource portfolio as capital, human resource and technology. Resources are also categorized as tangible resources, intangible resources, human resources, and capabilities (Ongeti & Machuki, 2018). Munyao et al. (2020) emphasize that for resources to contribute to performance, their proper use must be observed. It is incumbent upon leaders to manage the resource portfolio so that their organizations perform optimally. The importance of a study on the interplay among strategic direction, organizational culture and the use of resources on the one hand and performance on the other cannot be gainsaid.

Organizational Performance

In this study, the performance of educational publishing organizations in Nairobi County in Kenya was the study's dependent variable. This study adopted the definition of organizational performance by Demeke and Tao (2020) as the ability of an organization to achieve its goals, which ensures its growth and long-term survival. An organization can be said to perform well if it efficiently utilizes its resources in order to realize its objectives and keep the stakeholders satisfied.

Performance needs to be measured to ensure that an organization is on the right track. Kaplan and Norton (1992) and Kaplan & Norton (2005, in Munyao et al., 2020) proposed an innovative way of measuring a company's performance. Terming it the "Balanced Scorecard", this measure helps leaders look at their businesses from four essential viewpoints, namely; how an organization looks to shareholders (Financial perspective), how the customers see an organization (Customer perspective), what an organization must excel at (Internal business processes perspective), and whether an organization can continue to improve and create value (Learning and growth perspective). These perspectives, the authors opine, should

guide executives to determine whether improvements in one area have come at the expense of another, hence the need to balance them.

Kaplan and Norton (1996, in Ng'ang'a, 2018) explain that the balanced scorecard (BSC) offers a wide-ranging framework to translate a firm's vision and strategy into a set of sound performance measures. It defines the objectives and actions needed to achieve the organization's mission. These objectives are organized into four perspectives: financial, customer, internal business processes, and learning and growth. Financial objectives manifest in profitability often measured by return on investment and economic value added. Customer-based objectives are measured using the extent of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, customer retention, customer acquisition, and customer profitability, and the size of market share realized (Utami et al., 2023). Internal-business-process objectives are measured by gauging the quality of products and services, length of time taken to respond to customer needs, cost of the necessary internal processes, and the rate of new product introductions. Additionally, Utami et al. (2023) explain that learning and growth objectives are measured using the extent of employee satisfaction, retention, training and skills, and availability of capable information systems to employees to make accurate decisions and take necessary actions.

The BSC can help overcome the tendency to view business success in terms of profits realized. Granted, the financial perspective is an important measure of performance as it reflects the extent of return on investment and capital employed. However, as Hutchinson (2013) observes, BSC goes beyond the financial measure to include an evaluation of how stakeholder interests are satisfied. A crucial question to ask is whether an organization is a compelling place for a shareholder to invest, a customer to shop, and an employee to work. Abhayawansa (2022) points out a key

limitation of the financial perspective, that it relies on financial data which captures the organization's past performance. Therefore, to achieve a balance in the measurement of performance, the three other perspectives ought to be considered. Kaplan and Norton (2006, in Ng'ang'a, 2018) advise that shareholder expectations for financial performance must align with value creation for customers, the management of certain internal business processes, and the development of intangible assets – people, systems, and culture.

Empirical Literature Review

This sub-section provides an empirical literature review of strategic direction, organizational culture, and resource portfolio as they relate to and spur performance.

Strategic Direction and Organizational Performance

Several studies have attributed organizational performance to strategic direction. In a study that explored the relationship between strategic thinking and the sustainable performance of theological schools in the United States and Canada, Meinzer (2019) underscores the need for leaders who can inject strategic thinking that ensures the appropriation of money and other resources. El-Aidie et al. (2021) have endeavored to uncover the impact of effective strategic planning on the sustainability of performance in tourism sector organizations in the United Arab Emirates. They administered a closed-ended questionnaire to randomly selected respondents in tourism institutions. They conclude that sustainable performance in such organizations requires strategic leaders who can support effective strategic planning. It would be more satisfying to uncover the role strategic thinkers play in other corporate segments than theological schools and tourism.

Muasya (2017) studied the role of leadership in strategy implementation at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Somalia. The researcher used descriptive research design, and stratified sampling to pick a sample for a self-administered questionnaire. The findings indicate that strategic direction is vital for strategy implementation, as strategic leaders spearhead the strategic planning and its implementation process. In a different study related to strategy implementation, Mukhezakule and Tefera (2019) covered the relationship between corporate strategy, strategic leadership and sustainable performance in the aviation sector in South Africa. They collected data using both the questionnaire and interview techniques. They emphasize the need for the airlines to have strategic leaders who are effective in designing and implementing strategies. There is need to find out how the quest for strategic direction inspires effective strategic planning and implementation among publishers in Africa, and particularly in Kenya. Further, the studies by Muasya (2017) and Mukhezakule and Tefera (2019) did not use the same variables as are used in this study.

In Kenya, various studies have featured strategic direction and organizational performance of commercial-based organizations. Lerai et al. (2023) sought to trace the relationship between strategic direction and organizational performance of commercial-based parastatals in Kenya. Employing descriptive research design, and using a self-administered structured questionnaire, the researchers found a significant positive relationship between strategic direction and organizational performance where the study was carried out. Munyao et al. (2020) studied the effects of strategic direction on the performance of Africa Inland Church (AIC) theological training institutions in Kenya. They used the descriptive survey design and collected data using both closed and open-ended questionnaires administered to samples selected

using purposive stratified random sampling methods. The study found out that strategic direction had a positive effect on the performance of AIC theological training institutions in Kenya. The above studies did not include the context of educational publishing organizations, which necessitated the current study.

Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance

Various studies have identified organizational culture as having positive influence on performance (Akpa et al., 2021; Chelangat, 2022; Jahya et al., 2020; Mathew, 2019; Stauffer & Maxwell, 2020; Yusuf, 2020). In one of the previous empirical studies, Mathew (2019) carried out an ethnographic study to evaluate the theorized relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness in an Indian knowledge-intensive firm. The researcher concludes that appropriate cultures are crucial for effectiveness, especially in knowledge-intensive firms. Although the current study focused on knowledge-work firms, it instead employed a correlational research design. Further, the study by Mathew (2019) was done in India while the current study was done in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Menesha (2020) examined the influence of organizational culture on performance in Debre Berhan University in Ethiopia. The study employed a descriptive and explanatory research design, with data collected using questionnaires administered to the university's academic, administrative and technical assistant staff, and analyzed using SPSS. The study concluded that organizational culture influences performance. The context of the study by Menesha (2020) was a public university in Amhara, Ethiopia, whereas that of the current study was educational publishing firms in Nairobi, Kenya. The study by Menesha (2020) used descriptive research design while the current one used correlational research design.

In their study involving syntheses of the relevant literature, Akpa et al. (2021) report that if employees have the same norms and value as the organization, this gives them a sense of identity, and it could increase performance towards achieving the overall organization goals. Chelangat (2022) carried out a conceptual review of literature on the relationship between organizational culture and performance, targeting the influence between culture orientation and quality management practices. The study found out that existing literature strongly agree that both quality management practices and organizational culture enhance the performance of a firm. The study suggested a need for a mediating role of organizational culture for optimal performance of organizations.

Odhiambo (2016) sought to find out the extent of the influence of organizational culture on employee performance at NIC Bank in Kenya. Employing a descriptive survey design, the researcher administered questionnaires to a sample selected through purposive and stratified random sampling. The study established that employees performed better when guided by rules, policies, espoused beliefs and values. Mwangi and Waithaka (2018) studied the relationship between power culture, task culture, person culture and role culture and the performance of public universities in the Mount Kenya region. They collected both quantitative and qualitative data from deans, departmental heads and student leaders using questionnaires and interviews. The study found a positive and significant influence of organizational culture on the performance of public universities in Kenya. These two studies focused on banks and institutions of higher learning respectively, but the current study focused on publishers in Nairobi County in Kenya. The study by Odhiambo (2016) used descriptive research design while the current study used correlational research design which presented a methodological gap.

Resource Portfolio and Organizational Performance

Ahmed and Othman (2017) carried out a review of literature on the relationship between organizational resources and performance in the banking sector in Pakistan. They relied on the Resource-Based View Theory to construct a conceptual model and analyzed various secondary data sources. They proposed the mediating influence of organizational innovation on the relationship between organizational commitment, organizational culture, employer branding and the performance of the banking sector of Pakistan. The study relied on secondary sources and targeted the banking sector in Pakistan. The current study relied on both secondary as well as primary data and targeted the publishing sector in Kenya. Additionally, the study by Ahmed and Othman (2017) was anchored on Resource-Based View Theory while the current study selected Strategic Leadership Theory.

Daniel (2019) studied the effects of human capital development on performance in Trustfund Pension Limited of Abuja, Nigeria. Employing a descriptive design, the researcher collected data using questionnaires and a review of secondary data. The study reported that efficient human capital development enhances an organization's productivity and spurs its growth. The study focused on the financial sector in Nigeria, whereas the current study targeted the educational publishers in Kenya. In terms of methodology, the study by Daniel (2019) used descriptive research design as opposed to the current study that used correlational research design. Again, Daniel (2019) used human capital as the independent variable in the study while the current study used resource portfolio as the independent variable.

Ongeti and Machuki (2018) studied the influence of organizational resources on the performance of State Corporations in Kenya. They did a cross-sectional

descriptive survey and collected primary data using a semi-structured questionnaire. They found a significant relationship between organizational resources and performance, concluding that resources possessed by organizations lead to performance. Miriti and Karithi (2020) studied the effect the access to donor funds, the monitoring of such funds, and government policies on donor funding have on the sustainability of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They found that access to such funds, accountability over the funds, and government policies on donor funding and resources had a significant relationship with the sustainability of NGOs. These studies did not cover the performance of educational publishing organizations in Kenya, which is the focus of the current study. Methodologically, the study by Ongeti and Machuki (2018) used cross-sectional descriptive survey research design while the current study used correlational research design.

Strategic Leadership and Organizational Performance

An article by Papadionysiou and Myloni (2023) sought to examine the interrelations between organizational culture-related dimensions and human resource management practices-related dimensions, and their impact on performance in Greece and Scandinavia. The scholars employed a mixed methods approach and, through a questionnaire, collected data which they analyzed using SPSS to test hypotheses and correlations between the dimensions. They discovered a positive relationship between organizational culture and human resource management practices, and firms' performance in different countries such as Greece and Scandinavia. This study tested organizational culture dimensions such as pro-activity, obligation towards others, responsibility seeking, and participation whereas the current study tested the strategic direction, organizational culture, and resource portfolio. Moreover, the study by Papadionysiou and Myloni (2023) targeted human resource aspects only in Greece

and Scandinavia while the current study went beyond human resource to include capital resources and technology in Kenya.

In a study done in Africa, Onu et al. (2018) sought to identify the relationship between strategic leadership and performance of some selected manufacturing companies in Nigeria. The researchers collected data using questionnaires administered to samples selected using proportional sampling technique, and the data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The research found out that for organizations to succeed, strategists in leadership positions had to adequately perform tasks such as establishing strategic direction, fostering an effective organizational culture, exploiting core competencies in an organization, exercising organizational controls, and instituting ethical practices. This study did not bring out the tasks of strategic leaders in publishing companies in Kenya, which the current study endeavored to present. Moreover, the study by Onu et al. (2018) was done in manufacturing companies in Nigeria and used proportional sampling technique while the current study was carried out in Kenya and made use of purposive sampling method.

Munyao (2021) researched the effects of strategic leadership, with the external environment as a moderating variable, on the performance of the Africa Inland Church theological training institutions in Kenya. The researcher focused on four elements of strategic leadership, namely strategic direction, organizational culture, organizational resources, and ethical practices, and relied on the Balanced Scorecard to measure performance. The study concluded that the four elements have a positive effect on the performance of such institutions. The current study, although similar in terms of the elements employed to measure the variables, differs on the context targeted, which is educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. A

study on the influence of strategic leadership and the performance of educational publishers in Nairobi was necessary to highlight the nature, issues, and challenges that continue to be experienced concerning the performance of the publishing sector in Kenya, which is increasingly becoming an important hub for educational publishing in the eastern and central African region.

Theoretical Framework

The anchor theory for this study is Strategic Leadership Theory. The other supporting theories for this study are Systems Theory, and Balanced Scorecard Model. Strategic Leadership Theory was chosen for this study for it directly explains how top-level leaders influence organizational direction, resource allocation, and strategic choices, that result in long-term performance outcomes. It is suitable in the educational publishers that are operating in a rapidly changing business environment that requires a leadership style that is forward-looking. The Systems Theory supports this study due to its ability to connect various components of an organization such as the human resource, production processes, and external stakeholders. It views strategic leadership not as an isolated managerial function but as a coordinated force that integrates various subsystems toward organizational goals. For the Balanced Scorecard, it provides a structured and empirically robust framework for measuring performance outcomes aligned with the strategic objectives set by organizational leaders.

Strategic Leadership Theory

Strategic Leadership Theory evolved from the Upper Echelons Theory that Hambrick and Mason (1984, in Abatecola & Cristofaro, 2020) developed into a study of ways in which top leaders influence outcomes in their organizations. Subsequently,

Hambrick and Pettigrew (2001) distinguished leadership and strategic leadership in that the former refers to leaders at any level, whereas the latter refers to people at the top of the organization. Strategic Leadership Theory, therefore, focuses on the responsibilities of top executives.

This theory, traditionally referred to as 'the theory of higher levels' (Finkelstein et al., 2009), aptly indicates that it is the dominant coalition in an organization that determines its direction and, hence, optimal performance. The top leadership creates and sustains an organizational culture and oversees the utilization of resources to deliver desirable results. With organizational culture, the right attitudes to and discipline for work are instilled in the workforce, and resources are used prudently as everyone strives for a high-performance organization. As Hambrick and Mason (1984) explain, Strategic Leadership Theory is measured using the elements of determining an organization's strategic direction, cultivating and maintaining a conducive organizational culture, taking care of an organization's resource portfolio, emphasizing on ethical practices, and ensuring that control systems are in place to guard an organization from corruption and such vices.

As applied to this study, strategic leadership is expected to influence performance because, with their abilities, strategic leaders analyze the trends and make the right investment decisions, thereby giving an organization its strategic direction. Barine and Minja (2011) posit that strategic leadership is a requirement for an organization's success. Strategic leaders formulate and implement strategy (Nahavandi, 2014). They spot the opportunities for and threats to the business, allocate resources wisely, mobilize team effort, and produce long-term results to guarantee a secure future for the organization (Stowell & Mead, 2016). Strategic leaders wade through external and internal forces to ensure their organizations remain

efficient and effective. Therefore, Strategic Leadership Theory supports the independent variable of strategic leadership in the current study and especially in explaining the role of top leaders in organizations in providing strategic direction in order to achieve the desired performance in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Systems Theory

This theory, advanced by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, and James Grier Miller (Budd & Ruben, 2003; Montuori, 2007) as General Systems Theory or Open Systems Theory, sees an organization as a system. Organizations are open systems in that they receive inputs that are transformed through processes to yield products and services. The role of leadership is to provide inputs, monitor the processes, manage the outputs, and analyze feedback for necessary changes (Kozirovsky, 2017). Leaders create the necessary culture, embed it in the organization's structures and functions, and transmit it across all levels for the attainment of internal integration and the ability to adapt to external influences, which ensures stability in that organization (Schein, 2010). According to Katz and Kahn (1971), the open systems theory is measured using the elements of boundary, purpose, inputs, throughput, outputs, feedback, and environment.

Senge (1990) relied on this theory to argue a strong case for continuous learning in an organization to make it more effective in a dynamic world. Continuous learning helps an organization redefine its structure and culture to achieve a coherent relationship among its members (Panagiotopoulos et al., 2018). This theory helps us understand that all the parts of an organization need to work in synchrony to achieve its goals. The Open Systems Theory suggests a close interaction between an organization's internal and external environments. Strategic leaders need to better

understand the importance of the environment and its influence on performance (Scott, 2005). This theory supports the current study in explaining the extent to which organizational culture and the management of resources influence the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Balanced Scorecard Model

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) Model for measuring performance was formulated by Kaplan and Norton in the early 1990s and has since become the latest innovation tool in management for strategic control. According to this theory, performance of an organization can be measured using the financial perspective, customer perspective, internal business processes perspective, and learning and growth perspective. A Balanced Scorecard is a set of measures that allow for a holistic integrated view of the performance of any business (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). If performance cannot be defined, then it is possible that it cannot be measured. Kaplan and Norton (1996) state, "BSC was developed to supplement the old measures with criteria that measure performance" (p. 75).

As Bates and Holton (1995) stated, performance is a multidimensional construct that varies depending on a number of measurement factors. Nørreklit (2003) argues that the BSC was developed because it was not enough to just focus on a one-dimensional measure of performance. He noted that the model of the Balanced Scorecard suggests that rather than the focus, the natural balance of all other important goals is financial performance. When an organization is financially healthy, the other goals interact very well, resulting in good performance. The Balanced Scorecard system articulates the strategic support of goals. This model was used to support the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County where the study was carried out.

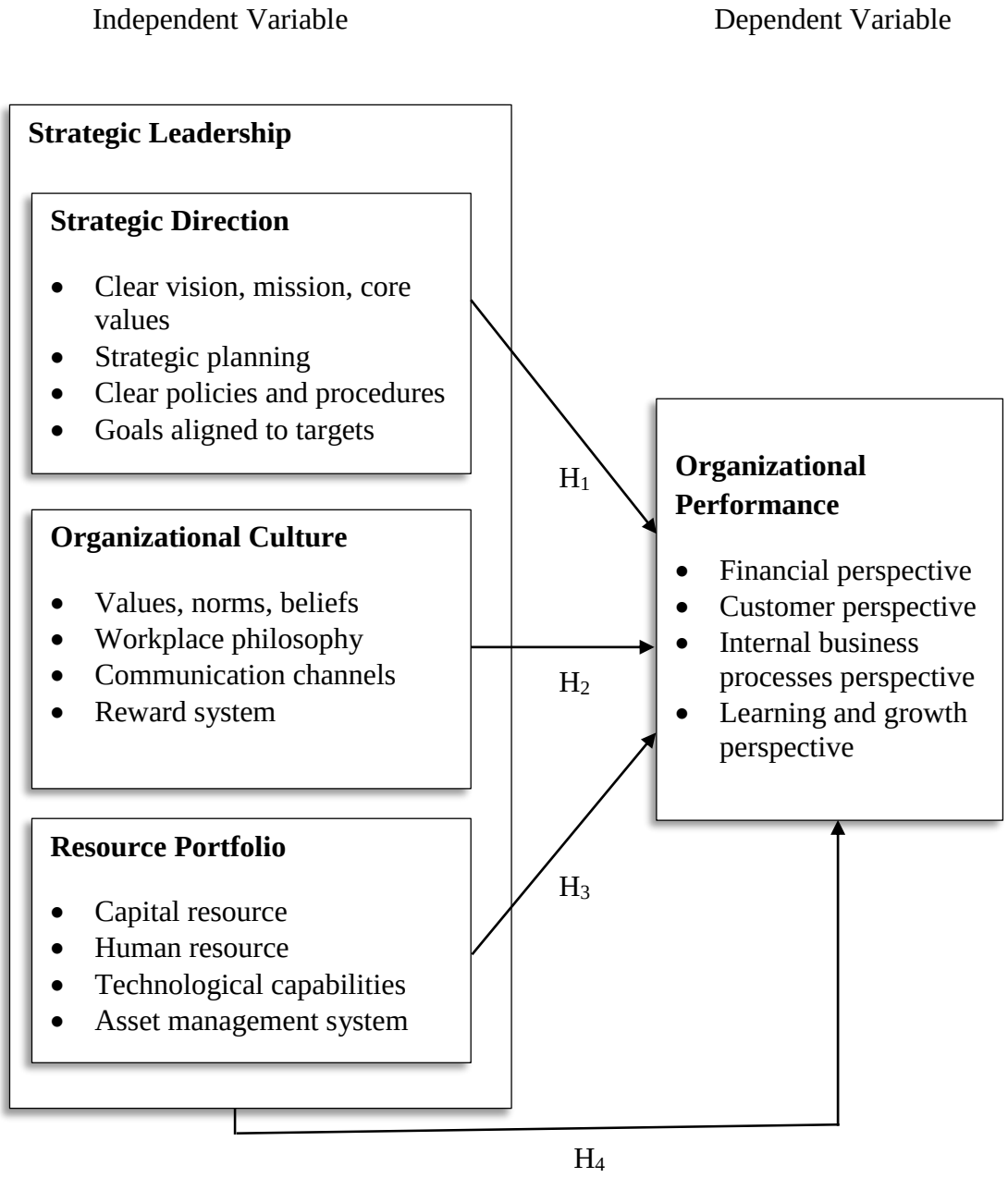
Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this research shows how strategic leadership (the independent variable) relates with performance (the dependent variable). Three aspects of strategic leadership – determination of strategic direction, sustenance of organizational culture, and management of a firm's resource portfolio – were used to explain strategic leadership's impact on the performance of educational publishers. On its part, the performance of educational publishers was measured using the four perspectives of the Balanced Scorecard: financial, customer, internal business processes, and learning and growth perspective. Each aspect of strategic leadership, as well as their combined effect, were weighed against the four BSC perspectives.

The relationship between the variables is captured in a visual model, as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model



(Source: Researcher, 2025)

Synthesis of Research Gaps

From the foregoing literature review, it is clear that, although several studies covered the concepts of strategic leadership and performance, they varied in the

contexts covered, methodologies employed and theories applied. This forms the basis of differentiation between this current study and such previous studies. For instance, Theodore (2014) covered strategic leadership and performance, but the researcher's context was the general business world, whereas this current study gives particularity to the educational publishing industry. Likewise, Strand (2014) concentrated on the world's conglomerates, overlooking businesses in the small and medium size categories, but this study covered both established (meaning old and large) firms and those that are fairly young and small.

Several researchers in Kenya, while studying the relationship between strategic leadership and performance, have focused on contexts other than publishing organizations, which was the focus of this current study. For instance, Nthini (2013) focused on the performance of commercial and financial state corporations in Kenya, while Munyao (2021) targeted the performance of Africa Inland Church (AIC) theological training institutions in Kenya. Although the study by Simam et al. (2012) in Kenya's Uasin Gishu County included educational publishers, they only investigated the publishers' involvement in the development and selection of school course books. This study paid attention to the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County as spurred by strategic leadership.

In terms of the concepts covered, Muo and Sei (2023) studied the effect of recycling strategy on performance of publishing firms in Kenya, while Daudi (2021) studied the influence of working capital management on the financial performance of Longhorn Publishers Limited in Kenya. Muasya (2017) attempted to establish the role of strategic leadership in effective strategy implementation, while Ongeti and Machuki (2018) tested the influence of organizational resources on the performance of state corporations. However, the current study went beyond a single aspect of

strategic leadership to establish the influence of strategic direction, organizational culture, and resource portfolio on the performance of educational publishing organizations.

In terms of the methodology employed, Mutia (2015) used a descriptive correlational research design, Kuruma (2017) used explanatory and descriptive research designs, and Kitonga et al. (2016) and Waihenya et al. (2018) picked their samples randomly. This current study employed the correlational research design, collecting data from a sample that was selected using purposive sampling method. Correlational research enabled this researcher to examine the extent to which the elements of the independent variable (strategic leadership) were related to those of the dependent variable (organizational performance).

On the theories applied, Othman et al. (2014) used transformational and transactional leadership theories to explain the obtaining phenomena, while Peterlin et al. (2015) used servant leadership and sustainable leadership theories. Kuruma (2017) used path-goal leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and contingency leadership theories. However, this researcher used strategic leadership theory as the leading theory and supplemented it with open systems theory to explain the influence of strategic leadership on the performance of educational publishing firms.

Therefore, there is evidence of research gaps on strategic leadership and the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. This study attempted to fill these contextual, conceptual, methodological, and theoretical gaps by availing data that can be applied to revamp educational publishing companies in Kenya. A summary of some of the research gaps identified is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Summary of Research Gaps

Author(s)	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	How Current Study Addresses Research Gaps
Theodore (2014)	To present the necessity of having strategic leadership in business corporations that practise corporate sustainability.	An article that relied on secondary sources by carrying out a review of existing literature.	Strategic leadership is a requirement in corporate sustainability.	The study used desktop research and corporate sustainability as its dependent variable in the context of the general business world.	This study was empirical in nature that was done in an educational publishing context in Kenya and instead gave particularity to the publishing industry.
Strand (2014)	To explore why corporate sustainability positions were being installed to the top management team, and the effects of corporate	Review of secondary sources (company websites, press releases), and in-depth interviews with corporate leaders.	Corporates proactively install top management team positions to drive sustainability performances.	Concentrated on world's conglomerates, leaving out businesses in the small or medium size categories. The study applied a mixed methods approach	This study covered both established and less-established educational publishers and was quantitative in nature.

Author(s)	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	How Current Study Addresses Research Gaps
	sustainability positions at the organizations.				
El-Aidie et al. (2021)	To identify the role of strategic leadership in attaining sustainability and competitiveness of tourism sector organizations in United Arab Emirates.	An exploratory descriptive study applying the positivist paradigm; questionnaires administered to a systematic random sample.	Strategic leadership has both direct and indirect impact on the sustainability of performance in tourism sector organizations.	The study used exploratory descriptive study on tourism sector organizations in United Arab Emirates, and not educational publishing organizations in Kenya.	This study used a correlational research design and focused on educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.
Mukhezakule & Tefera (2019)	To conceptualize a framework that indicates the relationships between corporate strategy, strategic leadership, and	Mixed methods approach, stratified random sampling, and data collected through questionnaires and interviews.	South African aviation companies have remained uncompetitive because they lack leaders who can design and	While using a mixed methods approach, the study gave attention to sustainability of South African aviation companies while using corporate	This quantitative study instead focused on the educational publishers operating in Nairobi County, Kenya, while using strategic leadership

Author(s)	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	How Current Study Addresses Research Gaps
	sustainable performance.		implement effective strategies.	strategy and strategic leadership.	to fill the identified gaps.
Nthini (2013)	To establish the influence of strategic leadership on the performance of commercial and financial state corporations in Kenya.	Descriptive survey design; data collected through a semi-structured questionnaire.	Effective strategic leadership promotes performance.	Focused on commercial and financial state corporations, and left out educational publishing organizations. The study used descriptive research design.	This filled the identified gaps by focusing the study on educational publishers operating Nairobi County in Kenya while using correlational research design.
Munyao (2021)	To establish whether strategic leadership has a positive effect on the performance of Africa Inland Church (AIC) theological training	Descriptive survey design; administered a questionnaire to a sample picked using purposive sampling and stratified random sampling methods.	Strategic leadership has a positive effect on the performance of AIC theological training institutions in Kenya.	Focused on the performance of AIC theological training institutions in Kenya while using descriptive survey research design.	This study filled the identified gaps by targeting the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya while using

Author(s)	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	How Current Study Addresses Research Gaps
	institutions in Kenya.				correlational research design.
Simam et al. (2012)	To establish the views of teachers and pupils on the quality of primary school textbooks within the Kesses Division, Uasin Gishu County in Kenya.	Administered questionnaires to public schools selected through stratified sampling, and interviewed book vetting government officers, and managers at publishing firms.	There was dissatisfaction regarding quality of books, feedback mechanisms, and transparency of book evaluation exercises.	Interested in the quality of textbooks selected for use in Kenya's primary schools. They covered educational publishers inasmuch as they participate in developing textbooks, and not their performance.	This study filled this gap by going beyond the quality of educational materials and focusing on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.
Othman et al. (2014)	To assess the impact of strategic leadership styles (transformational and transactional leadership) on the level of	Systematic literature review coupled with a cross-sectional survey, employing a descriptive and multivariate	Transformational and transactional leadership styles influence the performance of	Study tested the influence of transformational and transactional leadership styles on performance in Malaysia while using cross-sectional research design.	This study instead focused on strategic direction, organizational culture, and resource portfolio as aspects of strategic

Author(s)	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	How Current Study Addresses Research Gaps
	performance of heterogeneous research and development teams in Malaysia.	analysis to test the conceptual framework.	research and development teams.		leadership while using correlational research design in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County, Kenya.
Mutia (2015)	To determine how the setting of the church's strategic direction influences its infrastructural growth in Kenya.	Descriptive correlational research design, and used a self-administered structured questionnaire.	There is a positive relationship between a church's strategic direction and its infrastructural growth.	Study did not cover the influence of strategic direction on the performance of publishing businesses in Kenya.	This study's concern was the influence of strategic direction, organizational culture, and performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County while using correlational research design.

Author(s)	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	How Current Study Addresses Research Gaps
Muasya (2017)	To establish the role of strategic leadership in effective strategy implementation at UNICEF Somalia.	Descriptive research design, and stratified sampling to pick a sample for a self-administered questionnaire.	Strategic leaders are vital for the strategic planning and implementation process in organizations.	The study used descriptive research design and stratified sampling method while carrying its study in Somalia.	These gaps were filled in this study by employing correlational research design and selecting respondents using purposive sampling method in carrying out the study in Kenya.
Ongeti & Machuki (2018)	To test the influence of organizational resources on the performance of state corporations in Kenya.	Cross-sectional descriptive survey with primary data collected using a semi-structured questionnaire.	There is a significant relationship between organizational resources and performance.	The study was done in state corporations in Kenya using descriptive research design.	The current study filled the identified gaps by doing the study in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya using correlational research approach.

Author(s)	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	How Current Study Addresses Research Gaps
Kuruma (2017)	To establish the influence of strategic leadership on performance of coffee cooperative societies in Nyeri County, Kenya.	Explanatory and descriptive research designs, with data collected using questionnaires; sample selected using stratified random sampling.	Strategic leadership affects performance of coffee cooperative societies in Nyeri County.	Employed the explanatory and descriptive research designs to study the performance of coffee cooperative societies in Nyeri County.	The current study filled the gap by using correlational research design to investigate the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.
Waihenya et al. (2018)	To assess the influence of strategic leadership on customer growth in SACCOs in Kiambu County, Kenya.	Descriptive research design, with data collected using a self-administered questionnaire.	75% of customer growth in SACCOs in Kiambu County is influenced by strategic leadership.	The study used descriptive research design, had customer growth as its dependent variable while the context of the study was SACCOs in Kiambu County in Kenya.	The current study used correlational research design, had performance as the dependent variable and was done in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Author(s)	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	How Current Study Addresses Research Gaps
Peterlin et al. (2015)	To explore the implications of servant leadership and sustainable leadership for strategic decision making by the top management of a business organization.	A conceptual paper that relied on secondary sources.	Servant leadership and sustainable leadership approaches provide a sound basis for decision making to ensure organizational sustainability.	The study used servant leadership as one of its independent variable and strategic decision making as its dependent variable in business organizations.	This study used strategic leadership as its independent variable and performance as the dependent variable in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a conceptual and empirical review of literature on strategic leadership and organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. Also discussed were the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the study. The chapter identified some research gaps regarding the influence of strategic leadership on performance as it pertains to educational publishers. It emphasized the essence of strategic leadership in achieving high performance, which ensures the survival of publishing businesses in Nairobi County. This chapter concluded by underscoring the need for data that can be used to revamp the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. The chapter that follows delves into the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this study, with a specific focus on the philosophical perspective, research design, target and sample population, sampling methods, and methods employed in data collection and interpretation. It also covers reliability and validity of research instruments, instruments pre-testing, and ethical considerations for the study. The chapter ends with a summary.

Research Philosophy

Research philosophy constitutes a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2023). This researcher applied the positivism philosophical worldview. This philosophical viewpoint is the most recommended for quantitative research design which is characterized by gathering empirical, observable and measurable evidence (Ali, 2024; Maarouf, 2019).

Positivism, as advocated by 19th century scholar Aguste Comte (Raj, 2023), emphasizes reason and empirical evidence in scientific inquiry. This approach, which involves the use of quantitative methods to measure and analyze data, leading to the discovery of general laws and ideologies that govern phenomena, emphasizes objectivity, replicability, and the use of statistical techniques to test hypotheses (Ali, 2024). This research paradigm was apt for this study as it favoured the testing of the set hypotheses to establish the relationship between the selected elements of strategic leadership and the indicators of organizational performance.

Research Design

The researcher used the correlational research design, a non-experimental form of research in which a researcher uses a correlational statistic to measure the association between two or more sets of scores (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As Leedy and Ormrod (2014) explain, correlational research design helps a researcher to investigate the relationship between two or more variables. It is a design that examines the extent to which differences in one characteristic or variable are related to differences in one or more other variables.

The approach allows the development of findings in accordance with the research objectives, and helps reveal the degree of association between changes in one factor and changes in other factors (Putri et al., 2025). This research design was preferred in this study because it helped in establishing how strategic leadership was associated with organizational performance, and also enabled statistical testing of relationships between strategic leadership dimensions and the elements of organizational performance.

Target Population

Population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). When a researcher intends to generalize the results of a finalized study from a group within a certain locality, such a group becomes the target population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). The target population in the current study comprised 218 staff in the publishing and production departments in the 32 educational publishers being members of the Kenya Publishers Association (KPA) who were domiciled in Nairobi County, Kenya (Kenya Publishers Association, 2025). The staff in the targeted departments formed the backbone of publishing businesses. It is emphasized that the staff included the senior

managers and line managers in such departments. These managers were in a good stead to give strategic direction, inculcate an organizational culture, and manage the resources in their respective departments.

A list of the KPA members specified above is given in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Target Population

No.	**Name of Educational Publisher**	**Staff in Publishing and Production Departments**
1	Access Publishers Ltd	6
2	Atfaal Publishers Ltd	2
3	Booklyst Publishers	12
4	Bookmark Africa Ltd	3
5	Cambridge University Press	1
6	Danmar Publishers & Printers	1
7	Distinction Publishers Ltd	2
8	East African Educational Publishers	22
9	Evangel Publishing House	1
10	Highland Publishers	4
11	Jesma Publishers Ltd	2
12	Jomo Kenyatta Foundation	10
13	Kenya Literature Bureau	20
14	Longhorn Kenya Ltd	28
15	Madefamiliar Publishers Ltd	3
16	Marimba Publications Ltd	1
17	Mentor Publishing Co. Ltd	18
18	Modern Technologies	2
19	Moran Publishers	22
20	Mountain Top Publishers	3
21	Nsemia Inc Publishers	2
22	One Planet Publishing & Media Services Ltd	7
23	Oxford University Press	12
24	Pearson Education Africa	1
25	Pezi Publishers	1
26	Phoenix Publishers	2
27	Queenex Holdings Ltd	3
28	Salaam Publishers Ltd	1
29	Spearsharp Publishers	2
30	Spotlight Publications Ltd	8
31	Story Moja Publications	15
32	Targeter Educational Publishers	1
Target Population		218

(Source: Kenya Publishers Association, 2025)

Sample Population

It is not always tenable to study an entire population, hence the need for a researcher to pick a part or a sample of that population to focus on. Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) define a sample as a group of individuals, objects, items or cases that has been selected from the accessible population. Out of the 218 accessible respondents in the 32 educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya who were members of the KPA at the time of the study, a sample of 139 respondents was arrived at for the quantitative data collection, using an adaptation of Yamane's (1967) formula with an adjustment of the margin of error by Adam (2020):

$n = N / (1+N\varepsilon^2)$

where;

n = optimum sample size

N = Population size

e = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion = 0.05

ρ = the number of standard deviations that would include all possible values in the range = 2

t = t-value for the selected alpha level or confidence level at 95% = 1.96

ε = adjust margin of error [$\varepsilon = (\rho e / t)$]

Thus:

$\varepsilon = (2 \times 0.05 / 1.96) = 0.051$

$n = N / (1+N\varepsilon^2) = 218 / (1 + 218 \times 0.051^2) = 139.12$ (rounded off to 139)

The 139 respondents were purposively drawn from 9 educational publishers. This amounted to 28% of the total number of active educational publishers (32) domiciled in Nairobi County who were members of KPA, which was an adequate representative figure, as it was within the 10%–30% sample size recommended by

Mugenda and Mugenda (2019). Out of the 32 educational publishing organizations, 9 were purposively selected based on their operational longevity, existence of leadership structures, and the willingness of the selected organizations to provide rich and reliable information relevant to the study's research objectives. A table showing the educational publishers selected for quantitative data is given below.

Table 3

Sample Population

No.	**Name of Educational Publisher**	**Staff in Publishing and Production Departments**
1	Access Publishers Ltd	6
2	Booklyst Publishers	12
3	East African Educational Publishers	22
4	Highland Publishers	4
5	Longhorn Kenya Ltd	28
6	Mentor Publishing Co. Ltd	18
7	Moran Publishers	22
8	Oxford University Press	12
9	Story Moja Publications	15
Sample Population		139

(Source: Kenya Publishers Association, 2025)

Sampling Methods

Out of the 32 active educational publishing companies that were currently members of the Kenya Publishers Association domiciled in Nairobi, nine companies were picked for the quantitative data using purposive sampling. Before the sampling was done, a sampling criteria was set out based on the publishing organizations that had been in operation for over 5 years, had actively published educational materials, had defined leadership structures, and were willing to participate in the study. After establishing the above selection criteria, all the 32 publishing organizations were listed as shown in Table 2 above and reviewed based on the established criteria before

selecting on the best 9 organizations. It was expected that the selected companies would contribute varying numbers of respondents, as seen in Table 3 above.

Types of Data

Two types of data were collected; primary and secondary data. Primary data is the one which collected for the first time, whereas secondary data is the one which has already been collected by someone else and has already been passed through the statistical process (Dawit, 2020). Primary data was collected using a closed-ended questionnaire administered to publishing and production staff in 9 publishing companies. Secondary data was derived from a review of published books and peer-reviewed journals existing as both print and online resources. This pre-existing information aided the literature review to describe the study concepts, identify research gaps, and explain the theoretical framework. Secondary data was also tapped from unpublished sources, particularly through a review of the records of publishing firms to determine the total and sample populations.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

For data collection, a questionnaire was administered to gather data on the relationship between the study variables. The questionnaire comprised a five-point Likert Scale bearing statements that the respondents were required to agree or disagree with. The Likert Scale captures the perception of respondents towards an item of the researcher's interest (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). The scale ranges from Strongly Disagree (with a score of 1) to Strongly Agree (a score of 5) on each item. The Likert Scale is the most frequently used rating scale to test respondents' perception or attitude towards matters under inquiry (Munyao, 2021).

The questionnaires were sent to respondents through the Internet, an approach used due to its cost-effectiveness and convenience. A four-phase administration process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) was followed in this mailed survey lasting for three weeks. First, a brief advance-notice letter was mailed out to all sampled respondents. The actual survey was mailed out three days later. A follow-up letter was mailed out at the beginning of the second week. For the respondents who failed to respond by the end of the second week, a fourth mail was sent to them at the beginning of the third week.

Reliability and Validity Tests

The researcher tested the reliability of the instruments and the validity of data to guarantee the accuracy of the data collected.

Reliability Test

Reliability is the extent to which measurements remain consistent and stable when applied in various conditions, producing the same results (Drost, 2011). Reliability should be a major consideration when selecting the sources of data. Kothari and Garg (2014) caution that the reliability of data should be tested by finding out who collected the data, what the sources of data were, whether the data were collected using proper methods, and whether the desired accuracy of the data was achieved. Kothari and Garg (2014) emphasize the need for a researcher to minimize bias and maximize reliability.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) advise on the use of relevance and reliability to evaluate the usefulness of a source of secondary data. The reliability of secondary data was boosted through checking the reputation of the press that had published the source or posted it online, whether it was peer-reviewed, whether the author was a

reputable scholar, how current the source was, and whether the source had been frequently cited by others.

Reliability of the research instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. This test is used to show how well the items being tested are positively correlated (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The values for the Cronbach's Alpha range between 0 and 1, with a higher value of at least 0.7 giving assurance of reliability. A value of 0.6 is, however, acceptable for a small number of items tested (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019).

Table 4

Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.952	9

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The reliability test outlined in Table 4 above showed a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.952 which falls within the accepted range.

Validity Test

Validity is the degree to which a concept is accurately measured (Heale & Twycross, 2015). It is the ability of a tool to measure what it is intended to measure with accuracy (Kothari & Garg, 2014; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). As Selvam (2017) observes, an instrument is valid if it actually measures what it purports to measure. Using the wrong instrument yields the wrong measurements, and measuring the wrong characteristics gives the wrong results.

The instrument was subjected to a construct validity check, which is suited for this research because of the causal nature of the relationship between the variables being investigated. A test of convergent validity, a component of construct validity

besides discriminant validity, was more preferred in this study. This is because it tests whether the constructs that are expected to be related are, in fact, related (Taherdoost, 2016). A factor analysis was done using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax Rotation method.

Table 5

Validity Test

Component Matrix[a]

	Component
	1
Strategic_Direction	.864
Organizational_Culture	.854
Resource_Portfolio	.804
Financial_Perspective	.819
Customer_Perspective	.838
Internal_Business_Processes_Perspective	.786
Learning_and_Growth_Perspective	.810
Strategic_Leadership	.961

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The results presented in Table 5 above showed that all the items in the study passed the validity test since their scores were within the accepted range.

Instrument Pre-testing

Instrument pre-testing is the process of trying out the research tools on a selected number of study respondents to gauge their reliability (Ahmed, 2022). This is

important because it enables a researcher to check whether the respondents understand the gist of the questions and can answer the questions without difficulty. Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) recommend pre-testing to be done on 10 percent of the sample population. In this case, questionnaires were mailed to 14 respondents out of the total number of 218 respondents from the publishing and production departments who were not later included in the sample to assess how long it would take to complete the questionnaire and detect any possibility of respondents' fatigue, and to find out whether it was clear, accurate and comprehensive enough to collect the required data. They were chosen using purposive sampling targeting respondents who were likely to face challenges with the data collection instrument. These may include respondents with low literacy levels, those unfamiliar with the study topic, those inexperienced with surveys and questionnaires, and those facing language barriers. After the pretesting, no trace of respondents' fatigue was detected and, therefore, the tool was found to be clear, accurate and comprehensive enough for data collection.

Data Analysis and Interpretation Plan

This study employed a correlational research design to study the influence of strategic leadership on performance. Data from the field are often voluminous and cannot be absorbed in their raw form (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014), hence the need for them to be analyzed in order to be understood and interpreted. The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29 for descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. Descriptive statistics were provided by frequencies and presented in tables, measures of central tendency (the mean, the median, the mode), and measures of dispersion (range, variance, standard deviation) (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). Correlations were assessed using Pearson's r method to measure the strength and direction of the relationships between variables (Bougie &

Sekaran, 2020; Bryman, 2016; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). A negative correlation would mean that there is no relationship, whereas a positive correlation (above zero) would indicate the existence of a positive relationship between the study variables (Kothari & Garg, 2014).

Regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis that an independent variable affects a dependent variable, as advised by Mugenda and Mugenda (2019), and Bougie and Sekaran (2020). The one sample t-test was used to test each hypothesis on a single mean. A null hypothesis would be rejected if the significance level is less than 0.05, which would indicate that the confidence level is above 95%. The null hypothesis would not be rejected if the significance level is greater than 0.05, which would indicate that the confidence level is below 95% (Kothari & Garg, 2014).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are bound to arise during research. This is largely because, as Punch (2014, in Creswell & Creswell, 2018) observes, research involves collecting data from people and about people. As such, the interests of such people ought to be safeguarded. Leedy et al. (2019) advise that researchers must ensure the safety of the participants by protecting them from harm, respecting their dignity and right to privacy, allowing them to make voluntary and informed participation, and keeping their identity and responses confidential. Therefore, researchers are expected to adhere to a set of ethical principles in order to protect the participants and consumers of the information or knowledge generated.

This researcher obtained permission to collect data from the Pan Africa Christian University, the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), and the Kenya Publishers Association. To avoid inconveniences at the data collection sites, prior arrangements were made with the

organizations where respondents were drawn from. To ensure credibility of data, the researcher desisted from picking respondents from the organization where the researcher worked.

The participants were contacted and informed about the general purpose of the study and how it would help the publishing industry and, to some extent, the corporate world. The participants were assured that their involvement would be voluntary, therefore they would not have to sign any consent forms if they were not comfortable participating in the study. Appropriate consent was obtained from line managers of the organizations targeted before contacting any lower-cadre employees to give information where this was necessary. Strict confidentiality was guaranteed for every respondent during the administration of questionnaires and the interview sessions.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described the research philosophy, study design, the target population, sample population, sampling procedures, the tests for reliability and validity of research instruments, pre-testing of research instruments, types of data, and the data collection process. Data analysis and interpretation procedures as well as ethical issues were also outlined.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results of the study on the influence of strategic leadership on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to determine the influence of strategic direction on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya, describe the influence of organizational culture on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya, assess the influence of organizational resource portfolio on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya, and explain the combined influence of strategic leadership on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. The chapter starts by presenting the response rate, and the biographic information of the respondents. It also presents the results of descriptive, correlation, and regression analyzes before concluding with a chapter summary.

Response Rate

The section below presents the outcome of the response rate.

Table 6

Response Rate

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Returned	101	72.66 %
Not Returned	38	27.34 %
Total	139	100.00 %

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As outlined in Table 6 above, out of the 139 questionnaires that were distributed to the people from whom data was obtained, 101 were received back accounting for 72.66 percent of the total forms. Due to various reasons, 38 forms were not received back, translating to 27.34 percent. Based on these findings, the study proceeded to the data analysis stage on the suggestions of previous researchers (Sataloff & Vontela, 2021) that a response rate of above 60 percent is suitable for data analysis to be carried out. The findings of this study are supported by those of a previous study done in Kenya Literature Bureau that obtained a response rate of 98.7 percent (Kemei & Reuben, 2025). The high response rate that was recorded in this study provided confidence that the findings that we obtained reflect the actual practices and outcomes related to strategic leadership and organizational performance in the educational publishing firms where the study was carried out. The high response rate further enhanced the reliability and representativeness of the data.

Biographic Information

The section that follows presents biographic information (gender, position in the educational publisher, period of existence of the educational publisher) of the participants who took part in the study.

Gender of Respondents

The findings on the gender of the respondents who took part in the study are presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Gender of Respondents

Gender of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	a) Male	52	51.5	51.5
	b) Female	49	48.5	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As indicated in Table 7 above, 51.5 percent of participants were male while almost an equal number were female (48.5 percent) reflecting a near gender balance among participants drawn from educational publishers operating in Nairobi County. The relatively even distribution of respondents suggests that leadership and performance perceptions captured in the study are not influenced by one gender and therefore, strengthening credibility of the findings. Further, the near parity of participants reduces the likelihood of gender-based response bias and therefore, strengthening the validity of the conclusions that were drawn from the study in relation to strategic leadership and organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. These outcomes are similar to those of a previous study by Rono et al. (2019) that was done in public technical training institutions in Kenya and found 57 percent of the respondents were men while 43 percent of the respondents were women.

Position in the Educational Publisher

In Table 8 below are the outputs for the position of the study participants in the educational publisher.

Table 8

Position in the Educational Publisher

Position in the Educational Publisher

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	a) Senior manager	12	11.9	11.9
	b) Line manager	18	17.8	29.7
	c) Technical staff	71	70.3	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As shown in Table 8 above, out of the 101 representatives of the study, 70.3 percent belonged to the category of technical staff, 17.8 were from the line managers' category, while 11.9 percent belonged to the senior managers' level. As it is expected, most of the employees are found in the lower cadres. The fact that a majority of the respondents were found in the technical category suggests that the study captures insights from the employees who execute daily operational activities. Line managers and senior managers, though few in number, provide perspectives on supervisory and strategic decision-making to organizations. The distribution of the respondents allows the study to analyze the influence that strategic leadership across different organizational levels which is crucial for leadership practices has on performance both at the top and operational levels.

Period of Existence of Educational Publisher

Table 9 hereunder outlines the study results for the period of existence of the educational publisher.

Table 9

Period of Existence of Educational Publisher

Period of Existence of Sampled Educational Publisher

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Below 5 years	2	22.2
	5 – 10 years	1	11.1
	11 – 20 years	2	22.2
	21 – 30 years	1	11.1
	Above 30 years	3	33.3
	Total	9	99.9

(Source: Kenya Publishers Association, 2025)

Table 9 above shows the distribution of the educational publishers sampled in terms of the years they had been in operation. One-third (33.3 percent) of them have been in operation for up to 10 years, 11 to 30 years, and above 30 years respectively. A majority of them (66.6 percent) have been in the business for more than 10 years. Long years of operation suggest relative stability and that the organizations have successfully adapted to the market changes and technical shifts over the time they have been in operation. Again, longer-established organizations are likely to have well-established leadership structures, formalized policies and strategic leadership practices able to contribute to performance. The representation from organizations with varied periods of operation provides a wide range of organizational experiences.

Descriptive Statistics

The part that follows presents results of descriptive statistics for the indicators of strategic leadership and organizational performance.

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Leadership

Presented below are descriptive statistics for the indicators of strategic leadership.

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Direction

Tables 10(a) and 10(b) present descriptive findings for strategic direction.

Table 10(a)

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Direction

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Direction

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This organization has clear vision, mission, and core values	101	1	5	4.05	.921
This organization has a well-defined set of policies and procedures	101	1	5	3.86	1.059
This organization has clear values, norms, systems, language, assumptions, and beliefs	101	1	5	3.94	.947
The leadership clearly and adequately communicates the organizational culture, policies and procedures	101	1	5	3.87	1.016
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The findings tabulated in Table 10(a) above indicate that the statement that "This organization has clear vision, mission, and core values" had the highest mean (M=4.05) and the lowest standard deviation of 0.921. This implies that although the majority of the participants supported the statements provided to them, the responses

were scattered around the mean point which is a clear indication of a strong consensus among the respondents. The statement that “This organization has a well-defined set of policies and procedures” had the lowest mean of 3.86 and the highest standard deviation of 1.059 implying disparities of responses from the mean point of the small number of responses who did not support the statement presented to them. This could point to the fact that there were challenges or gaps in the formalization of policies where the study was done.

Table 10(b)

Composite Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Direction

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strategic_direction	101	1.50	5.00	3.9703	.79474
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

Table 10(b) above indicates that, overall, strategic direction had a moderate mean of 3.9703 and a standard deviation of 0.79474, denoting that a large number of the respondents agreed with the statements presented to them that were concentrated around the mean point.

The significance of these results is that strategic direction that is manifested through vision, mission, core values and policies is perceived as moderately well established in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. Theoretically, the high mean that was obtained in the statement on vision, mission, core values and policies demonstrated that strategic leaders in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County communicated them very clearly.

Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Culture

Tables 11(a) and 11(b) present descriptive results for organizational culture.

Table 11(a)

Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Culture

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This organization has clear values, norms, systems, language, assumptions, and beliefs	101	1	5	3.94	.947
This organization has a clear set of workplace philosophy, experiences and expectations	101	1	5	3.97	.900
The leadership clearly and adequately communicates the organizational culture, policies and procedures	101	1	5	3.87	1.016
This organization has a reward system in place	101	1	5	3.77	1.085
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As outlined in Table 11(a), the statement that "This organization has a clear set of workplace philosophy, experiences and expectations" had the highest mean (M=3.97) and the lowest standard deviation of 0.900. This meant that the responses of the majority of the participants agreed with the statement presented to them on the aspect of organizational culture and that the responses were concentrated around the mean point; a clear indication of consensus among the respondents. "This

organization has a reward system in place" is the statement that had the lowest mean (M=3.77) and the highest standard deviation of 1.085 implying that the responses of the least of respondents who disagreed with the statement presented to them were scattered from the mean point, an indication of lack of practical reinforcement of reward and recognition systems in the educational firms where the study was carried out.

Table 11(b)

Composite Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Culture

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organizational_Culture	101	1.00	5.00	3.8886	.84223
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The composite mean of organizational culture as tabulated in Table 11(b) was 3.8886 and a standard deviation of 0.84223 showing that, overall, the majority of the sampled group supported the items offered to them on organizational culture and that their responses were concentrated around the mean point. The empirical and theoretical support from the three theories selected for this study (Strategic Leadership Theory, Systems Theory, and Balanced Scorecard Model) confirms that indeed, organizational culture is a key mediator between leadership practices and organizational performance in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County. These findings are supported by a previous study by Kiilu et al. (2024) that found that a positive organizational culture mediates the relationship between strategy and performance.

Descriptive Statistics for Resource Portfolio

Tables 12(a) and 12(b) give tabulations of the study results for resource portfolio.

Table 12(a)

Descriptive Statistics for Resource Portfolio

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This organization has adequate budgets for its capital expenditure and operations	101	1	5	3.84	1.046
This organization has adequate human resource	101	1	5	3.70	1.015
This institution has invested in physical and technological infrastructure	101	2	5	3.86	.861
This institution has an asset management system in place	101	1	5	3.86	.861
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The findings depicted in Table 12(a) indicate that the statements that "This institution has invested in physical and technological infrastructure" and "This institution has an asset management system in place" had the highest mean of 3.86 and the lowest standard deviation of 0.861. This meant that the majority of the responses of those who agreed with the statements presented to them were

concentrated around the mean point and that the publishing organizations where the study was done had invested in infrastructural development and asset management that are required in the publishing sector. The statement that "This organization has adequate human resource" had the lowest mean of 3.70 and a relatively high standard deviation implying that although the least number of participants disagreed with the statement presented to them, their responses were scattered away from the mean point. This could imply that, although the publishing organizations had invested in other resources, investment in human capital development was still a challenge that needed to be addressed.

Table 12(b)

Composite Descriptive Statistics for Resource Portfolio

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Resource_Portfolio	101	2.00	5.00	3.8168	.72102
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

In Table 12(b), the composite mean of resource portfolio of 3.8168 and a standard deviation of 0.72102 supported the results in Table 12(a) where a relatively high mean was recorded on the statement on the same presented to them. The findings of this study are supported by those of Maisiba and Kiriri (2025) that found a positive correlation between resource portfolio and organizational performance in private universities in Kenya. The findings of the study advance the strength of Strategic Leadership Theory, Systems Theory, and Balanced Scorecard Model in their effectiveness in resource allocation and integration which are central to the influence

that strategic leadership has on performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Leadership

Table 13 presents descriptive statistics for strategic leadership.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Leadership

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strategic_Leadership	101	1.67	5.00	3.8919	.68895
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As illustrated in Table 13 above, strategic leadership had a mean of 3.8919 and a standard deviation of 0.68895 pointing to the fact that the majority of the responses supported the statement presented to them that were concentrated around the mean point. These findings point out to the fact that strategic leadership practices such as setting strategic direction, fostering organizational culture and aligning resources are practices in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County where the study was done. The results further support the assumption of Strategic Leadership Theory that leadership is a significant determinant of performance. These findings are in support of those by Mutuku et al. (2023) that found that, indeed, strategic leadership is well established in educational and knowledge organizations and significantly predicts organizational performance and therefore, making it relevant in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County.

Composite Descriptive Analysis for Strategic Leadership

Composite descriptive analysis for strategic leadership is presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Composite Descriptive Analysis for Strategic Leadership

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strategic_Direction	101	1.50	5.00	3.9703	.79474
Organizational_Culture	101	1.00	5.00	3.8886	.84223
Resource_Portfolio	101	2.00	5.00	3.8168	.72102
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The outcome of the composite descriptive analysis for strategic leadership presented in Table 14 above shows that strategic direction had the highest mean (M=3.9703) and a relatively high standard deviation (SD=0.79474) which indicates that although a good number of the population members agreed with the statements presented to them, the responses were scattered from the mean point; a reflection of how these elements of vision, mission, and long-term goals were understood or implemented across organizations. These findings add strength to Strategic Leadership Theory's contribution to organizational performance by aligning vision and resources.

Resource portfolio had the lowest mean (M=3.8168) and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.72102 showing that the responses of the population that disagreed with the statement presented to them were concentrated around the mean point. This could further mean that the acquisition and allocation of resources was a

common challenge in the educational publishing organizations where the study was carried out. The outcomes of this study are in line with those of a previous study by Barney et al. (2021) that found mobilization and alignment of resources as a critical contributor of organizational performance.

Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Performance

Presented in the following sections are descriptive analysis outcomes for financial perspective, customer perspective, internal business processes perspective, and learning and growth perspective which are the indicators of performance.

Descriptive Statistics for Financial Perspective

Presented in Tables 15(a) and 15(b) are descriptive analysis outcomes for financial perspective.

Table 15(a)

Descriptive Statistics for Financial Perspective

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This organization's sales revenues have increased over the last three years	101	1	5	3.94	.998
This organization's profits have increased over the last three years	101	1	5	3.77	.989
This organization measures performance against the set goals and strategic objectives	101	1	5	3.94	.881
This organization has mechanisms to reduce instances of loss	101	1	5	3.75	.899
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The results outlined in Table 15(a) above show that the highest mean (M=3.94) was obtained from the statements that "This organization's sales revenues have increased over the last three years" (SD=0.998) and "This organization measures performance against the set goals and strategic objectives" (SD=0.881). This means that although the majority of the study participants had agreed with two statements in equal measure, one had a higher dispersion (0.998) than the other (0.881). This points out to the fact that while performance measurement systems are relatively consistently applied, financial outcomes differ significantly depending on organizational context and leadership effectiveness.

The statement that was rated the lowest was “This organization has mechanisms to reduce instances of loss” with a mean of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 0.899 implying that internal controls and risk management measures may not be uniformly strong across the educational publishing sector and therefore, exposing them to financial inefficiencies and consequently, affecting their overall performance.

Table 15(b)

Composite Descriptive Statistics for Financial Perspective

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Financial_Perspective	101	1.50	5.00	3.8515	.79387
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The composite descriptive mean for financial perspective presented in Table 15(b) is 3.8515 and a standard deviation of 0.79387; an indication that the majority of the statements were rated high by the study’s subjects, a demonstration of the respondents’ perception that financial performance was moderately positive. From a theoretical lens, the inconsistencies in revenue growth and financial control mechanisms indicate areas where strategic leadership could be strengthened to enhance organizational performance. These findings are supported by those of Samimi et al. (2022) that found strategic leadership practices such as goal setting, performance oversight, and strategic control to be closely associated with improved organizational and financial outcomes.

Descriptive Statistics for Customer Perspective

Outlined in Tables 16(a) and 16(b) are descriptive analysis outcomes for customer perspective.

Table 16(a)

Descriptive Statistics for Customer Perspective

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This organization records high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty	101	1	5	4.00	.883
This organization enjoys high levels of customer acquisition and retention	101	1	5	3.93	.941
This organization has a wide range of product and service offerings	101	1	5	4.02	.959
This organization grows and protects its market share through timely response to customer needs and concerns	101	1	5	3.94	.892
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As illustrated in Table 16(a) above, the statement that had the highest mean (M=4.02) and a standard deviation of 0.959 was “This organization has a wide range of product and service offerings”. This is an indication that despite the agreement of the statement by the majority of the respondents, they were relatively scattered away from the mean point. The variance in responses may suggest dispersion in strategic focus, investment capacity, and leadership focus and especially, to matters of

innovation and curriculum alignment of leaders in educational publishing firms in Nairobi County. The lowest mean (M=3.93) with a standard deviation of 0.941 was recorded in the statement “This organization enjoys high levels of customer acquisition and retention”, which implies a relative disparity in the disagreements of the statements presented to participants.

Table 16(b)

Composite Descriptive Statistics for Customer Perspective

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Customer_Perspective	101	1.00	5.00	3.9728	.75985
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The composite descriptive mean for customer perspective shown in Table 16(b) was 3.9728 and a standard deviation of 0.75985, an indication that the majority of the study’s subjects agreed with the statements presented to them. These results could further point to inconsistencies in customer relationship management practices across the organizations where the study was done. The outcomes of the composite mean and standard deviation shows how respondents held a positive view in relation to the relationship that existed between customers and performance of their organizations.

The results presented in Tables 16(a) and 16(b) are supported by the Balanced Scorecard Model and especially the customer perspective aspect which emphasizes on customer satisfaction, retention, and market share as critical non-financial indicators of organizational performance. Strategic Leadership Theory supports the results provided above by underscoring the important role that leaders undertake in

organizations in shaping strategies for customer engagement and retention. The Systems Theory is supported by the existence of the interdependence between leadership decisions, internal processes and customer outcomes. These findings are supported by those of Pereira et al. (2025) who found customer retention to be linked to engagement strategies and organizational performance in digital environment.

Descriptive Statistics for Internal Business Processes Perspective

Presented in Tables 17(a) and 17(b) are descriptive findings for internal business processes perceptive.

Table 17(a)

Descriptive Statistics for Internal Business Processes Perspective

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This organization boasts of high quality of products and services	101	1	5	4.12	.886
This organization records good turn-around time in product and service delivery	101	2	5	4.06	.785
This organization actively controls the cost of internal processes	101	2	5	4.00	.825
This organization has a high rate of new product introduction	101	1	5	3.99	.889
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The findings that are presented in Table 17(a) above point out to the fact that the statement “This organization boasts of high quality of products and services” had the highest mean as well as a relatively high standard deviation (M=4.12; SD=0.886). The implication is that the majority of the respondents supported the assertion in the statement that had been presented to them and that their responses were scattered from the central mean point. The statement that “This organization has a high rate of new product introduction” had the lowest mean (M=3.99) as well as the highest standard deviation (SD=0.889) indicating a variation in innovation and product renewal practices across organizations. These findings suggest that while quality was generally emphasized in the organizations where the study was done, the extent to which quality standards were consistently achieved differed in the educational publishing firms due to variation in aspects like differences in leadership emphasis on quality assurance and investment in production processes.

Table 17(b)

Composite Descriptive Statistics for Internal Business Processes Perspective

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Internal_Business_Processes_Perspective	101	1.75	5.00	4.0421	.68197
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The overall mean of internal business processes as pointed out in Table 17(b) was 4.0421 and a standard deviation of 0.68197, pointing to the fact that internal systems are generally effective in supporting strategic objectives of the educational publishing firms. The findings are in support of those by Noorda and Schlüter (2024)

that internal organizational factors such as culture, team diversity, and leadership support shape innovation outcomes in publishing organizations and therefore, explaining why some firms introduce new products more effectively than others.

Descriptive Analysis for Learning and Growth Perspective

Descriptive analysis for learning and growth perspective is provided in Tables 18(a) and 18(b).

Table 18(a)

Descriptive Analysis for Learning and Growth Perspective

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This organization boasts of high levels of employee satisfaction and loyalty	101	1	5	3.74	1.016
This organization enjoys high rates of employee retention	101	1	5	3.73	1.057
This organization engages in training and skilling of employees	101	1	5	3.97	.964
This organization has functional and reliable information systems	101	1	5	3.91	.991
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

A mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.964 as shown in Table 18(a) was recorded in the statement “This organization engages in training and skilling of employees”; an indication that the responses of the majority of the participants were concentrated around the mean point. The findings show that there were variations in

responses that could be due to how training initiatives are implemented across educational publishing firms in Nairobi County in Kenya. The results also indicate that capacity-building efforts that exist may differ in scope besides how frequently they are conducted. The statement that "This organization enjoys high rates of employee retention" recorded the lowest mean (M=3.73) and the highest standard deviation (SD=1.057). This is an indication of a dispersion from the mean point of the responses of the participants who took part in the study and that although some educational publishing firms were experiencing stable workforce, there were others who were facing challenges related to staff turnover, limited career progression, and inadequate incentive structures.

Table 18(b)

Composite Descriptive Analysis for Learning and Growth Perspective

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Learning_and_Growth_Perspective	101	1.00	5.00	3.8391	.85043
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

A composite mean of 3.8391 and a standard deviation of 0.85043 as projected in Table 18(b) was obtained from learning and growth perspective; implying a moderate agreement of the study subjects to the questions posed to them. This is an indication that human capital development practices are present but not uniformly strong across the sector. The findings of this study are backed up by the Balanced Scorecard Model on learning and growth perspective that emphasizes on the development of employee skills, knowledge, and retention and key drivers of long-

term organizational performance. Strategic Leadership Theory supports these findings due to its focus of developing human capital in the areas of talent identification and management as well as training and skills development. The Systems Theory comes in to support the interplay between the ability of leaders to make decisions that develop employees for better performance. These findings are supported by those of Musungu and Kamaara (2024) who found a positive correlation between training and development and employee retention that consequently contributed to organizational performance in privately-owned media houses in Kenya.

Composite Descriptive Analysis for Organizational Performance

Presented in Table 19 is a composite descriptive analysis for performance.

Table 19

Composite Descriptive Analysis for Organizational Performance

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Financial_Perspective	101	1.50	5.00	3.8515	.79387
Customer_Perspective	101	1.00	5.00	3.9728	.75985
Internal_Business_Processes_ Perspective	101	1.75	5.00	4.0421	.68197
Learning_and_Growth_ Perspective	101	1.00	5.00	3.8391	.85043
Valid N (listwise)	101				

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

Table 19 above indicates that internal business processes perspective had the highest mean (M=4.0421) and the lowest standard deviation (SD=0.68197); an indication that the majority of the informants supported the questions fronted to them

and that the answers were concentrated around a central point. Additionally, the results suggest that internal operational systems such quality assurance, production efficiency, and process management were well established within educational publishing organizations where the study was carried out. Learning and growth perspective had the lowest mean (M=3.8391) as well as the highest standard deviation (SD=0.85043) which clearly shows that the responses of the minority of the participants showed disagreement by the way they scattered away from the mid-point. This therefore shows that the performance of the educational publishing organizations where the study was done were affected by issues of employee engagement, skills development, and retention. The Balanced Scorecard Model supports these findings because of the evidence of their support on internal business processes. These findings are in support of those of Lusega and Wabala (2022) that found training as a key element in the learning and growth perspective in the contribution of performance in public publishing firms in Kenya.

Correlation, Regression and Hypotheses Testing

The following section presents correlation and regression analysis while being guided by the objectives of the study. Correlation analysis (R) indicates the strength and direction of a relationship between variables. As Leedy and Ormrod (2014) explain, a correlation between variables is measured between -1 and +1 using Pearson Product-Movement Correlation Coefficient (Kothari & Garg, 2019) among other methods. On the other hand, regression analysis indicates the change in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable (Bryman, 2016) and is measured using the correlation of determination (R^2). It is presented in a percentage form.

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Strategic Direction and Performance

Outlined in Table 20 below are the outcomes of correlation and regression analysis guided by the study's objectives.

Table 20

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Strategic Direction and Performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.734[a]	.539	.534	.45064

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic_Direction

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The analysis outcomes in Table 20 above point to the fact that strategic direction posted a strong and positive correlation with performance (R=0.734). Additionally, the findings indicate that 53.9 (R^2=0.539) percent of performance was due to the provision of strategic direction by leaders. This may imply that improving strategic direction actions such as clarity of vision, mission, goals, and long-term orientation are strongly associated with the enhancement of performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. The findings further indicate that strategic direction is a key contributor of performance in the institutions where the study was carried out. The high explanatory power of strategic direction on performance indicates the role that leadership-driven strategic direction plays in increasing performance in organizations.

In relation to theoretical significance, the findings are strongly supported by Strategic Leadership Theory which explains that leaders' ability to clearly define organizations' strategic intent and align organizational efforts contributes to long-term performance of organizations. Systems Theory postulates that organizational

performance results from the interaction between such components as resources, structures, processes, and people. The findings of this study are in line with those of Muasya (2017) that found strategic direction as vital for strategy implementation at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Somalia.

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Organizational Culture and Performance

Table 21 below presents the outcome for the correlation and regression analysis between organizational culture and performance.

Table 21

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Organizational Culture and Performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.726[a]	.527	.522	.45625

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational_Culture

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As outlined in Table 21 above, organizational culture was found to have a strong and positive association with performance (R=0.726). In terms of contribution to performance, it was concluded that 52.7 percent (R^2=0.527) was as a result of the culture that leaders created in the organizations where the study was done. This implies that educational publishing organizations with well-developed and supportive cultures are likely to exhibit higher levels of performance and that the strength of the relationship between organizational culture and performance provides proof of the fact that organizational leaders practice shared values, norms, and practices that shape employee behavior and organizational outcomes. A high explanatory power between

organizational culture and performance indicates that culture is a critical mechanism through which strategic leadership influences performance.

The Balanced Scorecard Model supports these findings in that learning and growth thrives in a culture that supports employee engagement, capacity development, and long-term performance. For Systems Theory, these results indicate a strong coordination of activities within organizations' sub-systems as well as reducing friction. While examining the influence of organizational culture on performance in Debre Berhan University in Ethiopia, Menesha (2020) discovered that organizational culture influences performance.

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Resource Portfolio and Performance

Table 22 below presents correlation and regression analysis for resource portfolio and performance.

Table 22

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Resource Portfolio and Performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.718[a]	.516	.511	.46177

a. Predictors: (Constant), Resource_Portfolio

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As projected in Table 22 above, resource portfolio was found to have a strong and positive alignment with performance (R=0.718). Further, 51.6 percent (R^2=0.516) of performance was as a result of resource portfolio. These findings clearly prove that resource portfolio plays a critical role in the determination of performance in organizations and that educational publishing organizations with well-developed and

effectively managed physical, human, and technological resources achieve higher levels of performance. The moderate explanatory power of resources makes a key driver of organizational performance.

Strategic Leadership Theory support the findings of the study due to the vital role that strategic leaders play in sourcing and allocating resources while the Systems Theory underscores the interdependence that exists between resources and employee and customer satisfaction and consequently, resulting in the performance of organizations. The outcome of this study aligns with that of Daniel (2019) on the effects of human capital development on performance in Trustfund Pension Limited of Abuja, Nigeria, that reported efficient human capital development to enhance organization's productivity and spur its growth.

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Strategic Leadership and Performance

Table 23 below presents correlation and regression analysis between strategic leadership and performance.

Table 23

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Strategic Leadership and Performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.829[a]	.687	.683	.37146

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic_Leadership

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The outputs of the correlation between strategic leadership and performance presented in Table 23 above indicate a strong and positive association between the two variables (R=0.829) while 68.7 percent of the performance in the educational

publishing institutions where the study was done was due to strategic leadership. This could point to the fact that strategic leadership is a crucial determinant of performance and that higher levels of strategic leadership practices such as setting strategic direction, shaping the culture of organizations, and aligning resources contribute to performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. The high explanatory power of strategic leadership points to its important role in contributing to performance where the study was carried out.

The findings are backed up by Strategic Leadership Theory that posits that organizational performance is significantly influenced by top leaders' choices, behaviors, and ability to align internal capabilities for long-term organizational outcomes. Systems Theory supports this study by its ability in sustaining the integration of strategy, culture, resources, and processes towards the achievement of common goals. The above findings align with those of Papadionysiou and Myloni (2023) who discovered a positive relationship between organizational culture and human resource management practices, and firms' performance in different countries such as Greece and Scandinavia.

Composite Correlation for Strategic Leadership and Performance

Table 24 below presents composite correlation for strategic leadership and performance.

Table 24

Composite Correlation for Strategic Leadership and Performance

Correlations

		Strategic_Direction	Organizational_Culture	Resource_Portfolio	Organizational_Performance
Strategic_Direction	Pearson Correlation	1	.778	.590	.734
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	101	101	101	101
Organizational_Culture	Pearson Correlation	.778	1	.570	.726
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	101	101	101	101
Resource_Portfolio	Pearson Correlation	.590	.570	0.516	.718
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	101	101	101	101

(Source, Field Data, 2025)

From the findings of the correlation and regression analysis presented in Table 24 above, it can be deducted that strategic direction had the highest association and contribution (R=0.734, R^2=0.590) to performance while organizational culture came second (R=0.726, R^2=0.570), while resource portfolio was third (R=0.718, R^2=0.516). From these findings, it can be seen that leaders at educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya embrace the aspect of giving their organizations the strategic direction they require for them to get to the next level of success.

Additionally, these outcomes may suggest that organizations with clear vision, mission alignment and well-communicated strategic goals stand a better chance of achieving superior performance outcomes. The strong explanatory power of strategic direction points out to the fact that it plays a significant role in guiding decision-making and alignment of organizational efforts toward shared objectives. These findings further support Strategic Leadership Theory that emphasizes a leader's role in shaping the vision and mission of organizations. In a study done in Nigeria to identify the relationship between strategic leadership and performance of some selected manufacturing companies Onu et al. (2018) found out that for organizations to succeed, strategists in leadership positions had to adequately perform tasks such as establishing strategic direction, fostering an effective organizational culture, exploiting core competencies in an organization, exercising organizational controls, and instituting ethical practices.

Hypotheses Testing

According to Kothari and Garg (2019), hypotheses testing is done to test the confidence level of a model at 95 percent and therefore determine when to accept or reject a hypothesis. A null hypothesis is rejected if the p value is greater than 0.05 meaning that the confidence level of the model is below 95 percent. On the other hand, a null hypothesis is accepted if the p value is below 0.05 which means that the confidence level of the model is above 95 percent.

This study was underpinned on four hypotheses as follows:

H_{01} Strategic direction has no significant influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

H_{02} Organizational culture has no significant influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

H_{03} Organizational resource portfolio has no significant influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

H_{04} Strategic leadership has no significant combined influence on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya

Hypothesis Testing for Strategic Direction and Performance

Table 25 below presents results for hypothesis testing for strategic direction and organizational performance.

Table 25

ANOVA Table for Strategic Direction and Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
1	Regression	23.484	1	23.484	.000[b]
	Residual	20.105	99	.203	
	Total	43.589	100		

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

The product of ANOVA Table 25 above projected a significance level of 0.000 which implied a 100 percent confidence of the fitness of the model between strategic direction and performance. In this case, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis that "Strategic direction has significant effect on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya" was accepted. This could mean that strategic direction could be recommended in educational publishing organizations in Nairobi County in Kenya to bring the desired performance. These findings further point to the fact that strategic direction is able to significantly predict organizational performance and that the observed association between the two variables might not necessarily have been caused by chance. When

employees clearly understand and align themselves with the strategic goals, organizational efforts become more coordinated, leading to improved organizational outcomes. This study result is consistent with that of Nyaberi and Lumumba (2021) that found the confidence level between strategic direction and organizational performance to be 0.009. This could imply that, indeed, strategic direction is a key player in contributing to performance of organizations. Strategic Leadership Theory supports these findings due to its ability to influence organizational outcomes through setting of strategic direction, cultivating a conducive organizational culture and sourcing for and allocating resources for achievement of organizational objectives.

Hypothesis Testing for Organizational Culture and performance

ANOVA Table 26 below presents results for hypothesis testing for organizational culture and performance.

Table 26

ANOVA Table for Organizational Culture and Performance.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
1	Regression	22.981	1	22.981	.000[b]
	Residual	20.608	99	.208	
	Total	43.589	100		

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

In ANOVA Table 26 above, the significance level between organizational culture and performance is projected as 0.000 implying a 100 percent confidence of the model between the two variables. This means that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis that “Organizational culture has significant influence on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya” was accepted. This, therefore, means that the model between organizational culture and

performance can be relied upon to bring positive transformation. The significant relationship between organizational culture and performance implies that shared values, norms, beliefs, and behavioral expectation within an organization play a critical role in shaping employee attitudes, commitments, and productivity. The findings could further point to the fact that organizations that put in place a conducive cultural working environment are able to increase their performance. One of the vital elements of Strategic Leadership Theory is creation of a conducive working environment for business to thrive in. These findings are contrary to those of a study by Ng'ang'a (2018) that found organizational culture to have a significance level of 0.065 and therefore not having a significant influence on performance.

Hypothesis Testing for Resource Portfolio and Performance

The confidence level between resource portfolio and performance is outlined in ANOVA Table 27.

Table 27

ANOVA Table for Resource Portfolio and Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
1	Regression	22.479	1	22.479	.000[b]
	Residual	21.110	99	.213	
	Total	43.589	100		

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

A significance level of 0.000 was recorded in the hypothesis testing between resource portfolio and performance in Table 27 above, implying a 100 percent confidence level of the model between the two variables. In this case, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis that "Organizational resource portfolio has significant influence on the performance of educational publishers

operating in Nairobi County in Kenya" was accepted. These outcomes can point to a situation in which the educational publishers where the study was done have the necessary resources to accomplish their set objectives. The findings further suggest that organizations with adequate and well-managed and strategically aligned financial, human, technological, and physical resources are more likely to achieve higher performance levels. The model between resource portfolio and performance can, therefore, be used to bring positive changes in the institutions where the study was conducted. Strategic Leadership Theory backs these findings due to the ability of leaders to allocate resources that support the attainment of organizational goals. These outcomes are similar to those of Ng'ang'a (2018) that found a confidence level of 0.000 between resource portfolio and performance, making the null hypothesis to be rejected.

Hypothesis Testing for Strategic Leadership and Performance

Projected in ANOVA Table 28 below is the hypothesis testing for strategic leadership and performance.

Table 28

ANOVA Table for Strategic Leadership and Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
1	Regression	29.929	1	29.929	.000[b]
	Residual	13.660	99	.138	
	Total	43.589	100		

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

As exhibited in ANOVA Table 28 above, a significance level of 0.000 was recorded between strategic leadership and performance. This implies that the confidence level of the model between strategic leadership and performance was 100

percent making the null hypothesis to be rejected and the alternative hypothesis that "Strategic leadership has significant combined influence on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya" was accepted. These findings suggest that organizational performance is enhanced when effective strategic leadership highlights the important role of leadership in shaping organizational success by providing direction, aligning organizational culture and resources with long-term goals, and enhancing organizations' response to changes in the environment. This, therefore, means that the model on strategic leadership can be used to improve performance in the organizations where the study was carried out and that, strategic leadership is practiced at the educational publishing organizations where the study was conducted. These findings are in line with the Systems Theory that supports the integration of different sub-systems such as the setting of direction, creation of organizational culture, and provision of resources for achievement of performance. This outcome is in agreement with a previous study by Munyao (2021) that found a significance level of 0.000 between the study variables.

Chapter Summary

This chapter on results and discussions started by presenting the response rate of the questionnaires that had been issued out to respondents. The results showed a response rate of 72.66 percent. Thereafter, an analysis of the biodata of the sampled population was done followed by descriptive analyzes guided by the indicators of the two main variables, correlation and regression analyzes guided by the study's objectives. Towards the end, an analysis to test the hypotheses was done with all of them being rejected and alternative hypotheses accepted due to significance level being less than 5 percent.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter begins by presenting a summary of the findings as outlined in Chapter Four followed by conclusions that were drawn from the findings. Also presented in this chapter are the recommendations that were given in line with the findings and conclusions of the study, and a chapter summary.

Summary of Findings

The general aim of this study was to determine the influence of strategic leadership on the performance of educational publishing organizations in Nairobi County in Kenya. In order to achieve this general objective, four specific objectives were formulated as follows:

1. Establish the influence of strategic direction on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.
2. Discuss the influence of organizational culture on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.
3. Assess the influence of organizational resource portfolio on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.
4. Examine the combined influence of strategic leadership on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya.

The summary of the findings was presented based on each objective of the study.

Strategic Direction and Performance

The descriptive findings of strategic direction proved that it had a mean of 3.9703 and a standard deviation of 0.79474. Additionally, there was a strong and

positive correlation between strategic direction and performance (R=0.734) and that 53.9 percent of performance where the study was done was due to strategic direction. On hypothesis testing, the outcome showed a significance level of 0.000 making the null hypothesis to be rejected and the alternative hypothesis to be accepted. These findings pointed out to the fact that, indeed, strategic direction was a key player in the determination of performance where the study was done.

Organizational Culture and Performance

On organizational culture, the outcome for descriptive analysis posted a mean of 3.8886 and a standard deviation of 0.84223. Correlation analysis that was carried out indicated a strong and positive association between organizational culture and performance (R=0.726) and that 52.3 percent of performance was contributed by creating of an organizational culture that favored employees to work better. The significance level between organizational culture and performance was found to be 0.000 prompting the null hypothesis to be rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Resource Portfolio and Performance

The mean for organizational resource portfolio was 3.8168 with a standard deviation of 0.72101 while the outcomes of correlation and regression analysis showed a high and positive association (R=0.718) that existed between resource portfolio and performance with 51.6 percent of performance in the institutions where the study was done being caused by resource portfolio. On hypothesis testing, the findings indicated a significance level of 0.000 which made the null hypothesis to be rejected and the alternative one accepted.

Strategic Leadership and Performance

The association between strategic leadership and performance was found to be high and leaning to the positive side (R=0.829) and that strategic leadership contributed to 68.7 percent of performance where the study was carried out. The significance level of the model between strategic leadership and performance was found to be 0.000 prompting the null hypothesis to be rejected and the alternative one accepted.

Conclusions

The conclusions were done based on the findings while being guided by the objectives of the study.

Strategic Direction and Performance

The fact that strategic direction had a relatively high mean (M=3.9703) and a standard deviation of 0.79474 means that the majority of the study participants supported the statements that had been presented to them despite the dispersion of the responses from the mean point. This confirms the fact that leaders of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County provide future direction for their organizations making them able to steer the companies to achieve the set organizational goals and, thereby, flourishing in the business they are involved in. These assertions are confirmed by the existence of a strong and positive correlation (R=0.734) between strategic direction and performance and the contribution (R^2=0.539), that a clear strategic direction is provided where the study was done, resulting in increased performance. It can further be concluded that strategic direction, to a greater extent, predicts performance. Furthermore, a further conclusion can be made that strategic direction is a critical determinant of organizational performance in education

publishing institutions in Nairobi County in Kenya. Organizations that articulate clear vision, mission, and long-term goals are more likely to achieve superior performance. The importance of setting strategic direction in an organization is further affirmed by the results of fitness of the model (p=0.000) between strategic direction and performance.

The findings provide strong empirical support for Strategic Leadership Theory, which argues that organizational performance is largely influenced by leaders' ability to define and communicate a compelling vision, align organizational resources and guide employees toward long-term organizational objectives. Systems Theory supports the connection between different segments of an organization such as culture and resources to produce the desired results. The Balanced Scorecard argues that outcomes such as customer satisfaction and financial growth are products of the provision of strategic direction.

Organizational Culture and Performance

The critical role that organizational culture plays in the success of organizations is exemplified by the fact that the majority of the sampled population rated it highly (M=3.8886) despite the fact that the responses were scattered away from the mean point (SD=0.84223). It means that respondents perceived the culture of their organizations from a positive perspective and that it was strong and well established by their leaders. These outcomes confirm that leaders at the educational publishers operating in Nairobi County create a good and conducive working environment for employees to feel comfortable as they work. The findings further suggest that leaders within the educational publishing sector actively cultivate a conducive and supportive environment that enables employees to feel comfortable, motivated, and engaged in their work.

From the high correlation between organizational culture and performance, a further conclusion can be drawn that an increase in organizational culture results in an increase in employee engagement and subsequent goal achievement. This is also confirmed by the high percentage of the contribution that organizational culture has on performance where the study was done. From a theoretical perspective, Strategic Leadership Theory supports these findings due to the ability of strategic leaders to create a culture that supports innovation, employee engagement, and the realization of organizational goals.

Resource Portfolio and Performance

Resources play a critical role in supporting the implementation of strategies set out by leaders to achieve performance. The high mean of 3.8168 and a standard deviation of 0.72101 that were recorded from resource portfolio indicate the confidence that employees of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County had on the way resources were adequate, diverse and well-managed. The high correlation and contribution ($R=0.718$, $R^2=0.516$) that resource portfolio had on performance indicates that organizations that manage resources well tend to perform better than those that do not. A strong correlation and substantial contribution of resource portfolio to performance confirm that organizations that effectively acquire, allocate, and manage their resources are better positioned to implement strategies and achieve a higher level of performance. Furthermore, the availability and allocation of resources is a key determinant of performance in organizations.

One of the elements of Strategic Leadership Theory is resource portfolio. From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that leaders play a central role in making decisions regarding resource allocation and management (financial, human, and technological) that are central to translating strategic intent into measurable

organizational performance. The Systems Theory acknowledges resources as one of the vital elements that contribute to organizational performance. One of the internal processes in an organization is sourcing and acquisition of resources, and this is supported by the Balanced Scorecard Model in this study.

Strategic Leadership and Performance

The high correlation and regression scores ($R=0.829$, $R^2=0.687$) obtained from strategic leadership and performance outcomes of the study showed the level of confidence that employees had that strategic leadership has a key influence on the performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County. The high association and regression findings between strategic leadership and performance clearly indicate a high level of confidence among employees where the study was done. It can again be deduced that strategic leadership increases in direct proportion to performance. Strategic leadership behaviors such as setting vision, effective communication and empowerment, and adaptability contribute to achievement of organizational goals and objectives. This, therefore, means that strategic leaders can be believed to bring organizational transformation and success.

From the perspective of Strategic Leadership Theory, these findings confirm that leaders' strategic actions, decisions, and behaviors shape organizational outcomes and that leaders who provide direction, align resources, and engage employees effectively can drive organizational transformation and performance. The findings further confirm the vital role of Systems Theory to bring together different parts of an organization for the purpose of achieving organizational strategies.

Filling Research Gaps

This study had established conceptual, contextual, and methodological gaps. Conceptually, it had been established that although previous studies had been carried out on strategic leadership and performance, not many of them had tested the three indicators of strategic leadership as was the case in this study with majority of them having used all the six indicators of strategic leadership. This study therefore filled this gap by testing the influence that strategic direction, organizational culture, and resource portfolio had on performance. The study had further established contextual gaps in that although there was quite a considerable number of previous studies that had been done on strategic leadership and performance, very few had been done in educational publishing institutions. This gap was, therefore, filled by doing the study in educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya. Methodologically, a majority of previous studies had used different methods than were used in this study. This study filled these gaps by using different methodologies such as a positivism research approach and correlational research design.

Recommendations

The following were the recommendations for policy, managerial practice, and further studies that were made based on the outcomes and objectives of the study.

Recommendations for Policy

Since strategic direction has already been found to contribute to performance, a recommendation for policy is made for developing and strengthening formal strategic planning initiatives in all educational publishing institutions in Kenya. In terms of strengthening capacity building for strategic leadership, it is important for the introduction of policies in capacity building programs for leaders on strategic

leadership, planning and performance management. There is also a need to align the educational publishing institutions' goals with those of Kenya's Education Agenda such as the Competency Based Education (CBE) as well as digital learning. The implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems could go a long way in ensuring that the gains that have already been achieved are not dropped mid-way.

Recommendations for Managerial Practice

This study recommended the strengthening of the communication mechanisms for the organizations' vision, mission, and goals across all departments in the educational publishing organizations as some of the key drivers in leading organizational success. It is also important for organizational leaders to ensure that strategic initiatives are integrated into daily operations in the educational publishing organizations for the purpose of translating strategic plans into clear, actionable departmental objectives and performance targets. Additionally, it is recommended that resources be allocated for and aligned with strategic goals, initiatives, and priorities.

Recommendations for Further Research

Since the current study confined itself to educational publishers operating in Nairobi County in Kenya, future studies could be extended to other Counties in Kenya and even in the East African region. The expansion of the scope of the study will help in understanding whether the application of strategic leadership differs across various regions. It is recommended that future studies be expanded to other institutions such as higher education institutions, private schools, and non-profit organizations with the aim of establishing how strategic leadership is applied in different contextual settings. Future study could use longitudinal research design that supports collection of data

over a long period of time as opposed to the current study that collected data at a single point in time. In terms of variables, future studies could use other variables such as organizational culture, employee engagement, and digital transformation. Lastly, future studies could use qualitative as well as mixed-method approaches since the current study was quantitative in nature.

Chapter Summary

This chapter started by presenting the summary of the key findings of the study while being guided by the objectives. Later, the chapter outlined the conclusions that had been drawn from the findings of the study before ending with various recommendations for policy, managerial practice, and areas of further research. The chapter then concluded with a chapter summary.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Research Instruments (Questionnaire)

Questionnaire on Strategic Leadership and Organizational Performance of Educational Publishers in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Instructions

This questionnaire is intended to collect data on the influence of strategic leadership on the organizational performance of educational publishers operating in Nairobi County, Kenya, as part of a Master of Arts in Leadership degree course. Please take a few minutes to fill in the tool. The information you give will be treated with strict confidence, and will be used for academic purposes only. Participants will not be paid to participate in the study.

Section A: Biodata

1. Indicate the name of your publishing organization (optional).

   .....

2. Indicate your gender. (Tick as appropriate.)

   a) Male ___

   b) Female ___

3. What is your position at the publishing organization? (Tick as appropriate.)

   a) Senior manager ___

   b) Line manager ___

   c) Technical staff ___

   d) Other ___ (specify: .....)

Section B: Strategic Leadership

Using the scale provided below, indicate by ticking in the appropriate box how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – No comment, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

	Strategic Leadership	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
	Strategic Direction					

1.	This organization has clear vision, mission, and core values					
2.	This organization has a strategic plan in place					
3.	This organization has a well-defined set of policies and procedures					
4.	This organization's goals are aligned to specific and measurable targets					
	Organizational Culture					
5.	This organization has clear values, norms, systems, language, assumptions, and beliefs					
6.	This organization has a clear set of workplace philosophy, experiences and expectations					
7.	The leadership clearly and adequately communicates the organizational culture, policies and procedures					
8.	This organization has a reward system in place					
	Resource Portfolio					
9.	This organization has adequate budgets for its capital expenditure and operations					
10.	This organization has adequate human resource					
11.	This institution has invested in physical and technological infrastructure					
12.	This institution has an asset management system in place					

Section C: Organizational Performance

Using the scale provided below, indicate by ticking in the appropriate box how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – No comment, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

	Performance	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
	Financial Perspective					
1.	This organization's sales revenues have increased over the last three years					
2.	This organization's profits have increased over the last three years					
3.	This organization measures performance against the set goals and strategic objectives					
4.	This organization has mechanisms to reduce instances of loss					
	Customer Perspective					
5.	This organization records high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty					
6.	This organization enjoys high levels of customer acquisition and retention					
7.	This organization has a wide range of product and service offerings					
8.	This organization grows and protects its market share through timely					

	response to customer needs and concerns					
	Internal-Business Processes Perspective					
9.	This organization boasts of high quality of products and services					
10.	This organization records good turn-around time in product and service delivery					
11.	This organization actively controls the cost of internal processes					
12.	This organization has a high rate of new product introduction					
	Learning and Growth Perspective					
13.	This organization boasts of high levels of employee satisfaction and loyalty					
14.	This organization enjoys high rates of employee retention					
15.	This organization engages in training and skilling of employees					
16.	This organization has functional and reliable information systems					

Thank you

Appendix II: Consent Forms

PAC University Research Authorization Letter

National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI) Research Permit

Kenya Publishers Association Letter