

**OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF NON  
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A Research Project Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Administration (Strategic  
Management) of Egerton University**

**EGERTON UNIVERSITY**

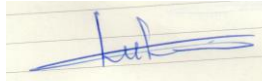
**OCTOBER, 2024**

## DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Declaration

This project report is my original work and it has not been presented in this university or any other for the award of a degree.

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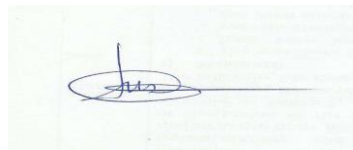
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### Recommendation

This project report has been submitted with my approval as the university supervisor.

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**Signature**

18/9/2024

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## **DEDICATION**

To my dear parents and the entire Chochoi's family for positioning academic establishment and fortress, and for being a continuous source of support, inspiration, encouragement and hope. Special dedication to my Husband Felix and children Talia, Ashley, Mayah and Robbins your patience, love and understanding made me achieve this degree. To my late brother Nathan who was set to graduate in the same university but death took him away I celebrate you brother.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Past studies suggest that operational strategies are important predictors of performance of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). However, few studies have empirically examined the effect of operational strategies on performance of NGOs. Therefore, this study sought to determine the effect of operational strategies on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County, Kenya. The specific objectives were to establish the effect of cost priority on the performance of NGOs, to determine the effect of quality priority on the performance of NGOs, to establish the effect of speed delivery on the performance of NGOs, to determine the effect of flexibility on the performance of NGOs and to determine the joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County. The study was based on the causal explanatory research design. The study population was 59 NGOs in Nakuru County. A census of 59 chief executive officers was taken as the study participants. Questionnaires were used to collect data. A pilot study was conducted to ensure the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient above 0.7 was obtained and considered acceptable. Data was described by the use of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations and analyzed using Pearson's correlation analysis. The hypotheses were tested by the use of simple and multiple regression analyses. The study found that cost priority, quality priority, speed delivery and flexibility affected the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County. The study concluded that cost priority, quality priority, speed delivery and flexibility significantly affected the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County. There was also a significant joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, speed delivery and flexibility on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County. The study recommends that the NGOs in Nakuru County should incorporate diverse operational strategies such as cost priority, quality priority, speed delivery and flexibility in order to enhance their performance. This study was confined to cost priority, cost priority, quality priority, speed delivery and flexibility in relation to the performance of NGOs; therefore, similar studies based on other operational strategies and methodologies should be conducted in the NGOs and other sectors to enhance the generalization of the findings. The policy makers, practitioners and scholars alike are projected to find this inquiry insightful in comprehending the nexus between operational strategies and performance of NGOs in Kenya.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>GOK:</b>	Government of Kenya
<b>IFC:</b>	International Finance Corporation
<b>NGOs:</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>ROK:</b>	Republic of Kenya
<b>SAC:</b>	Systems Auditability and Control
<b>SAMAF:</b>	South African Micro-Finance Apex Fund
<b>SAP:</b>	Structural Adjustment Programmes
<b>VAT:</b>	Value Added Tax

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In the modern business environment, organizations are compelled to employ strategies that give them an upper hand amid the unprecedented heightened competition (Hitt & Sirmon, 2022). Motivated by the urge to benefit from good reputation and promote overall performance, most organizations have focused on identifying and executing operational strategies within the confines of their business (Adnant, 2022; Dess & Lumpkin, 2021; Urbancová, 2021). In this regard, therefore, novel operational strategies have been touted as being essential agents of organizational and institutional performance (Slack, 2023).

#### **1.1.1 Operational Strategies**

Operational strategies are the specific actions that direct business activities towards the attainment of goals. Since every organizations aims realizing favourable outcomes, the formulation of operational strategies is often aligned to the overall organizational goals. It is in this context that Schilling (2022) is imperative that a well formulated operational strategy should in no uncertain terms remain both sustainable and comprehensive while also remaining cognizant of the cardinal objectives provoking action within the organization. Operational strategies in this regard are meant to deliver quality products and services by focusing on cost reduction, efficiency and general organizational success.

In common parlance operational strategies have been perceived to connote divergent meanings but different research investigators (White, 2021). For instance, Beckman and Rosenfield (2022) considered innovativeness, service, time and technological edge as the critical components of operational strategies. Haider (2021) contended that operational strategies should be taken as the formulation of execution plan that enables the organization to expeditiously utilize the treasured resources for progressive growth. Oparanma (2020) has segregated the operational strategies by classifying them into facility, capacity and processes on one hand and workforce, procurement and structure on the other. Slack (2023) argues that capacity strategy, supply network and process technology strategy are critical operational strategies for managing business organizations. However, Ward (2022) placed price on resource management and value proposition as the most plausible ways of comprehending operational strategies.

It is unequivocally apparent that diverse operational strategies exist that can be adopted to address the key question of how to utilize organizational resources to achieve the set objectives. However, within this diversity, the most plausible attributes of operational strategies adeptly applicable within the confinement of Non-Profit Organizations (NGOs) and which have the susceptibility to spur performance, according to Beckman and Rosenfield (2022), are delivery speed, quality, cost and flexibility. Therefore, in this study, cost priority, quality, delivery speed and flexibility were adopted as the dimensions of operational strategies.

Cost priority aims at cutting on the expenses and reducing wastages as much as possible on the available resources (Koufteros & Vonderembse, 2021). If this remains operationally tenable, a considering less costly strategies can augment organizational performance. However, lowering prices unprecedentedly in profit directed institutions or organizations, could jeopardize the projected profit margins as products and services may end up failing to fetch high prices. In his view, Slack (2023) advises that lowering down the cost should be carried out in tandem with the associated procurement costs, processes and procedures. On the contrary, Sluti (2021) contended that there existed progressive linkages between performance and cost priority while White (2021) did not ascertain any significant effect of cost priority on performance. This presents a further supposition that low cost strategies and accelerated performance are at best rarely synonymous.

Quality priority focuses on meeting the stakeholder needs and conforming to organizational performance specifications. Quality is basically the beneficiaries' expectations relative to the service rendered by the presumptive providers. Tentatively, meeting or exceeding beneficiaries' expectations has been affirmed by Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (2022) to be the outstanding demonstration of acceptance of the extent to which the product or service is qualitative. Empirically it has been adduced that improved quality and organizational performance are interconnected synergistically (Wood, 2014). In retrospective, quality is perceived to be the most significant and undoubtedly consistent conjecturer of performance in comparison to innovativeness, capacity and planning. There are different forms taken by quality objectives but the common conspicuous ones include but not limited to flawlessness and specification conformity.

According to Ward (2022) obtainability, dependability and expediency are the defining characteristics of delivery speed. Accordingly, Long and Stonebraker (2022) perceive delivery as the steadfastness in responding to the requests or orders from diverse stakeholders. In this regard, Wacker (2021) preoperationally contextualizes delivery in terms of the steadfastness and inventiveness of extending services to the assigned individuals. Li (2020) deems delivery as a time issue conceptualized in terms of promptness in creating new products or services. In this regard, the realization of delivery speed is dependent upon the degrees to which past deliveries have been forthrightly prompt. To comply with the intentions to fast-track the pace at which operations are undertaken, speed delivery is conceptualized in terms of just-in-time delivery, process-time reduction, on-time deliveries, fast payments and time to complete administrative transactions (Khalili & Nazemi, 2021).

The ease of switching between products and services instantaneously is conceived as flexibility (Chandes & Pache, 2020). However, it is cumbersome to operationalize flexibility given the breadth and depth of its coverage, all of which attempt to decipher the means through which organizations can effectively handle fluctuation in demand and supply from time to time and place to place. Its operation considers the ability of address individual demands for specific product features. According to Erkan (2021) flexibility enables an organization to manage environmental uncertainty. Zhang (2003) perceives flexibility as the ability to comply with stakeholder/beneficiary expectations during tempestuous times. Therefore, it is imperative for NGOs operating under resource constraints environment to invigorately ascertain the appropriate forms of flexibility to be adopted to enhance performance.

### **1.1.2 Performance of NGOs**

The ultimate and single most aim of organizations and institutions is to meet the ascribed and unprecedented objectives of performance. It is in this respect that the critical component of performance in nearly all organizations clusters around conformity with regulatory standards, ensuring operational usefulness, as well as inadvertently realizing continuousness. This involves the assessment of the performance eventuality and outcomes for nearly all the certified activities usually with the consideration of cost efficiency, eminence and adeptness as the superimposed performance parameters (Wibowo, 2022). While nonfinancial considerations have dominated the analysis of performance it was also the contention of this investigation to consider the financial indicators as well. In this regard, return on investment

(ROI) and product market performance were particularly viewed as the indomitable aspects and therefore touted as the essential considerations of the non-financial indicators measured not only by relevance and promptness but also by impact and sustainability. It is about how effectively an organization transforms the available inputs into outputs. Richard (2021) contextualized and conceptualized performance within the lens of improved sales turnover, return on equity and assets as the ability of the organization to endlessly remain operationally sound.

Although organizations utilize idiosyncratic indicators appropriate to their operational mandate to deduce and operationalize performance, for many organizations, however, the performance indicators tend to enshrine both financial and non-financial considerations (Alavi & Yolowe, 2023). Consequently, Euske and Lebens (2022) deduced performance by the application of financial and nonfinancial attributes and used these to ascribe to the thematic requirements for the organizational success. In tandem with this theorization, Flood and Hefferman (2021) view performance as the capability of the organization to proficiently and efficiently execute the generally inadequate resources to bring about the existential goals. Ittner and Larcker (2024) used ubiquitous attributes such as productivity and quality to operationalize performance. Similarly, Cascio (2021) underscored the realization of organizational mission as the presumptive performance based definition while Kotter (2021) considered performance within the ambits of net income/revenue generation and expansion. According to Chandes and Pache (2020) performance can be operationalized in terms of the perceived impact and the unprecedented sustainability of the programs undertaken by the NGOs often executed effectively and efficiently. In this study, therefore, performance was conceptualized as propounded by Hill (2022) with respect to relevance, impact, promptness and sustainability of the NGOs' programs.

Relevance in its entirety interrogates whether the program activities are executed to suit the pronouncements of the concerned parties particularly the program sponsors and beneficiaries. The critical aspect evaluated when introspectively scrutinizing a program's relevance is its capacity to safeguard the interests of the beneficiaries often consistent with the predetermined goals. While effectiveness is concerned with the prudential use of resources as enshrined in the objectives of the program, the outstanding concern with impact is veracity of the changes resulting from the program's execution. Promptness on the other hand addresses outputs as compared with program investment. Indeed, Chandes and Pache (2020) futuristically

operationalize sustainability in relation to the continuity of the program outcomes going beyond closure phase.

### **1.1.3 The Non-Governmental Organizations in Kenya**

NGOs are perceived as the institutions operating independently of the government involvement, typically focusing on addressing the social or economic issue without being driven by the profit motive. In Kenya, the NGOs' Council is legally delegated to regulate all the unprecedented activities undertaken by the NGOs. Consequently, the council functions autonomously, approving and scrutinizing the operational and legislative confines and boundaries of the registered NGOs. As far as the incorporated membership of the council is concerned, Owino (2023) affirms the existence of foreign as well as locally domiciled NGOs. Beverly and Ochieng' (2020) observed that there has been an increased proliferation of NGOs carrying out charitable work in Kenya. These NGOs are actively involved in small scale enterprises, disability and many others forms of charitable work (Karanja, 202). Similarly, Kanyinga (2022) opines that NGOs provide services and support social welfare. In this study the focus was on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County. In Nakuru County, there are over 59 formally registered NGOs. These NGOs involved in diverse activities such as gender issues, humanitarian and social welfare programs. The NGOs have adopted different operational strategies.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

NGOs are presumptively perceived to display a significant role in outrightly stimulating socioeconomic development. Serving as the relatively reliable conduits of poverty reduction and alleviation of human inequities, NGOs have continued to play a warrantable role in enhancing progression in the society. In Nakuru County there are many NGOs undertaking diverse programs and projects. However, most of these NGOs have not performed as expected (Omondi, 2021; Owino, 2023). With the declining donor funding, concerns have been raised regarding the relevance and impact of the programs implemented by the NGOs in the area. As a result, the NGOs have unyieldingly failed to bring forth the outcomes enshrined in the performance objectives. To enhance performance, different operational strategies have been adopted by the NGOs. Previous studies have been conducted to scrutinize the unprecedented effect of operational strategies on institutional performance in Kenya (Kasanga, 2023; Luthabo, 2022; Mwangi, 2022; Randon, 2022). The results of these studies suggested a sufficiently plausible effect of operational strategies on organizational

performance. However, the studies considered financial indicators of performance yet NGOs, as postulated in the study, are not motivated by profit making goals. For example, Kasanga (2023) looked the perceived predictors of NGOs' financial performance in Kenya and averred that effortful execution of cost mitigation measures was significantly associated with performance while Mwangi (2022) established that financial sustainability was a significant determinant of performance of NGOs. However, the studies were not based in Nakuru County where NGOs have adopted diverse operational strategies to enable them achieve their intended objectives. Past studies have not examined whether the operational strategies adopted have not only ensured that the NGOs implement their programs effectively but also realize improved performance. This heralded empirical and thematic gaps in so far as operational strategies and NGOs' performance in Nakuru County were trepidiously concerned. Hence, the study examined the perceived effect of operational strategies on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of the study was to establish the effect of operational strategies on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

- i. To determine the effect of cost priority on performance of NGOs in Nakuru County.
- ii. To establish the effect of quality priority on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County.
- iii. To establish the effect of delivery speed on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County.
- iv. To determine the effect of flexibility on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County
- v. To determine the joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County

### **1.4 Hypotheses of the Study**

The study was based on the following hypotheses which were guided by a comprehensive review of literature:

- i. **H<sub>01</sub>**: There is no significant effect of cost priority on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County.

- ii. **H<sub>02</sub>**: Quality priority has no significant effect on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County
- iii. **H<sub>03</sub>**: There is no significant effect of delivery speed on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County.
- iv. **H<sub>04</sub>**: Flexibility has no significant effect on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County.
- v. **H<sub>05</sub>**: Cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility have no significant joint effect on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

There has been an inadvertent growth in the urgency of the NGOs to continuously spur socio-economic upliftments in Kenya today. Thus, the findings may inadvertently benefit the government, the management of NGOs, the donors and other scholars. The government may embrace the study outcomes to formulate policies regulating the operations of NGOs in Kenya. The findings may also enable the national council of NGOs to enforce appropriate laws and regulations that will strategically enhance the performance of NGOs.

The findings might also be significant to the management of NGOs who would be able to appreciate the perceived operational presuppositions of NGOs in enhancing performance. It is contextually projected that the management may not ignore to reflectively scrutinize the prevailing strategies in terms of their pragmatic values while also strategically and synergistically executing novel strategies in the NGOs. The donors, institutions and individuals supporting the programs undertaken by the NGOs adopted the findings to assess the impact of their contribution in humanitarian support programs.

Scholastic contribution of the study is by large evident as scholars motivated to delve deeper into this field of inquiry may receive critical insights from the study outcomes to discernible comprehend the perceived linkage between operational strategies and NGOs' performance. The study also contributed to the existing pool of knowledge regarding operational strategies and performance in NGOs. As a result, the scholars and other researchers will borrow from the findings to support literary citations as well as develop themes for further research. In this regard, the study may serve as noteworthy points of reference guiding future investigators/researchers/scholars inspired to promote knowledge in this regard.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

### **1.6.1 Scope of the Study**

The study's scope is operationalized as the geographical area that a researcher intends to cover in the study (Creswell, 2014). Based on this ideation, the study was delineated within the scheduled confines of NGOs in Nakuru County. In this county there are 59 registered NGOs. The target population was the branch managers who were purposively sampled. Conceptually, the study focused on cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility as the predictor variables affecting NGOs' performance. The effect of the chosen variables was intervened by the legal framework. In tandem with the projected study's goals, the causal explanatory design was embraced with a bias on the utilization of the questionnaire to gather quantitative data.

### **1.6.2 Limitations of the Study**

It was projected that a number of constraints were to be confronted during the investigation. These included the reluctance of some respondents to unperturbly divulge pertinent information related to the study. In retrospect, the respondents were guaranteed confidentiality which served to promote the collection of accurate information. This was accompanied by adherence to the principle of anonymity in the entire process of the scholastic interrogation. Conceptually, the study was confined to cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility as the predictor variables perceived to affect NGOs' performance exclusively in Nakuru County. However, this was considered to be associated with the cumbersomeness of outcome generalization to other counties in Kenya where NGOs are domiciled. There were also constraints of time and financial requirements. However, the researcher carried out the study within the stipulated budget and time frame. BY considering the unit of analysis and the probable source of information, the investigation was confined to the apex management in the NGOs involved in the investigation. This restraint might unreservedly jeopardize the data collected as the employees occupying the apex position of the NGOs might remain reserved to reveal secret details associated with the NGOs' performance. However, in militating against such eventualities, appropriate sampling procedure was adopted to incorporate the right participants.

### **1.7 Assumption of the Study**

The investigation was directed by the inexorable assumptions that the participants would provide accurate information that would help to ascertain the effect of operational strategies

on organizational performance. It was also assumed that the NGOs in Nakuru County have adopted diverse operational strategies and that the research tool would generate accurate and consistent data. Indeed, the designated operational strategies were inherently assumed to affect the NGOs' performance.

### **1.8 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Cost priority:** This referred to the efforts made by the NGOs to cut on the expenses and wastage by figuring out all aspects of costs and lowering prices when implementing programs and projects.

**Delivery speed:** This referred to the speed at which the NGOs deliver the intended schedules, stakeholder orders, projects and programs.

**Effectiveness:** This referred to the propensity of the programs executed by the NGOs to eventually result in the attainment of the intended objectives.

**Flexibility:** This referred to the unreserved capability of the NGOs to amicably handle unprecedented uncertainty, satisfy varied stakeholder expectations, deal with individual demands and promptly switch between one program and another.

**Impact:** This referred to the positive or negative changes created by the NGO to the community as a result of the implementation of diverse NGOs.

**Non-Governmental Organization:** An organization that functions autonomously without the inclination to derive benefits but which seeks to address an identifiable social, ecological and economic concern in Nakuru County.

**Operational Strategies:** The plan of action embraced by the NGOs to conduct their affairs and systematically and synergistically reach their existential objectives. In this study, operational strategies were cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility in NGOs.

**Performance:** This referred to the realizable organizational output assessed with respected to a priori formulated objectives. In this study, performance included relevance, promptness, impact and sustainability in relation to NGOs programs.

**Quality priority:** This referred to the procedures taken by NGO to conform to stipulated specifications and operational regulations.

**Relevance:** This was deduced as the propensity of goal attainment owing to the execution of the NGOs' preprogrammed activities to meet the prescribed needs of the beneficiaries.

**Sustainability:** This referred to the extent to which programs undertaken by the NGOs continue after the closure of the projects.

**Promptness:** This referred to the extent to which the NGO implements its programs within some stipulated timelines.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Literature review is an evaluative process that gathers empirical views linked to the current study. Objectively, the review involves analyzing past studies with the sole aim of discerning the research gaps. The literature review has been done by evaluating past studies regarding operational strategies and NGOs' performance. The chapter has also reviewed the theories formulated to explain how operational strategies were linked to NGOs' performance. The conceptual framework unreservedly describing the parameters of the study variables has also been highlighted as well as the summary of the identified gaps.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Perspectives**

The connection between operational strategies and NGOs' performance was theoretically anchored. Therefore, this investigation was proficiently guided by the theoretical tenets of the theory of management by objectives (MBO) and the McKinsey's 7s theory. These two theories were uninquisitively considered appropriate in showing how the execution of the operational strategies was hypothesized to achieve the performance goals of the NGOs.

##### **2.2.1 Management by Objectives Theory**

MBO was progressively introduced and popularized by Peter F. Drucker in 1954 in his book *The Practice of Management*. Drucker (1996) pointed out the unprecedented objectives required of each and every business entity to foster performance and remain viably operational. The theory postulates that an objective is the end towards which the entire organization works toward to ensure presumptive survival. Kaufman (2020) contended that filling the gap between the current and the preferred situations should ultimately be pursued by the concerned business entity. As a result, the objectives for which the management should be concerned ought to be clear and display all the facets that often work synergistically to accomplish the desired results. When made explicit, objectives become multiuse tools for performance appraisal (Ansoff, 1965). As a theoretical dispensation, MBO relies on explicitly defining the performance objectives for each unit of analysis in comparison with the requisite operational conditions (Rossi & Warglien, 1999). Indeed, Fife (2003) commendably conceptualizes MBO as a theoretical dispensation concerned with rewarding performance exclusively based on objective fulfillment. Verboncu and Vrintuc

(2014) consider MBO theory as the most reliable strategic management system that organizations can adopt to ascertain achievable goals and the expected results.

Flak and Hoffmann (2019) opined that the most important tenet of MBO is the requirement that the formulation of objectives should be specific, measurable, attainable, and realistic and time constrained. By adopting this theory in this study it was assumed that the operational strategies would guide the realization of organizational performance goals. As a result, the effect of operational strategies on organizational performance can well be explained by the MBO theory. In this regard, the theory clearly articulates how organizational performance is a significant function of the implementation of the specific operational strategies (Pazvakavambwa & Steyn, 2014). Usually organizations tend to formulate unprecedented operational strategies that propel the organization towards accelerated performance (Chiang, 2019). For example, NGOs in Kenya have embraced diverse operational strategies to improve performance. This is exactly what the public and the funders of the NGOs need to see: the resources directed at meeting the identified needs through efficient effective, accountable and transparent utilization of the resources. Therefore, the operational strategies are often applied in the strategic management of the NGOs with the aim of enhancing performance. Consequently, the theory was adopted to guide the study as it can clearly explain why NGOs should be concerned with the performance goals which concur with the study's outcome variable.

#### **2.2.4 The McKinsey's 7s Theory**

Originally, McKinsey articulated the theory in the 1970s to comprehensively grasp the application of the valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable resources and capabilities to spur performance (Barney, 1991). Consequently, the theory pinpoints the cardinal attributes that can foster organizational performance. These are the three Ss of strategy, structure and systems together with the four Ss of super-ordinate goals, staff, style, skills (Hitt, 2017). Structure unperturbably focuses on the way tasks are set, split and classified while systems are described as the routine activities and procedures executed to complete the apportioned tasks (Hitt, 2017). The operational strategies of cost priority, quality priority, speed delivery and flexibility are the subvariables of the system as one of the Ss. Essentially, skills are the unique abilities that enable employees to execute the operational strategies under the guidance of the leadership style of the NGOs' management, showing how they interact and the actions they take (Hitt, 2017).

As it is evident, skills, staff, structure and systems ought rightly serves to proliferate performance concerns within the organization. Considered critical in achieving organizational performance, the proposition overtly proclaims that flourishing organizations may made a consideration of the seven components for purposes of enhancing performance (Hitt, 2017). As can be propensively construed, performance is evidently a by-product of these components thus confirming the suitability of the theory in this particular study. Furthermore, the theory focuses on the operational strategies which as institutionally required when formulating organizational strategic plans. Holistically taken, therefore, the elements characteristic of the theory are aptly appropriate in elucidating how NGOs can embrace the operational strategies to enhance performance.

### **2.3 Performance of the NGOs**

Performance has been examined in terms of intended outputs conceptualized in terms of many variables including cost effectiveness and quality (Hillman, 2021). In this regard, performance is an assessment of achievement indicators realized within the stipulated time. This evaluation could be objective or subjective based assessment (Kotler, 2021). Objective based appraisal focuses on the progress made in meeting the financial, production, marketing and other operational activities oriented towards meeting organizational goals. Subjective aspects emphasize the value of the result achieved through the actions of individuals and groups in carrying out their activities. Further, Wibowo (2022) explains that measuring performance should be based on the objective aspect that can be measured using financial ratios.

According to Junchen and Xiaoming (2024) performance is associated with organizational work outcome. This view restricts performance to the execution of specific tasks to achieve the intended outcomes (Kaplan & Norton, 2021). Moreover, Flood and Hefferman (2021) view performance in terms of accomplishing the stipulated goals within the confines of the resources set aside to do so. Borman and Schmit (2021) exquisitely looked at performance broadly in both judgmental and evaluative terms by focusing on growth in all discernible fronts. However, it was the contention of this investigation to use the conceptual theorization of Langereis (2023) which operationalize performance with regard to relevance, promptness, impact and sustainability of the programs undertaken by the NGOs as postulated.

Serageldin (2022) observes that for NGOs to achieve these performance parameters, diverse funding sources are required. According to Alymkulova and Seipulnik (2023) many NGOs are unable to realize their performance goals due to decreased donor funding. This makes performance a major challenge that is faced by many NGOs. Abdelkarim (2024) contended that it is only the NGOs with the propensity to harness checks and balances to safeguard resource utilization that can amicably meet performance objectives. To be able to generate a positive impact and allow the NGO to continue to provide relevant, timely, impactful and sustainable projects and programs, sound operational strategies are required.

## **2.4 Operational Strategies**

Globally, organizations adopt appropriate operational strategies to remain operational in the intermittently changing business environment. It is postulated that operational strategies can propel organizations to achieve their overall goals when they are aligned with the organizational mission and pursued incessantly to eventually culminate in the delivery of cost effective performance excellence (Hand & Millenbergh, 2022). In the NGO Sector, challenges have been witnessed with performance being the chief concern among stakeholders (Carroll & Stater, 2020; Erkan, 2021). These challenges tend to undermine their capacity to survive. As a result, NGOs have either folded up (ceased operating) or embraced novel operational strategies to remain sustainable. Anderson (2022) suggested that many NGOs have adopted different operational strategies depending on their operational environment. Four fundamental operational strategies have adeptly been pursued by many NGOs namely quality priority, cost priority, flexibility and delivery speed and executed to enable the NGOs build resilient capacities required for accelerated performance.

According to Khalili and Nazemi (2021) NGOs ought to ensure that their operations are executed in supposedly strict compliance with the prerogatives of performance criteria to avoid premature termination of designated programs, projects and activities. Markus (2021) observed that economic difficulties have influenced NGOs to come up with novel cost cutting strategies for enhancing performance. For instance, ensuring that the programs meet the needs of the target audience can enhance the performance of the NGOs. Hodge and Piccolo (2023) have associated NGOs with external unpredictable resource dependency and advocated for diligent utilization of the available resources to truncate wastage and leakage. As Clark (2022) unequivocally contended, diversification of operational strategies may potentially serve to help the NGOs realize a long lasting performance impact long lasting.

Therefore, it was hypothesized that there was a significant effect of these strategies on NGOs' performance as discussed in the subsequent subsections.

#### **2.4.1 Cost Priority and Performance**

The effect of cost priority and consideration has been examined in previous studies. For example, Norden (2022) sought to ascertain both the perceived effect of wastage control on the performance of Norwegian NGOs. The study design revolved around the cross-sectional-design involving 350 employees sampled from 20 NGOs. By using the regression analysis to analyze data gathered by the use of a questionnaire, the study established that cost priority was positively associated with NGOs' performance.

Jozef (2021) sought to ascertain whether organizational performance could be achieved by adopting different cost reduction strategies in not-for-profit organizations in Yugoslavia. Anchored on a case study approach, the questionnaire was involved in gathering data from 150 respondents nominated from humanitarian NGOs working in war torn regions. Using the appropriate data analysis procedures and after carefully scrutinizing the results, it was unequivocally evident that cutting on constraining expenses provided opportunity for the NGOs to enhance their performance. In Pakistan, Swarithitra (2021) examined the potential connection between cost priority and sustainability of selected NGOs with global outreach mission. The descriptive design was apparently endorsed as the unitary intention was to describe the status quo within the ambits of thematic content analysis. The results revealed that consistent cost reduction strategies guaranteed the operational continuity of NGOs.

In England, Barnett (2022) examined the role of cost priority on corporate success of public limited companies. A survey of 312 respondents was selected from 857 employees who provided data which was analyzed inferentially. The study postulated that cost priority was closely linked to business success. Bhargavi and Yaseen (2024) interrogated the policy changes and business performance in Yemen with an inherent bias on the use of the questionnaires to gather data from 55 leaders in the public administration and law enforcement sectors. Conceptually four types of operational strategies were scrutinized to discern their perceived effect on performance. The evaluated opinions postulated that cost priority was the most effective strategy used as a conduit for realizing organizational performance.

Regionally, Ezenwa (2022) scrutinized the purported link between cost priority and the success of state owned parastals in the Ibadan state of Nigeria by considering the views of 208 randomly isolated study participants from 10 parastals. The results unequivocally illustrated a perceived significant linkage pitying cost and success ( $r=0.671$ ;  $p=0.001$ ). This suggested a possibility that cost priority could contribute to improved organizational performance. Consequently, the study considered diverse aspects of operational strategies as predictors of organizational performance unlike in the current study that focused on four strategies. By adopting a sample of 277 respondents in Gezira State, Sudan, Attayib (2022) similarly exemplarily scrutinized the operational strategies with a view to determining their potential effect on organizational performance. The study aptly adopted the experimental (quasi) design which entailed classifying and assigning the respondents into experimental and control groups. To make the enquiry complete, 122 participants were allocated to the experiment group, with the control group being allocated 135 participants. The Test Score was embraced to measure organizational performance with the data being analyzed via a t-test to show the mean difference between the two groups. There were apparently noteworthy significant variances in organizational performance scores of the experimental group ( $R\text{-square}=0.589$ ;  $\beta=0.354$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) in comparison to the control group. However, the study was inadequate as it did not consider the performance of NGO.

Odipo (2021) expeditiously used the cross-sectional design to interrogate the innovative strategies embraced by NGOs in Kenya to foster performance. Operating within the ambits of the resource based theory, the questionnaires were involved in gathering data the analysis of which unambiguously demonstrated that the innovative strategies insignificantly prospered NGOs performance. Moreover, Naliaka (2023) studied the probable nexus between cost priority and the perceived performance in the institutions of higher learning in Kenya as guided by the survey design involving 149 study participants from five public NGOs. Excluding the probable sway of other factors apparently constant, it was unquestioningly evident that the cost of programs and projects discernibly influenced performance of NGOs in Kenya. Moreover, Muiruri (2022) used the mixed method design, to explore the unprecedented impact of fancy proposals on the performance of NGOs in Kenya. A critical perusal of the study outcomes postulated that indeed fancy proposals greatly impacted project completion in NGOs in Kenya.

#### 2.4.2 Quality Priority and Performance

A host of studies have examined how quality strategies can contribute to the performance of organizations. Levin (2021) studied the impact of quality strategies on the performance of international NGOs based in the USA. The study apparently made use of the survey design and used primary data gathered using questionnaires. The regression analysis in this particular research enquiry aided data manipulation. Based on the cardinal principles of the structural equation model, the empirical results evidently postulated that quality programs resulted into long term impact of the programs.

In Poland, Jeromende (2024) undertook a primary examination of the perceived role of adherence to the operational service charter in enhancing organizational performance of insurance companies. Employing the *ex post facto* as the appropriate design and collecting primary data via guided interview with the financial advisors in selected insurance companies, the results provided insights into how service charter positioned the insurance companies on a competitive edge. In another elaborate investigation, Wasel (2021) employed a path model to ascertain the predictors of performance of selected universities in the USA. A sample of 125 students voluntarily participated in the investigation. Upon scrutiny, it was noted that quality priority was linked to the success of the universities. However, the beta coefficient ascertained that quality priority had an insignificant impact on the performance of the universities ( $R\text{-square}=0.277$ ;  $\beta=0.596$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). The relevance of Wasel's study is that most of the operational strategies were examined to ascertain whether they predicted the success of the universities.

Bagherzadeh and Trezemon (2023) interrogated the operational strategies responsible for the perceived performance of NGOs. In line with the predetermined objectives, primary data was holistically gathered using the interview guides. After interrogating the findings, it was evident that adherence to the regulations governing the operations of NGOs ensured the sustainability of NGOs. This consideration influenced Özturan (2020) to interrogate the effect of quality priority in the management of the daily activities of the NGOs in Turkey under the guise of the descriptive survey design. While interacting with the correlation analysis results, Özturan (2020) noticed that there was a high degree of interdependability among these variables ( $r=0.619$ ;  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ). Hall (2023) systematically examined how quality priority predicted the performance in UK's financial institutions. The study was guided by the quasi-experimental design in which 529 employees were included in the study. Using the semi-

structured questionnaires to collect data, the study was objectively anchored on the descriptive design. Being guided by the structural equation modeling approach, quality priority was found to be statistically related to the performance of the financial institutions ( $R\text{-square}=0.409$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). However, the study could not be generalized to the NGOs in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Similarly, Ofweneke (2023) focused on how quality priority unprecedentedly affected the performance Nigeria's automobile firms. The *ex post facto* design was adopted in congruence with the study's objectives and as projected it was evident that quality priority apparently significantly affected the performance of the concerned firms ( $r=0.501$ ,  $p=0.02$ ). However, the study ignored the probable effect of quality priority in so far as the performance of NGOs was concerned. The results were supported by Ogbo (2023) who looked at quality priority and performance in the context of SACCOs and not NGOs and reported improved profitability due to quality priority considerations in Nigeria.

In Kenya, Kipkemboi and Kurgat (2021) investigated the perceived impact of quality control on learning outcomes by considering 210 learners in Vihiga County, Kenya. Perceived quality control as a criterion variable was conceptualized as assessing the progress of learning. The anticipated results illustrated that the perceived quality control significantly augmented students' academic achievement ( $R\text{-square}=0.447$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). However, the study thematically deviates from the foregoing investigation as it did not focus on the performance of NGOs.

Based on the descriptive design, Okutoyi (2021) interrogated the determinants of project performance undertaken by NGOs in the water sector in Busia County in a study where 78 management employees were involved. Furthermore, project performance was taken as the criterion/outcome variable with quality programs as the predictor variable. The study revealed that adherence to operational guidelines enabled the NGOs to ensure that the projects and programs were relevant and had long lasting impact. In an attempt to identify study gaps, Koimbura (2021) undertook to explore empirically, the strategies adopted to enhance the impact of agricultural based NGOs in Kiambu County. Performance of two purposively selected NGOs was the analytic unit done within the confines of the descriptive design and the results revealed that owing to adherence to quality standards enabled the NGOs to deliver the programs within the stipulated time.

Wamalwa (2022) set out to scrutinize the factors influencing the performance of charitable organizations in Kenya. Analyzed inferentially, it was unprecedentedly evident that operational strategies were significant as well as exhibited associative relationship with the considered attributes of the perceptibly engaged NGOs. In addition, Kiaritha (2014) explored the quality priority effect on banks' financial performance in Kenya. Data was analyzed using both the correlation and inferential analysis. The study outstandingly revealed that quality priority significantly predicted financial performance of the banks' based SACCOs ( $R\text{-square}=0.6612$ ;  $\beta=0.639$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). However, the results were ungeneralizable to the present study because the focus was not on NGOs.

### **2.4.3 Delivery Speed and Performance**

Delivery speed refers to procedures that are skillfully invoked and executed to fast-track movement of the activities undertaken by the organization. Previous investigations have attempted to engender the prediction of performance based on delivery speed. In Australia, for instance, Randon (2022) carried out a study to determine how speedy delivery of organizational programs enhanced its success. In the study delivery speed was the predictor variable which was expected to be empirically manipulated to reflect transformation in the outcome variable (organizational success). Opting to identify 132 project managers in 12 NGOs in Sidney within the ambits of the survey design, it was clearly posited that speedy project delivery significantly forestalled project success. Luxton (2022) investigated financial performance of organizations as predicted by speedy delivery. As initially hypothesized the results unperturbingly showed that speedy delivery substantially predicted performance ( $r=0.186$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) but the study was not domiciled in the NGOs. In the United Arab Emirates, AlShehhi (2021) scrutinized the role played by speed delivery in organizational productivity. Using the interview guide and questionnaires, the study targeted the top and middle level managers in different UAE-based organizations. The generated data was scrutinized and aptly analyzed based on the objectives using both the correlations and regression analysis. A significant correlation between speed delivery and organizational productivity was found. However, the current study addressed organizational performance and not productivity.

In Nigeria, Akpoghiran (2024) systematically interrogated the performance of NGOs in the health sector. As was initially projected, the results adduced that effective internal checks and

balances were significant predictors of the performance of the NGOs. In South Africa, Luthabo (2022) analyzed the factors unprecedentedly responsible for the completion of projects sponsored by local NGOs in Johannesburg. Upon careful scrutiny of the results, it was evidently adduced that timely completion of project significantly enhanced the public perception on the effectiveness of the NGOs in addressing human problems.

In Kenya, Anunda (2024) examined the projects executed in the NGOs in the health sector in Nairobi County, Kenya to espouse the factors linked to the performance of HIV/AIDS projects. The study employed the descriptive research design while targeting 547 programs that were executed by the prescribed NGOs delivering HIV related projects in Nairobi County. The data gathered from the participants through questionnaires was analyzed via descriptive statistics. Based on results obtained from the study, it was evident that effective delivery of the projects promoted the performance of the targeted NGOs. Moreover, using a survey of selected NGOs in Nakuru County, Kipruto (2021) looked at how strict adherence to delivery schedules and strict adherence to financial polices contributed to organizational success of NGOs. This was done by comparing NGOs that had collapsed with those that continued with their operations. The results revealed that prudent use of financial resources and timely implementation of programs tended to influence the successful operations of NGOs. However, speed delivery as an operational strategy was ignored.

Kariuki (2022) interrogated the influence of speed delivery with a focus on the performance of Laikipia County. Being guided by a well-articulated design (descriptive), the study isolated and singled out a blend of unequivocally appropriate procedures in selecting the study participants (60 procurement staff). The study contended that speed delivery clearly enhanced the county's performance ( $r=0.582$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). The study interrogated with certainty how speed delivery impacted the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County, Kenya. Similarly, Kipkemoi (2021) undertook to interrogate purposely to discern the perceived affiliation between speed delivery and performance of the Nairobi Stock Exchange (NSE) using a sample of 36 listed firms. Using the regression analysis, it was clearly discerned that a significant positive link between speed delivery and ROA prevailed ( $R\text{-square}=0.6612$ ;  $\beta=0.639$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). However, the study was based on the NSE and the parameters of performance were different and could not apply in the context of NGOs in Nakuru County. Okero (2022) scrutinized the impact of speed delivery on performance of NGOs. Ten NGOs domiciled in Nairobi County were objectively targeted with the eventual selection of 70

respondents. With regard to the results, a unit transformation in speed delivery appeared to contribute to an increase of 0.612 in the performance of the NGOs. While the aforementioned inquiry provides significant information on speed delivery with its portended effect on performance of NGOs, it was contextually different as the current investigation/enquiry was based in Nairobi. As such, the results may not be generalized to the NGOs in Nakuru County.

#### **2.3.4 Flexibility and Performance**

It is apparent that past scholarly pursuits have attempted to discern the probable link between flexibility and organizational performance. For instance, Sonam (2022) analyzed the correlation between flexibility and performance of financial institutions in Italy by critically reviewing, comparing and contrasting data pertaining to organizational performance within the framework of a mixed method design. The analysis displayed that many organizations that were apparently flexible in their operations reported unprecedented increase in performance matrices.

Becchetti (2020) was concerned about the situation in the higher learning institutions and set to enquire into the influence of resource management on the performance of institutions of higher learning in Brazil. A causal correlation design was adopted to establish the effect of resource management which was the predictor variable on outcome variable (performance). The findings indicated that effective resource management and performance of institutions of learning was positive. Barnett (2022) examined the role of flexibility in terms of products and services diversification on corporate success of public limited companies. A survey of 312 respondents by unintended sampling methods was selected from 857 employees. The data gathered was inspected within the inferential matrix. It was reported that flexibility was closely linked to business success. However, the current study was domiciled in NGOs and not public limited companies. Rangaswany and Subramanya (2020) empirically focused on flexibility as predictor of performance of selected motor vehicle outlet dealers in India. The focus of concern in this scholastic undertaking was on major retailers handling consumer goods in their chain store. Mixed methods were adopted and while considering 60 businesses, flexibility was conclusively discerned as being able to reduce the process length of transaction by 773 minutes. This conceptually implied that flexibility could potentially upscale the anticipated performance of supply chain even though the study wasn't based on the NGOs.

Qi (2020) interrogated the probable impact of flexibility as it related to agri-based projects' performance in China. The study was objectively anchored on the descriptive design involving the use of the questionnaires to collect data from 11 purposively selected on shore agri-based projects. Being guided by the correlation design, it was evident that flexibility was significant but the outcome of the study suffered from generalization limitations owing to the contextual differences. In a study on performance determinants of projects, Miyata (2021) examined the effect of flexibility on the performance of projects in Benin, Madagascar and Malawi. It was evident that being flexible in the implementation of the projects enhanced the project success. In Nakuru County, the study sought to ascertain whether flexibility played a role in the eventual NGOs' performance of NGOs. Similarly, Naomi (2021) looked at the critical factors influencing the delivery of healthcare projects in Bujumbura. The focus of the study was on 185 staff members who served as the respondents and analysis of the results postulated that the project completion, project leadership sufficient resources, stakeholder involvement and effective planning were critical factors contributing to the performance of NGOs. This study is significant because it conceived flexibility in terms of meeting stakeholder expectations.

In Kenya, Kamau (2022) probed into the institutional factors associated with organizational sustainability in NGOs in Nairobi County. Applying purposive sampling design, 302 project managers from five NGOs formed the study sample. Based on predetermined objectives, the generated data was scrutinized and it was evident that responsiveness to stakeholder interest was among the variables determining the sustainability of NGOs. While studying social roles of NGOs in Kenya, Kinuthia (2022) adopted a case study design and utilized data gathered through interview guides. The results revealed that responding to emerging uncertainties was a major role played by NGOs though some NGOs remained rigid in addressing their core mandate in spite of the emerging challenges affecting the society. In a study in insurance companies in Kenya focusing on strategic positioning and financial performance, Gachimu and Njuguna (2022) embraced the correlational design to review the possibility of there being an association linking the identified variables. The resource based view was adapted to support firm's strategic positioning and performance. It was revealed that flexibility was related to financial performance ( $\beta_1=.801$ ,  $t=22.565$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ). The high correlation index was projected in the current study although the location is different from the reviewed study. In a separate study, Tsuma (2023) embraced the descriptive design to research on how

financial performance of Saccos in Kenya was affected by flexibility as an operational strategy. Relying on the questionnaire to gather data, the results postulated that flexibility was, however, not related to financial performance ( $r=-0.417$ ,  $p=0.409$ ) even through the study was not based domiciled in the NGOs.

## **2.5 Summary of Reviewed Literature, Critique and Research Gaps**

It is deducible from the empirical interrogations that the volume of resources and activities controlled by NGOs has grown, yet many NGOs are experiencing a myriad of challenges associated with performance (Padilla & Staplefoote, 2021). Typically, NGOs are reliant on donations from well-wishers, sponsorship from the government and non-state actors (Hendrickse, 2022). With the surge in the need for humanitarian assistance, NGOs need to be more clinical in adopting operational strategies that enhance their performance. However, many programs managed by the NGOs have stalled while others fold up prematurely (Mutinda, 2022) without giving timely account of their activities and resource utilization.

In consideration of this state of affairs, previous studies have demonstrated how operational strategies could spur performance. Emphasizing the need to be innovative when adopting operational strategies, it was evident that operational strategies have mainly been adopted in money handling entities (banks) where they have had some associated sway. Nevertheless, the adoption of operational strategies has gained currency in the nonfinancial organizations where adequate and elaborate inquiry is still lacking. Hence, the results evident in the previous studies are clearly inconsistent in so far as the performance of NGOs is concerned. While some studies have revealed a significant effect of operational strategies on performance, others have found no significant effect. Moreover, the studies showing unprecedented effect of operational strategies on performance of NGOs but utilized inconsistent approaches that make the outcomes hesitantly ungeneralizable in this study.

In Kenya, few studies focused on operational strategies in relation to the performance of NGOs yet NGOs play integral roles in socioeconomic development. Moreover, most of the studies utilized different operational strategies unlike this study which considered cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility making the results inapplicable in the present study. Other studies differed methodologically as they adopted different research designs such as the *ex post facto* design while this study utilized the causal explanatory research design. In addition, their failures to clearly discern their methodological

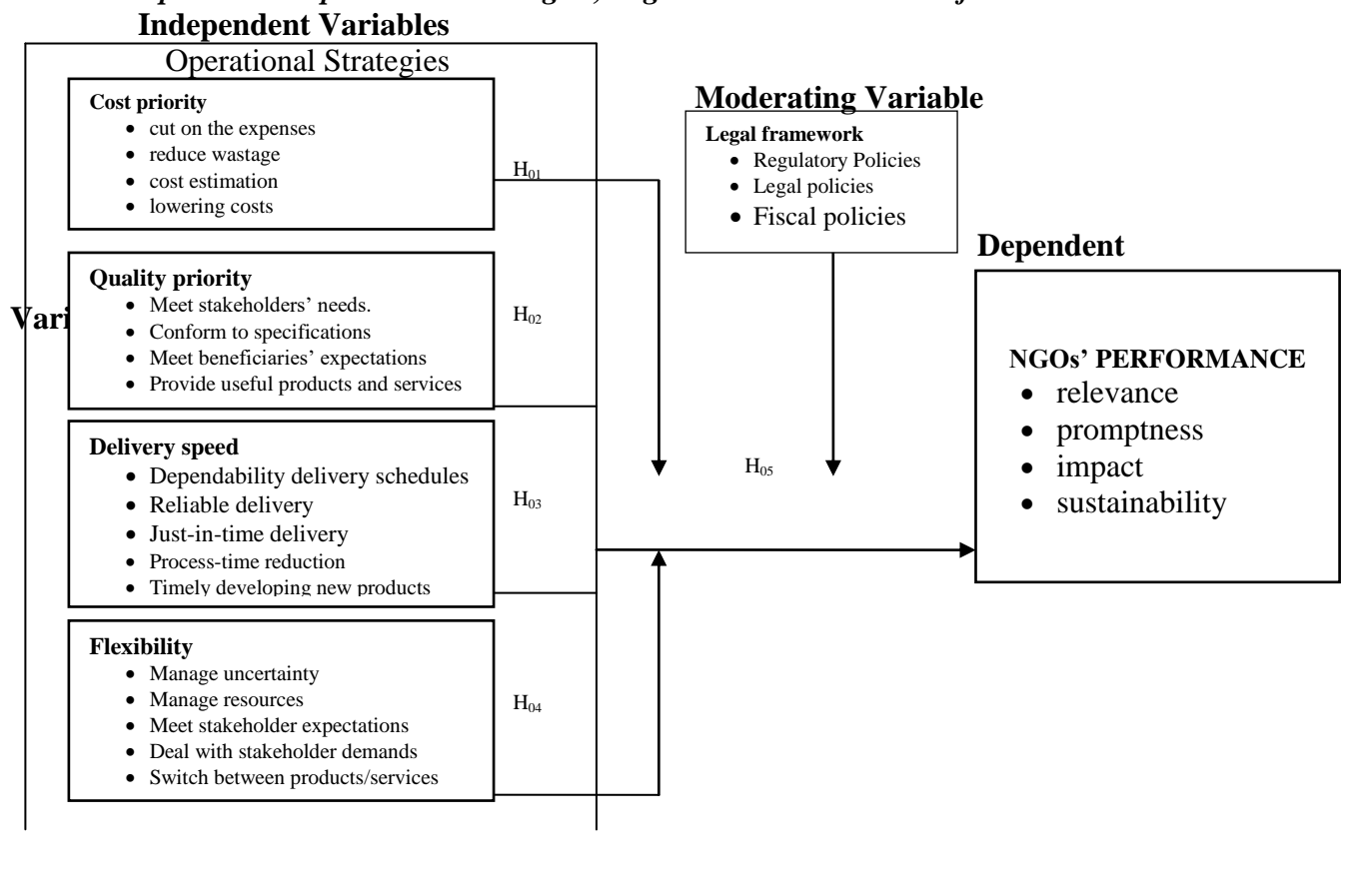
dispensations rendered the outcomes also un-generalizable in the foregoing interrogation. Hence, the gaps in the literature called for further research to determine whether operational strategies affected the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County.

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is a diagrammatical representation of the interrelationship among study variables (Kothari, 2004). As displayed, the independent variables for the study were cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility while performance of NGOs was the dependent variable. A conceptual model of the relationships between operational strategies, legal framework and performance is vividly displayed in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:**

***Relationship between Operational Strategies, Legal Framework and Performance***



In Figure 1 the interaction among the study variables had been fervently displayed. The independent variables were the operational strategies which included cost priority, quality

priority, delivery speed and flexibility. The variables were analyzed in relation to their prediction of NGO's performance. The performance parameters were relevance, promptness, impact and sustainability of the programs and projects undertaken by the NGOs. It was expected that the specific operational strategies would affect the performance of the NGOs. In the context of this study, cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility were expected to be affected by the performance of the NGOs. As postulated by MBO theory and McKinsey's 7s Theory, the NGOs utilized the operational strategies to bring about the required result. In this regard the NGOs may adopt strategies which comply with donor prescriptions while keeping focus on the needs of the beneficiaries of their programs. However, the perceived association between the predictor and outcome variables was moderated by the legal framework (regulatory, legal and fiscal policies). For instance, the fiscal policies such as inflation rate, may perturbably jeopardize the attainment of performance goals thus affecting the NGOs' performance. Moreover, the regulatory environment, that is, laws on NGOs may limit the extent to which the NGOs operate to achieve their overall objective. For example, the requirement that NGOs should disclose the sources of their funding and their mode of operations could affect their ability to be flexible in adjusting to the needs of the beneficiaries.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter has presented a detailed description of the research design, study location and target population. It has also outlined the procedure for undertaking sampling, the sample size, tool for gathering data, variable measurement, data analysis and presentation. Also, the chapter has described the pilot study, focusing on the instrument' reliability and procedure that was undertaken to ensure that the research instrument was valid.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study adopted the causal explanatory research design. This is a design which inherently involves identifying the nature of the cause-effect linkages where two or more variables are concerned (Montgomery, 2024). In this design the moderating variables are controlled by either keeping them constant or eliminating them. In the study moderating variable was omitted during data collection. By understanding which variable displays a significant effect on the outcome variable, it is possible to improve the other. If the causal is able to pinpoint the exact outcome of mixing together different variables, it would be easy to create viable proofs of the variables. The assumptions underlying the causal explanatory design is that a causal relationship exists between the variables and that the presumed cause occurs before the effect and is usually displayed in a concomitant variation. The causal explanatory design was considered suitable as it facilitated the prediction of the hypothetical occurrences of the outcome variable (performance of the NGOs) as a result of the predictor variables (operational strategies). The design also facilitated the generation of data that made it possible to make inferences about the perceived effect of the predictor variables on the outcome variable.

#### **3.3 Location of the Study**

The location of the study was Nakuru County, Kenya. In this county, the NGOs have adopted diverse operational strategies in order to enhance performance. The study area is considered appropriate because there have been concerns about the performance of NGOs in the area. This is because several NGOs have folded up while others have been unable to fulfill their operational mandate due to financial distress.

### **3.4 Target Population**

In the study 59 NGOs in Nakuru County were involved in the study. The NGOs were undertaking diverse activities notably providing water (3), farming diary animals (6), banking (4), gender and health (3), protecting the environment (9), planting trees (11), building peace initiatives (5), welfare and humanitarian support (5), educational support (10), recreation and sports (3). Overall, the NGOs were the unit of analysis and from each NGO the chief executive officers or their representatives were targeted as the unit of observation.

### **3.5 Sample Design**

Guided by the dismal size of the population, a census was used and the entire population targeted was involved in the study by responding to the issues allied to NGO's performance in as far as operational strategies were evidently concerned. Saunders and Bistow (2023) pointed out that in circumstances where the entire population is small and homogenous a census is often preferred. Therefore, a census was taken for all the 59 chief officers in the 59 NGOs.

### **3.6 Data Collection Instrument**

In this study, data was gathered using questionnaires from the chief executive officers or their representatives as the unit of observation. The questionnaire was used because it is relatively economical and enables the researcher to generate uniform responses. The questionnaire is also preferred because it can reduce bias that might result from the personal characteristics of the researcher. All the questionnaires were personally administered to the research participants. All the items in the questionnaires were closed questions scattered in two separate subdivisions. The first section comprised of items seeking to gather demographic information pertaining to the study participants and the other gathered data about the study variables.

#### **3.6.1 Validity of the Instrument**

Validity seeks to find out if the research used to gather data actually gathers data about what it was intended to do (Aguinis, 2024). The major types of validity are construct, content, criterion and face each concerned with a particular attribute of validity. Construct validity is concerned with ascertaining whether the instrument measures the portended concepts while content validity seeks to find out if the instrument is fully representative of all the parameters of a variable. On the other hand, face validity displays the instrument suitable for the test

while criterion focuses on the correspondence between reality and subject matter of the instrument (Atmowardoyo, 2022). The specific validity orientations of this study, however, were the content and construct validity which were jointly addressed by formulating the items in congruent with the objectives and consulting the supervisor and other experts to validate the instrument. The suggestions and comments were adopted and used to make appropriate modifications on the research instrument. In addition, the questionnaire items were rated by 4 experts to ascertain the item relevance. From their ratings, Item Content Validity Index (I-CVI) was computed.

### **3.6.2 Reliability of the Instrument**

It is important to ensure that the research tool is reliable in order to yield consistent results even after repeated administrations (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the testing of instrument's reliability was carried out during pilot study. The questionnaire was pilot tested with 20 managers in three NGOs in Baringo County to determine the reliability of the instrument. As propagated by Asenahabi (2021) Cronbach alpha of 0.7 and above was accepted as sufficient and undoubtable proof of the instrument's validity. In the circumstances where the threshold was abjectly unmet, specific items were restructured under the guidance of the supervisor.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

A letter was obtained from Egerton University to be used for applying for the research permit. A research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) was obtained to pave way for data collection. A pre-visit was conducted in the study area to ascertain the availability of research participants. The researcher established rapport with the respondents after which the instruments were issued and later collected for subsequent collation and analysis.

### **3.8 Measurement of Variables**

The outcome variable in this study was NGOs' performance while the independent variables were the operational strategies (cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility). Derived from literature, NGOs' performance was gauged by relevance, promptness, impact and sustainability of the programs and projects undertaken by the NGOs. A five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), Agree (4) and strongly agree (5) was used. The responses were ranked based on a 5-point Likert scale with values ranging from 1 to 5. In the scale, 1-1.4 represented strongly disagree, 1.5-2.4 represented

disagree, 2.5-3.4 represented noncommittal, 3.5-4.4 represented agree while values above 4.4 represented strongly agree with parameters of the study variables.

### 3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

After coding data, the descriptive and inferential statistics were involved in analyzing the results as guided by the study’s objectives. The descriptive statistics included the computation of the means, standard deviations, percentages and frequencies. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson’s correlation) was computed to establish the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Simple regression was used to test hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also computed to help check the goodness of fit of the regression model. Null hypotheses were rejected or failed to be rejected based on the p-value se at  $\alpha=0.05$  level of significance. The output of the regression analysis (simple & multiple) consisted of an R squared in the summary model, F-tests and regression coefficients. To test hypothesis  $H_{01}$ , that stated that there was no significant effect of cost priority on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County, simple regression analysis was used as shown in equation 1:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where:

Y = Performance of NGOs

$\beta_0$  = Constant

$\beta_1$  = regression coefficient

$X_1$  = Cost Priority

$\epsilon$  = Error term

To test hypothesis  $H_{02}$ , which stated that quality priority has no significant effect on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County, simple regression analysis was used as shown:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2 + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Where:

Y = Performance of NGOs

$\beta_0$  = Constant

$\beta_2$  = regression coefficient

$X_2$  = Quality priority

$\epsilon$  = Error term

To test hypothesis H<sub>03</sub>, which anticipated that there was no significant effect of delivery speed on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County, simple regression analysis was used as shown:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

Where:

Y = Performance of NGOs

$\beta_0$  = Constant

$\beta_3$  = regression coefficient

X<sub>3</sub> = delivery speed

$\epsilon$  = Error term

To test hypothesis H<sub>04</sub>, which stated that flexibility has no significant effect on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County, simple regression analysis was used as shown:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots (4)$$

Where:

Y = Performance of NGOs

$\beta_0$  = Constant

$\beta_4$  = regression coefficient

X<sub>4</sub> = flexibility

$\epsilon$  = Error term

To test hypothesis H<sub>05</sub>, which was to determine the joint effect of hypotheses one to four, which stated that cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility had no significant joint effect on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County, multiple regression analysis was subsequently used involved in discerning the perceived effect of the predictor variables as demonstrated by the model below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots (5)$$

Where: Y: Performance

a: is the constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$  and  $\beta_4$  are the regression (beta) coefficients

X<sub>1</sub>: Parameter for cost priority

X<sub>2</sub>: Parameter for quality priority

X<sub>3</sub>: Parameter for delivery speed

X<sub>4</sub>: Parameter for flexibility

$\epsilon$ : Error term

With the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), data was analyzed and the results presented in tables and figures.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

The results are presented in this chapter based on the study objectives. The chapter displays the response rate, the respondents' demographic characteristics as well as the descriptive and inferential results. Corroboratively, the chapter also depicts the discussion and elucidation of the findings.

#### 4.2 Reliability and Validity Tests

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed to check the reliability of the instrument during the pilot test. The selected items on the operational strategies and organizational performance were analyzed as provided in reliability test using Cronbach alpha coefficient and the results and displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1:**

*Summary of Reliability Analysis*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Number of items</b>
Cost priority	0.9513	10
Quality priority	0.9375	10
Speed delivery	0.9299	10
Flexibility	0.9934	10
Performance	0.9349	20

From the pilot study result captured in Table 1, the alpha coefficients for all the variables were greater than 0.7. It is evident that the alpha values for cost priority was 0.9513, quality priority was 0.9375, speed delivery 0.9299, flexibility, 0.9934 and performance was 0.9349. This showed that all the variables complied with the set reliability conditions of Cronbach alpha 0.70 ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ) hence permitting the adoption of the questionnaires in for gathering data during the main study.

The supervisor and other research and industry experts were also consulted to advice on the aspects of the questionnaire that needed improvement before carrying out the study. In this regard, the questionnaire items were rated by 4 experts to ascertain the relevance of the

questionnaire items. From their ratings, Item Content Validity Index (I-CVI) was computed as displayed Table 2.

**Table 2:**

***Validity Test Results***

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>I-CVI</b>
Cost priority	10	0.7993
Quality priority	10	0.9725
Speed delivery	10	0.8972
Flexibility	10	0.9781
Performance	20	0.9815

As displayed in Table 2, the I-CVIs for the entire variables exceeded the 0.75 threshold, which implied that the items in the questionnaires were valid.

**4.3 Response Rate**

In this study, 59 questionnaires were distributed to 59 CEOs (unit of observation) in 59 NGOs (unit of analysis). However, a total of 54 questionnaires were adequately filled in and returned by the respondents translating to a 91.5% response rate. Carvajal and Hardigan (2024) observed that a response rate greater than 60% is often sufficient for use in statistical analysis. This is in comparison to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) who advocated for the adequacy of a 50% response rate to permit data analysis and generalization with 70% and above being described as being excellent.

**4.4 Descriptive Analysis**

The descriptive statistics are presented in this section focusing on the demographic characteristics of the respondents alongside the findings on the descriptive analysis associated with the study variables.

**4.4.1 Descriptive Information on the Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

The demographic information solicited included the respondents' gender, education attainment and the distribution of the NGOs by period of existence in Nakuru County. The findings are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 3:**  
*Demographic Information of the Respondents*

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	36	66.7
Female	18	33.3
<b>Level of Education</b>		
PhD	2	3.7
Masters	20	37.0
Bachelor	30	55.6
Diploma	2	3.7
<b>Distribution of NGOs by period of Existence</b>		
Less than 1 year	4	7.4
1-5 years	15	27.8
6-10years	16	29.6
Above 10 years	19	35.2

As shown in Table 3, the findings postulated that 66.7% of the respondents were male compared with 33.3% representing the female respondents. This implied that majority of the managers of the NGOs, Nakuru County were male. This is consistent with Zhang (2023) who indicated that the males were more frequently represented in the management roles in many organizations. The findings on the educational level of the respondents indicated that 55.6% had obtained bachelor’s degree with 37.0% having a masters’ degree. It can also be adduced that 3.7% had diploma as well as PhD. The findings affirmed that the respondents were adequately prepared through education and training to handle assigned responsibilities and conceivably be able to reliably assess the role of operational strategies in enhancing organizational performance in the NGOs.

Moreover, the findings on the period of existence of the NGOs demonstrated that majority of the NGOs (35.2%) had existed for over 10years. The remaining 29.6%, 27.8% and 7.4% had existed for 6-10 years, 1-5years and less than a year respectively. As can be construed,

majority of the NGOs encompassing 92.6% had existed for over a year, thrusting them in a position to realize their performance goals. It is out of this realization that the study empirically explored the effect of cost priority, quality priority and the flexibility on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County, Kenya.

#### 4.4.2 Descriptive Information on Cost Priority

The study sought to determine how cost priority evidently applied in the NGOs in Nakuru County, Kenya. The findings are captured in Table 4.

**Table 4:**

*Descriptive Information on Cost Priority*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
We exclude unnecessary expenses in our operations strategy	54	3.8519	.65610
There is transparency in use of resources via cost estimation	54	3.8519	.73734
In our NGO we avoid wastage when implementing programs	54	3.8519	.73734
The NGO spends resources as per financial regulations	54	3.8333	.74606
Cutting down on cost ensures continuous operations	54	3.8333	.74606
My NGO endvours to minimize cost of items in our programs	54	3.7778	.88310
My NGO adopts simple operational procedures to cut on cost	54	3.7593	.72516
My NGO is always accountable for its operational activities	54	3.7593	.88882
My NGO utilizes cost effective resources to serve the needy	54	3.7037	.92409
Our NGO plans in advance the resources for operations	54	3.6481	.70463
<b>Aggregate Mean</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3.7917</b>	<b>.77487</b>

It is evident as displayed in Table 4 that the respondents were committal that the NGOs always avoided wastage when implementing their programs (M=3.8519; SD=0.73734). The respondents also concurred that the management attempted to exclude unnecessary expenses via the chosen operational strategies (M=3.8519; SD=0.6561). It is also apparent that the respondents were committal that there was transparency in the use of resources through cost estimation (M=3.8519; SD=0.73734). Also cutting down on cost enabled the NGOs to continue operating (M=3.8333; SD=0.74606). It is reducibly evident that cost priority profoundly changed the business identity as well as the image and reputation which assist in promoting the product quality. This sharply concurs with Norden (2022) who established that cost priority was associated with NGOs' performance. Similarly, Jozef (2021) found that

cutting on constraining expenses provided opportunity for the NGOs to enhance their performance. It was also significant that the NGOs spent the resources in compliance with the stipulated financial regulations (M=3.8333; SD=0.74606).

Moreover, NGOs endeavoured to minimize cost of items employed in carrying out programs (M=3.7778; SD=0.8881). It was furthermore apparent that the NGO adopted simple operational procedures in order to cut on cost (M=3.7593; SD=0.72516). This is supported by Swarithitra (2021) who revealed that consistent cost reduction strategies guaranteed the continuous existence of NGOs. In addition, the NGOs were always accountable for their operational activities (M=3.7593; SD=0.88882). It was also evident that the NGOs utilized cost effective resources to meet the needs of the beneficiaries (M=3.7035; SD=0.92409). The respondents were further committal that the NGOs planned in advance the resources required to carry out their operations (M=3.6481; SD=0.70463). The aggregate mean response of 3.7917 (SD=0.777487) indicated that there was congruence with the statements regarding cost priority in the NGOs in Nakuru County. In this regard, a significant improvement in the performance of the NGOs was bound to be achieved by implementing the cost priority strategies. This has been supported by Jozef (2021) who advocated for the elimination of constraining expenses to enable the NGOs to improve performance.

#### 4.4.3 Descriptive Information on Quality Priority

The descriptive results on quality priority in the NGOs in Nakuru County, Kenya were presented in Table 5.

**Table 5:**

*Descriptive Information on Quality Priority*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
As an organization we always conform to donor quality specifications	54	4.2222	.83929
I am concerned about the quality of programs we offer	54	3.9074	.73378
Our employees have adequate experience and skills to improve the quality of service delivery	54	3.8519	.73734
My NGO delivers quality programs to the beneficiaries	54	3.8333	.74606
In my NGO the programs are formulated to meet the	54	3.7778	.88310

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stakeholders' needs			
The programs undertaken by my NGO are approved by the government	54	3.7037	.81564
My NGO conforms to the rules and regulations governing the operations of all NGOs in Kenya	54	3.6481	.70463
In my NGO programs formulated are useful to the community	54	3.6111	.99843
As an organization we endeavour to capitalize on the usefulness of the resources via adherence to quality standards	54	3.2963	1.09251
In our NGO, quality is considered before launching programs	54	2.9630	1.18103
<b>Average</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3.6815</b>	<b>0.8732</b>

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The findings presented in Table 5 demonstrated that the NGOs always conformed to donor quality specifications ( $M=4.2222$ ;  $SD=0.83929$ ). Also the managers were concerned about the quality of programs offered by the NGOs ( $M=3.9074$ ;  $SD=0.73378$ ). Furthermore, it is apparent that the employees had adequate experience and skills to improve the quality of service delivery ( $M=3.8519$ ;  $SD=0.7374$ ). Also the NGOs delivered quality programs to the beneficiaries ( $M=3.8333$ ;  $SD=0.74606$ ). Similarly, the programs were formulated by the NGOs to meet the stakeholders' needs ( $M=3.7778$ ;  $SD=0.8831$ ). This coheres with Owino (2023) who discerned that operational strategies were apparently responsible for quality improvement in the NGOs and other organizations.

Moreover, the NGOs tried to make good use of the available resources in conformity to the prescribed quality standards. It can be construed that the NGOs conformed to the rules and regulations governing the operations of NGOs in Kenya ( $M=3.6481$ ;  $SD=0.70463$ ) as the participants were not also committal that quality was considered before the programs were launched ( $M=2.963$ ;  $SD=1.18103$ ). However, the participants were not committal that the programs undertaken by the NGO were also approved by the government ( $M=3.2963$ ;  $SD=1.0251$ ). This notwithstanding, the programs formulated were useful to the community ( $M=3.6111$ ;  $SD=0.99843$ ). Since the respondents tended to agree with most of the statements, it can be considered that on average ( $M=3.6815$ ;  $SD=0.8732$ ) that quality priority was largely carried out in the NGOs with the intention to upgrade and improve service quality while also aiming enhancing the performance of the NGOs. Karanja (2023) also concurred by asserting that quality priority is significant during uncertain times. This was further affirmed by

Oyolowe (2021) who empirically suggested that NGOs should embrace quality concerns in their operations.

#### 4.4.4 Descriptive Information on Delivery Speed

The study sought to determine how delivery speed had been adopted and the findings are displayed in Table 6.

**Table 6:**

*Descriptive Information on Delivery Speed*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
My NGO is dependable in delivery schedules	54	4.0000	.70040
Our NGO endeavours to provide services quickly	54	3.9815	.81242
Our delivery schedules focus on prompt response to the needs of the beneficiaries	54	3.9074	.68041
My NGO adopts process-time reduction to guide programs implementation	54	3.8519	.73734
In our NGO the staff often displays strong work values for timelines	54	3.8333	.74606
My organization takes the shortest time possible to make improvements in the services provided	54	3.8148	.72876
We are reliable in effecting programs	54	3.7778	.90422
My NGO focuses on timely provision of services to the beneficiaries	54	3.7222	.97935
As an NGO we are guided by just-in-time delivery procedure	54	3.5926	.94207
All our programs are guided by speed convenience considerations	54	3.3704	.95752
<b>Average</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3.7852</b>	<b>0.8188</b>

The findings shown in Table 6 postulated that the NGOs were dependable in delivery schedules (M=4.000; SD=0.7004) and were also reliable in implementing the programs (M=3.9815; SD=0.81242). Moreover, the delivery schedules of the NGOs focused on prompt response to the needs of the beneficiaries (M=3.9074; SD=0.68041). It was also discerned that the NGOs adopted process-time reduction to guide programs implementation

(M=3.8519; SD=0.73734). Moreover, the staff often displayed strong work values for timelines (M=8333; SD=0.74606). It also took the shortest time possible to make improvements in the services provided (M=3.8148; SD=0.72876) and the NGOs endeavoured to provide services quickly (M=3.7778; SD=0.90422). This is further supported by Randon (2022) posited that speedy project delivery significantly predicted project success.

There was also a general consensus that the NGOs focused on timely provision of services to the beneficiaries as shown by a mean score of 3.7222 (SD=0.97935). However, the NGOs were moderately guided by just-in-time delivery procedure as revealed by a noncommittal mean response of 3.5926 (SD=0.94207). This is sufficient to assert that delivery speed was fundamental to the success of the NGOs. This concurs with Randon (2022) posited that speedy project delivery was a significant determinant of project success. Finally, all the programs were guided by speed convenience considerations (M=3.3704; SD=0.95752). The aggregate mean response of 3.7852(SD=0.8188) indicated that the respondents concurred with statements relating to seed delivery as an operational strategy in the NGOs in Nakuru County. This implied that the NGOs were concerned about delivery speed activities. Consequently, improved performance was bound to be realized by adopting delivery speed strategies.

#### **4.4.5 Descriptive Information on Flexibility**

The descriptive information on flexibility in the NGOs is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7:*****Descriptive Results on Flexibility***

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
My NGO promptly switches between products and services as needs arise	54	4.2037	.83281
My NGO effectively manages uncertainty if and when they do occur	54	4.0185	.65849
Due to donor uncertainty we usually make adjustments in our operations	54	4.0000	.70040
As an organization we usually adjust to the environmental changes	54	3.9815	.81242
As an NGO we deal with tackle problems as they emerge	54	3.8148	.82586
Flexibility enables our NGO to prioritize the needs of the target beneficiaries	54	3.8148	.72876
Innovativeness, creativity and responsiveness are our guiding principles	54	3.7963	.62585
As an organization we rely on new information to make informed decisions	54	3.6481	.80464
As an organization we have turned flexibility into a competitive advantage	54	3.6296	.73449
Through flexibility my NGO has managed to meet the expectations of the beneficiaries	54	3.5370	1.14452
<b>Aggregate Mean</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3.8444</b>	<b>0.8217</b>

From Table 7, it is evident that the NGOs promptly switched between different deliverables as needs arose ( $M=4.2037$ ;  $SD=0.83281$ ) while the NGOs effectively managed uncertainty if and when they did occur ( $M=4.0185$ ;  $SD=0.65849$ ). It is further evident that due to donor uncertainty the NGOs usually made adjustments in their operations ( $M=4.0000$ ;  $SD=0.7004$ ). The results further postulated that the NGOs usually adjusted to the environmental changes ( $M=3.9815$ ;  $SD=0.81242$ ) while also there was highly committal that flexibility enabled the NGOs to prioritize the needs of the target beneficiaries ( $M=3.8148$ ;  $SD=0.72876$ ). Similarly, the NGOs tackled problems as they emerged ( $M=3.8148$ ;  $SD=0.82586$ ). Furthermore, the results showed that innovativeness, creativity and responsiveness were the guiding principles

of the NGOs ( $M=3.7963$  ( $SD=0.62585$ )). This showed that flexibility was closely linked to business success. Kinuthia (2022) revealed that responding to emerging uncertainties was a major role played by NGOs though some NGOs remained rigid in addressing their core mandate in spite of the emerging challenges affecting the society. Similarly, an overwhelming majority also agreeing that the NGOs had turned flexibility into a competitive advantage ( $M=3.6296$ ;  $SD=0.73449$ ). This has been supported by Sonam (2022) who noted that NGOs that remained flexible in their operations reported increased performance.

It was evident that the NGOs relied on new information to make informed decisions ( $M=3.6481$ ;  $SD=0.80464$ ). However, the respondents appeared to be noncommittal that through flexibility the NGOs had managed to meet the expectations of the beneficiaries ( $M=3.537$ ;  $SD=1.14452$ ). The results demonstrated that flexible strategies were adopted in the NGOs. This further implies that flexibility created the capability required to influence the performance of the NGOs. Generally, flexibility is known to create impetus for performance. The overall mean response of 3.7852 ( $SD=0.8188$ ) indicated that there was concurrence with the concurred with statements relating to seed delivery as an operational strategy in the NGOs in Nakuru County. These results generally indicated that the NGOs were concerned about delivery speed activities. Consequently, improved performance was bound to be realized by adopting delivery speed strategies.

#### **4.4.6 Descriptive Information on Organizational Performance**

Table 8 displays the results on the performance of the NGOs as described in terms of the mean and standard deviation.

**Table 8:*****Descriptive Results on Organizational Performance of NGOs***

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
The programs are structured to meet the objectives set	54	4.0370	.77613
In our NGO we obtain required resources on time	54	4.0000	.67293
In my NGOs programs are delivered in time	54	3.9444	.76273
Our NGO has provided solution to the society's problems	54	3.9444	.76273
My NGO provides continuous community support	54	3.9074	.68041
All our programs are undertaken until full completion	54	3.9074	.85271
The sustainability of programs is our main focus	54	3.9074	.85271
Our programs improve lifestyle of beneficiaries	54	3.9074	.73378
In my NGO the objectives are timely delivery of programs	54	3.8704	.72804
My NGO maintains community activities for their welfare	54	3.8704	.72804
My NGO enhances development in the community	54	3.8519	.65610
Our programs have created a lasting impact	54	3.8519	.73734
Our programs contributes in alleviating human suffering	54	3.8333	.74606
The resources are usually obtained on time	54	3.8148	.64644
As an organization we keep track of our programs	54	3.8148	.82586
Once programs are complete the community is left intact	54	3.7407	.64968
The programs are suited to the needs of target group/donor	54	3.7407	.82839
My NGO promotes activities that add value	54	3.7222	.89899
In my NGO activities are completed on time	54	3.6481	.73092
My NGO supports programs that develops society	54	3.6481	.70463
<b>Aggregate Mean</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>4.0274</b>	<b>0.70609</b>

The results displayed in Table 8 illustrated that the results showed that the presence of the NGOs had provided permanent solution to the society's problems (M=3.9444; SD=0.762373) while also being delivered within the stipulated time (M=3.9444; SD=0.76273). Moreover, the programs improved the standard of living of the beneficiaries (M=3.9074; SD=0.73378). Moreover, the NGOs provided continuous community support (M=3.9074; SD=0.68041) as the sustainability of the programs was the main focus of the NGOs (M=3.9074; SD=0.85271). Similarly, the NGOs undertook the programs until full completion (M=3.9074; SD=0.85271). It seemed that other NGOs were quite careful about the expectation of the

beneficiaries of the programs. The NGOs maintained the community activities for their good welfare (M=3.8704; SD=0.72804). However, majority of the respondents were neutral that the overall objectives of the NGOs were timely delivery of programs (M=3.8704; SD=0.72804). It is also evident that the programs had created a long lasting impact to the community (M=3.8519; SD=0.73734). Also the NGOs enhanced the socio-economic development in the community (M=3.8519; SD=0.65610). A high response rate was also reported with regard to the fact that the programs run by the NGOs contributed in alleviating human suffering (M=3.8333; SD=0.74606) and made effort to acquire the requisite resources on a timely basis (M=3.8148; SD=0.82586). The resources required to implement the programs were usually obtained on time (M=3.8148; SD=0.64644).

It is also evident that once the programs had been undertaken the community was left intact (M=3.7407; SD=0.64968). It was also reported that the programs were carried out in strict adherence to the donor’s specification (M=3.7407; SD= 0.82839). It was also evident that the NGOs promoted activities that added value to the community (M=3.7222; SD=0.89899). Furthermore, the NGOs supported programs that ensured the development of the society (M=3.6481; SD=0.70463). It was also evident that the activities of the NGOs were completed on time (M=3.6481; SD=0.73092). Since the aggregate mean was 3.8481 (SD=0.70609) it is evident that the performance of the NGOs in Nakuru County had improved.

#### 4.5 Correlation Analysis

Using the Pearson correlation analysis, the relationship between operational strategies and the performance of the NGOs was scrutinized and the results generated are captured in Table 9.

**Table 9:**  
*Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis Results*

		Performance	Cost priority	Quality priority	Speed delivery	Flexibility
Performance	Pearson	1	.917**	.467**	.802**	.631**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	54	54	54	54	54

Cost priority	Pearson	.917**	1	.375**	.787**	.556**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.05	.000	.000
	N	54	54	54	54	54
Quality priority	Pearson	.467**	.375**	1	.569**	.711**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.05		.000	.000
	N	54	54	54	54	54
Speed delivery	Pearson	.802**	.787**	.569**	1	.745**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	54	54	54	54	54
Flexibility	Pearson	.631**	.556**	.711**	.745**	1
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	54	54	54	54	54

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

As shown in Table 9 the relationships between cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility and performance of NGOs were all positive. Furthermore, there was a strong positive relationship ( $r=0.917$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) between cost priority and NGO performance. This concurs with Ezenwa (2022) who found a positive association between cost and success ( $r=0.671$ ;  $p=0.001$ ). However, the results contradicted Odipo (2021) who reported unprecedented lack of association between innovative strategies and performance of NGOs. Similarly, quality priority was theorized to be significantly linked to the performance of the NGOs. However, the study output demonstrated that there was a weak positive relationship ( $r=0.467$ ;  $p=0.001$ ) between quality priority and performance of NGOs. This received support from Wamalwa (2022) who found that quality priority was statistically significant and linearly linked with performance in the considered NGOs. The results further postulated that there was a strong positive relationship ( $r=0.802$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) between delivery speed and NGOs' performance. This is consistent with Luxton (2022) who showed that speedy delivery substantially predicted financial performance ( $r=0.186$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Finally, a moderate positive relationship ( $r=0.631$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) existed between flexibility and performance of

NGOs. This is supported by Sonam (2022) who noted that many organizations that were flexible in their operations reported increased performance.

#### 4.6 Diagnostic Tests

The diagnostic tests undertaken included the homoscedasticity and normality tests. The test results for homoscedasticity are presented in Table 10.

**Table 10:**  
*Diagnostic Tests for Homoscedasticity*

Model	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)					
NGO Performance	.291	.145	.172	.902	1.375
Cost priority	.198	.135	.132	.899	1.264
1 Quality priority	.207	.167	.163	.881	1.248
Speed Delivery	.207	.167	.163	.891	1.299
Flexibility	.067	.030	.029	.790	1.383

The homoscedasticity test was diligently guided by the evaluative assumption that the error generated in discerning the perceived effect of the predictor variables on the outcome variable was homoscedastic and uniform for all the foretelling/predictor variables. Guided by the results deduced and captured in Table 10 it is evident that the homoscedasticity test was significant and the inherent assumption of the existence of heteroscedasticity and serial correlation of data was ignored. This is because the tolerance values and the values for the VIF met the required threshold. Generally, the tolerance values should be more than 0.1 and the value of the VIF should not be greater than 10, otherwise further investigations should be merited. However, the tolerance values were within the acceptable range. For instance, tolerance for cost priority was 0.899 (VIF=1.264), quality priority was 0.891(VIF=1.248), speed delivery was 0.891(VIF=1.299) and flexibility was 0.79(VIF=1.383). In addition, NGOs' performance had a tolerance of 0.902 (VIF=1.375). Based on the results, there was no heteroscedasticity in the research data hence excluding the need to undertake further scrutiny. This implied that the data was fit for further analysis. Moreover, Shapiro-Wilk test was involved in attempting to deduce whether data was normally distributed as the data set was less than 100. The outcome of this inquiry is captured in Table 11.

**Table 11:*****Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normality***

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
NGOs' Performance	.0978	54	.109
Cost priority	.0992	54	.206
Quality priority	.1377	54	.079
Speed delivery	.0845	54	.083
Flexibility	.1379	54	.1922

As illustrated in Table 11, the data set emanated from a normally distributed population. It is in this respect evident that data on NGOs' performance ( $p=0.109$ ), cost priority ( $p=0.206$ ), quality priority ( $p=0.079$ ), speed delivery ( $p=0.083$ ) and flexibility ( $p=0.1922$ ) were normally distributed.

**4.7 Testing Hypotheses**

The section displays the findings of the statistical analyses, hypotheses tests and interpretations and discussion of the findings as guided by the study objectives and hypotheses.

**4.7.1 Cost Priority and the Performance of NGOs**

The first objective sought to establish the effect of cost priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. It was hypothesized that cost priority had no significant effect on NGOs' performance. Using simple regression analysis, the results obtained following the hypothesis testing are captured in Table 12.

**Table 12:*****Regression Results for the Effect of Cost Priority on Performance of NGOs***

<b>Model Summary</b>					
<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>		
.817 <sup>a</sup>	.667	.638	.10026		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Cost priority					
<b>ANOVA<sup>b</sup></b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	3.983	1	3.983	275.365	.000 <sup>b</sup>

Residual	0.752	52	.014
<b>Total</b>	4.735	53	

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs

b. Predictors: (Constant), Cost priority

<b>Regression Coefficients</b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>		
(Constant)	1.118	.165		6.759	.000
Cost priority	.621	.043	.717	16.594	.000

**Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs**

The findings presented in Table 12 postulated that show that the R-squared value of 0.667 meant that 66.7% of the variance in NGOs’ performance in Nakuru County could be explained by cost priority. It is apparent that the other factors excluded from the model explained 33.3% of the performance of NGOs. The null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant effect of cost priority on the performance of NGOs was rejected (p=0.000). This was construed to imply that cost priority significantly affected NGOs’ performance in Nakuru County. The outcomes for ANOVA involving cost priority NGOs performance designated that the F-calculated statistic was 275.365 (p=0.000) denoting that the model was significant and displayed goodness of fit. The regression model fitted to test the effect was;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon; \dots\dots\dots (6)$$

where;

Y = NGOs’ Performance,

$\beta_0$  = Constant,

$X_1$  = Cost priority

$\epsilon$  = Error term

The standardized beta coefficient resulting from the regression model was;

$$Y = 1.118 + 0.717X_1$$

The results designated that without cost priority, NGOs’ performance was fixed at a constant of 1.118 units. However, a unit adjustment in cost priority influenced 0.717(or 71.7%) unit change in NGOs’ performance in Nakuru County. This increase was found to be significant (p=0.000). The findings have been supported by Norden (2022) who averred that cost priority was associated with the NGOs’ overall performance. Similarly, Jozef (2021) concurred that

cutting down on constraining expenses provided opportunity for the NGOs to enhance their performance while Swarithitra (2021) believed that consistent cost reduction strategies guaranteed the continuous existence of NGOs. The results are also supported by Ezenwa (2022) who discerned the existence of a significant effect of cost priority on performance and Attayib (2022) who found a noteworthy significant variance between cost priority and performance.

#### 4.7.2 Quality Priority and the Performance of NGOs

The second objective scrutinized the perceived effect of quality priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The study hypothesized that quality priority did not significantly affect NGOs' performance in Nakuru County and the outcome of the test is displayed in Table 13.

**Table 13:**

#### *Regression Results for the Effect of Quality Priority on NGOs' Performance*

<b>Model Summary</b>					
<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>		
.569 <sup>a</sup>	.324	.318	.16176		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality Priority					
<b>ANOVA<sup>b</sup></b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	1.034	1	1.034	14.534	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	3.701	52	.071		
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.735</b>	<b>53</b>			
a. Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Quality Priority					
<b>Regression Coefficients</b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>		
(Constant)	2.315	.404		5.731	.000
Quality priority	.417	.109	.467	3.812	.000
<b>Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs</b>					

As displayed in Table 13, the R-square was 0.321 which suggested that quality priority had a chance of explaining 32.1% of the perceived variance in NGOs' performance. Also the F-statistic value of 14.534 ( $p=0.000$ ) confirmed that the regression model was significant and commendably displayed goodness of fit. From the findings, the hypothesis which indicated that quality priority did not significantly predict NGOs' performance in Nakuru County was rejected ( $p<0.05$ ). This implied that by executing quality priority would result into improved NGOs' performance.

The regression model fitted to test the effect was;  $Y=2.315+0.467X_2$  ..... (7)

where;

$Y$  = Performance of NGOs

$X^2$  = Quality priority

The results for the beta coefficient for quality priority revealed that without quality priority, NGOs' performance would be 2.315 units. However, a unit adjustment in quality priority significantly contributed to 0.417 (or 41.7%) units adjustment in NGOs' performance. Generally the outcome of the study has been supported by Levin (2021) who concurred that quality programs accelerated the performance of NGOs while Bagherzadeh and Trezemon (2023) concurred that quality priority was important in the sustainability of NGOs. The results are also congruent with Koimbura (2021) who affirmed that prioritizing quality standards enabled NGOs to deliver the programs within the stipulated time. However, the results are different from Wasel (2021) who ascertained that quality priority had an insignificant impact on organizational performance.

#### **4.7.3 Delivery Speed and the Performance of NGOs**

The third objective sought to establish the effect of delivery speed on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. It was hypothesized that delivery speed had did not significantly affect the NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Using simple regression analysis, NGOs' performance was regressed on delivery speed and the outcome obtained provided in Table 14.

**Table 14:****Regression Results for the Effect of Delivery Speed on NGOs' Performance**

<b>Model Summary</b>			
<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
.779 <sup>a</sup>	.607	.536	.17023

a. Predictors: (Constant), Delivery Speed

<b>ANOVA<sup>b</sup></b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	3.046	1	3.046	93.769	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	1.689	52	.032		
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.735</b>	<b>53</b>			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs

b. Predictors: (Constant), Delivery Speed

<b>Regression Coefficients</b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Coefficients</b>		
			<b>Beta</b>		
(Constant)	1.144	.280		4.081	.000
Speed Delivery	.604	.074	.792	9.683	.000

**Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs**

It can be deduced from Table 14 that the R-square was 0.607 which suggested that delivery speed had a chance of explaining 60.7% of the variance observed in NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The other factors not included in the model would explain 39.3% of NGOs' performance. The ANOVA results for delivery speed postulated that the regression model was significant and displayed goodness of fit as the F statistic was 93.769 ( $p=0.000$ ). Moreover, it has been affirmed that the results failed to support the null hypothesis which discredited the significant effect of delivery speed on NGOs' performance ( $p<0.05$ ). This implied that delivery speed was a significant predictor of NGOs' performance ( $\beta_3=.792$ ,  $t=9.683$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

The model fitted for speed delivery and NGOs' performance was;  $Y=1.144+.792X_3$ ; .....  
(8)

where;

Y= NGOs' performance

$X_3$ =Delivery speed

The standardized beta coefficient for delivery speed implied that without delivery speed, NGOs' performance ( $p=0.000$ ) remained at 1.144 units. However, a unit adjustment in delivery speed informed 0.792 (or 79.2%) significant units increase in NGOs' performance ( $p=0.000$ ). The significant role played by speed delivery has been supported by Randon (2022) who posited that speedy delivery of programs was a significant determinant of organizational performance. Luthabo (2022) also concurred that seed delivery significantly enhanced the public perception about the ability of the NGOs to create the expected impact while Anunda (2024) found that speed delivery promoted organizational performance of the NGOs. Similarly, Kipruto (2021) adduced that the perceived effect of delivery speed on performance was significant.

#### **4.7.4 Flexibility and the Performance of NGOs**

The fourth objective focused on ascertaining the perceived effect of flexibility on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Flexibility was hypothesized as having no significant effect on NGOs' performance. By the express use of simple regression analysis, NGOs' performance was regressed against flexibility and the findings deduced captured in Table 15.

**Table 15:**

***Regression Results for the Effect of Flexibility on NGOs' Performance***

<b>Model Summary</b>					
<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>		
.649 <sup>a</sup>	.421	.417	.21407		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexibility					
<b>ANOVA<sup>b</sup></b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	1.886	1	1.886	34.419	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	2.849	52	.055		
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.735</b>	<b>53</b>			
a. Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexibility					
<b>Regression Coefficients</b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Coefficients</b>		
(Constant)	1.554	.392		3.959	.000
Flexibility	.597	.102	.631	5.867	.000
<b>Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs</b>					

Table 15 aptly displays the model summary espousing the perceived linkage of flexibility and NGOs' performance. It is undoubtedly evident that R-squared for flexibility was 0.398 and this empirically implied that 39.8% of the projected variation in NGOs' performance was occasioned by flexibility. It can be deduced that the F statistic was 34.419 (p=0.000) clearly postulating that the model enshrining flexibility as a predictor was indeed significant. This provided the ground to ascertain that the model displayed goodness of fit. Hence the results confirmed that there was a significant effect of flexibility on NGOs' performance ( $\beta_4=.631$ ,  $t=5.867$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and this was extended to imply that if the NGOs adopted flexibility as an operational strategy the performance would significantly improve.

The regression model fitted was  $Y=1.554+0.631X_4;$ .....(9)

where;

Y= NGOs' performance

X<sub>4</sub>=Flexibility

The beta coefficient results for flexibility implied that in the absence of flexibility, the performance of NGOs remained at 1.554 units. However, for a unit change in the index of flexibility, there was a 0.631 (63.1%) increase in index of the performance of NGOs. The increase was significant ( $p=0.000$ ). This has been supported by Sonam (2022) who contended that adjusting the available resources in tandem with the stakeholders' expectations would improve the performance of the NGOs. Barnett (2022) also concurred that being flexible in dealing with stakeholder demands was closely associated with organizational success. On her part, Naomi (2021) contended that being able to manage uncertainty was a critical success factor for NGOs. The results are also congruent with Gachimu and Njuguna (2022) who found that flexibility was related to performance. However, the results are incongruent with Tsuma (2023) who established that flexibility was inversely related to performance ( $r=-0.417$ ,  $p=0.409$ ).

#### **4.7.5 Joint Effect of Cost Priority, Quality Priority, Delivery Speed, Flexibility and Speed Delivery on NGOs' Performance**

The fifth objective focused on ascertaining the joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. It was hypothesized that the joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility on NGOs' performance was insignificant. By the use of multiple regression analysis, the outcomes of the analysis are displayed in Table 16.

**Table 16:*****Regression for the Joint Effect of Cost Priority, Quality Priority, Delivery Speed and Flexibility on Performance of NGOs***

<b>Model Summary</b>			
<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
.831 <sup>a</sup>	.691	.576	.11333

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cost Priority, Quality Priority, Delivery Speed and Flexibility

<b>ANOVA<sup>b</sup></b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	4.106	4	1.026	79.919	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	.629	49	.013		
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.735</b>	<b>53</b>			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs

b. Predictors: (Constant), cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility

<b>Regression Coefficients</b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>		
(Constant)	1.071	.206		3.449	.001
Cost priority	0.571	.067	.596	9.027	.000
Quality priority	0.254	.067	.261	.815	.019
Speed delivery	0.286	.095	.296	.906	.017
Flexibility	0.183	.087	.188	.961	.001

**Dependent Variable: Performance of NGOs**

As shown in Table 16, the R-squared for the joint regression was 0.691. This means that cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility explained the likelihood of achieving 69.1% improvement in NGOs' performance. Consequently, 30.9% of the unperceived variation in NGOs' performance was the product of unaccounted factors otherwise excluded from the model. The ANOVA results for the combined independent variables as demonstrated in Table 16 clearly affirm that the F-statistic was 22.283 as compared with the

*f*-critical (3.83). On the basis of the sufficiently and inherently large difference, the results presented reliable grounds to authentically pronounce that the regression model involving the four predictor variables was not only undoubtedly significant but also displayed the goodness of fit. In tandem with this eventuality, and in consideration of the reported  $p=0.000$ , the four variables were declared as being good predictors of NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Hence the null hypothesis was overruled implying that focusing jointly on cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility as the preferred operational strategies would enhance the performance NGOs in Nakuru County. Perhaps, this is based on the fact that operational strategies tended to reduce costs while helping to maximize the outcomes for the NGOs. The regression model fitted to test the hypothesis was:  $Y = 1.071+0.596X_1+0.261X_2+0.296X_3+ 0.188X_4 + 0.0009\varepsilon\dots\dots\dots(10)$

- Where:
- Y: NGOs' Performance
- $\beta_0$ : is the constant
- $\beta_1, \beta_2 \beta_3$  and  $\beta_4$  are the standardized beta coefficients
- $X_1$ : cost priority
- $X_2$ : quality priority
- $X_3$ : delivery speed
- $X_4$ : flexibility
- $\varepsilon$ : Error term

The results of the standardized beta coefficients indicated that without cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County would stay unaltered at 1.071 units. However, with cost priority changing by a single unit, a significant increase of 0.596 (59.6%) would be reported in NGOs' performance ( $p=0.000$ ), to further discern that the effect of cost priority on NGOs' performance in the joint regression model was significant. Also, by increasing quality by one unit would held an increase of 0.261(26.1%) in NGOs' performance. The results also demonstrated that the perceived effect of quality priority in the joint regression model was significant ( $p=0.019$ ).

It has also been evidently deduced that if delivery speed increased by one unit, the change in NGOs' performance in Nakuru County would be 0.296(29.6%). With  $p=0.017$ , the demonstrated effect of delivery speed in the joint model was taken to be significant. The

results also show that when flexibility increased by one unit, there was a corresponding significant ( $p=0.001$ ) increase of 0.188(18.8%) units in NGOs' performance.

The results credibly concur with Norden (2022) who established that operational strategies were associated with enhanced performance in the NGOs. Similarly, Jeromende (2024) provided insights into how effective operational strategies would place NGOs in a competitive edge and long term impact. Similarly, results display congruence with Koimbura (2021) who affirmed that operational strategies enabled the NGOs to deliver the programs within the stipulated time. However, the results contradict Muchemi and Wambura (2022) who denounced any noticeable linkages involving operational strategies and NGOs' performance. Although the joint effect of the operational strategies was significant, it made sense to discern strength of significance of the predictor variables. As revealed by the model's coefficients, cost priority was highly linked to NGO's performance (0.696), followed by speed delivery (0.296), quality priority (0.261) and flexibility (0.188).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This section covers a summary of the research results with regard to the effect of operational strategies on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. In addition, it highlights the study conclusion and recommendations. It also highlights the suggestions for further research.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Study

The study examined the effect of operational strategies on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The first objective of the study was to determine the effect of cost priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Cost priority was hypothesized to have no significant effect on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The findings revealed a significant effect of cost priority on performance which further implied that cost priority significantly affected NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Hence  $HO_1$  was rejected.

The second objective sought to establish the effect of quality priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Quality priority was hypothesized to have no significant effect on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. However, the findings deduced affirmatively that quality priority significantly affected NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Hence  $HO_2$  was rejected.

The third objective discerned the effect of speed delivery on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Speed delivery was hypothesized to have insignificant effect on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County, Kenya. However, the findings discerned that the effect of delivery speed on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County was significant. Hence,  $HO_3$  was rejected.

The fourth objective focused on examining the effect of flexibility on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Consequently, flexibility was hypothesized to have insignificant effect on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. However, the findings postulated that the effect of flexibility on NGOs' performance was significant. Hence  $HO_4$  was rejected.

The fifth objective looked at the joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility on NGOs' performance. The four predictor variables were hypothesized to have no joint significant effect on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. However, the results apparently asserted that cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility

jointly and significantly affected NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Hence  $H_{O5}$  was rejected.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The first objective sought to determine the effect of cost priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. It was hypothesized that there was no significant effect of cost priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The hypothesis results revealed that there was significant effect of cost priority on performance. Therefore, the hypothesis that stated that there was no significant effect of cost priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County was rejected and it is concluded that cost priority affected NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Hence, the NGOs should adopt cost priority as an operational strategy to enhance the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County.

The second objective sought to establish the effect of quality priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. It was hypothesized that there was no significant effect of quality priority on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County. However, the results of the hypothesis test showed that there was a significant effect of quality priority on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County, hence the hypothesis was rejected and the study concluded that quality priority affected NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. Hence, quality priority results into enhanced performance of NGOs.

The third objective examined the effect of delivery speed on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The third hypothesis stated that there was no significant effect of delivery speed on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The results of the hypothesis, however, revealed that there was a significant effect of delivery speed on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County, hence the hypothesis was rejected and the study concluded that delivery speed affected NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. This implied that the NGOs should enhance delivery speed in their programs as a way of enhancing the performance of programs and activities.

The fourth objective examined the effect of flexibility on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The fourth hypothesis stated that there was no significant effect of flexibility on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The hypothesis results revealed that there was a significant effect of flexibility on NGOs' performance, hence the hypothesis was rejected.

This suggested that the NGOs in Nakuru County would register improved performance by adopting flexibility as an operational strategy.

The fifth objective examined the joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. It was hypothesized that cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility did not significantly affect NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. The results of the hypothesis showed that the joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County was significant, hence the hypothesis was rejected. Hence, the joint effect of cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility on NGOs' performance was significant and likely to enhance NGOs' performance.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations emanating mainly from the results as informed by the study objectives were made:

##### **5.4.1 Recommendations for Practice and Policy**

From the results it is apparently evident that operational strategies significantly affected the NGOs' performance. Hence, the study recommends that the NGOs' management ought to adopt cost priority as an operational strategy to improve the performance of the NGOs. The cost priority may enhance NGOs' performance by ensuring that resources are directed towards the intended programs and activities.

Concerning quality priority, it is recommended that the NGOs ought to aim at ensuring that the programs are conforming to the quality standards and rules guiding the functions of the NGOs purposely to incentivize performance.

Based on delivery speed, the NGOs should adopt delivery speed as an operational strategy by adhering to the laid down delivery reliability procedures to promote the performance of the NGOs.

The NGOs should be flexible in their operations by customizing their activities to cover broader areas as this will help them to operate under resource constraints environments while meeting the NGOs' performance goals.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendation for Further Research**

The study focused on ascertaining the effect of operational strategies on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County. However, the study considered four predictor variables were involved namely cost priority, quality priority, delivery speed and flexibility which accounted for 86.67% of the observed change in NGOs' performance. However, the same study can be replicated but data collection could be done over a protracted duration as opposed to the current study. There are other factors that accounted for 14.3% which future studies can explore. Hence, further investigations should look into the effect of the other variables on NGOs' performance in Nakuru County and in other counties in Kenya. On the other hand, a similar study could be carried out other entities or organization in Nakuru County to facilitate the generalization of the findings. Moreover, future studies can also adopt other methodologies such as the use of correlational design to provide further insights into the linkages between NGOs' performance and operational strategies.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Letter of Introduction to the Respondents

Egerton University-Town Campus

P.O Box 536-20215

Nakuru

Dear Respondent,

#### **REF: PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FROM YOUR NGO**

I am pursuing a Master's degree in Business Administration at Egerton University specializing in Strategic Management. Currently I am involved in research activity and my research project is on **OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF NON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**. This letter seeks to unreservedly implore you to permit me to undertake the investigation within the precincts of your organization.

As a result, you have been explicably and carefully chosen to participate in the study by sharing your unreserved views regarding various aspects of the aforementioned subject. The information provided will be handled with utmost confidentiality and the outcome of the investigation will be used purely to accomplish academic requirements.

Yours Sincerely,

**LULU AKIRU CHOCHOI**

**CM11/62584/14**

## Appendix II: Questionnaire to the Respondents

### Instructions

- a) Please do not write your name on the questionnaire.
- b) The information you will give will be treated with confidentiality.
- c) Indicate your choice by a tick
- d) Kindly answer all questions.

### SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Indicate your gender: Male  Female
2. Level of education: Diploma  Bachelor  Masters  PhD  Other (Specify).....
3. How long has the NGO existed? Below 1yr  1-5 yrs  6-10 yrs  above 10 yrs

### SECTION B: Operational Strategies

4. The following statements indicate the parameters related to operational strategies in your NGO. You are required to indicate on the response scale agreement level with each statement. There are five possible responses to each statement as follows: **1(Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Undecided), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree)**. Please mark with a tick (✓) the number that corresponds with your response

<b>Statements on Cost Priority</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Cutting down on cost has enabled my organization to continue operating					
In our NGO we always avoid wastage when implementing our programs					
My NGO adopts simple operational procedures in order to cut on cost					
My NGO endeavors to minimize cost of items in our programs					
My NGO is always accountable for its operational activities					
My NGO utilizes cost effective resources to meet beneficiary needs					
Our NGO plans in advance the resources to carry out its operations					
The NGO spends resources as per the stipulated financial regulations					
There is transparency in the use of resources through cost estimation					
We attempt to exclude unnecessary expenses in our operations strategy					
<b>Statements on Quality Priority</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
As a manager I am concerned about the quality of programs we offer					
As an organization we always conform to donor quality specifications					
In my NGO programs formulated are useful to the community					
In my NGO the programs are formulated to meet the stakeholders' needs					
We exploit resource usefulness by complying with quality standards					
In our NGO, quality is considered before any program is launched					
My NGO conforms to the rules and regulations governing the					

operations of all NGOs in Kenya					
My NGO delivers quality programs to the beneficiaries					
Our employees have adequate experience and skills to improve the quality of service delivery					
The programs undertaken by my NGO are approved by the government					
<b>Statements about delivery speed</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
All our programs are guided by speed convenience considerations					
As an NGO we are guided by just-in-time delivery procedure					
As an organization we are reliable in implementing our programs					
In our NGO the staff often displays strong work values for timelines					
My NGO adopts process-time reduction to guide programs implementation					
My NGO focuses on timely provision of services to the beneficiaries					
My NGO is dependable in delivery schedules					
My organization takes the shortest time possible to make improvements in the services provided					
Our delivery schedules focus on prompt response to the needs of the beneficiaries					
Our NGO endeavors to provide services quickly					
<b>Statements on Flexibility</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
As an NGO we deal with tackle problems as they emerge					
As an organization we usually adjust to the environmental changes					
As an organization we have turned flexibility into a competitive advantage					
Due to donor uncertainty we usually make adjustments in our operations					
Flexibility enables our NGO to prioritize the needs of the target beneficiaries					
Innovativeness, creativity and responsiveness are our guiding principles					
My NGO effectively manages uncertainty if and when they do occur					
My NGO promptly switches between products and services as needs arise					
Through flexibility my NGO has managed to meet the expectations of the beneficiaries					
As an organization we rely on new information to make informed decisions					

## SECTION E: Performance of NGOs

5. The following statements indicate parameters related to the performance in your NGO.

You are required to point out agreement level with the statements using the given key:

**1 (strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Undecided), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly agree).**

Please mark with a tick (✓) the number that corresponds with your answer

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Relevance					

The NGO promotes activities that add value to the community					
The programs carried out by my NGO meet stipulated objectives					
Target group priorities are considered by the programs					
My NGO supports programs that ensure the development of the society					
Our programs contributes in alleviating human suffering					
<b>Impact</b>					
Our programs have created a long lasting impact to the community					
My NGO enhances socio-economic development in the community					
Our programs have made life simpler for the beneficiaries					
Once the programs have been undertaken the community is left intact					
The presence of our NGO has provided permanent solution to the society's problems					
<b>Sustainability</b>					
My NGO maintains the community activities for their good welfare					
My NGO provides continuous community support					
The sustainability of the programs is the main focus of our NGO					
As an organization we carry out monitoring to ensure that our programs are try keep track of our programs					
All our programs are undertaken until full completion					
<b>Promptness</b>					
In my NGO activities are completed on time					
In my NGOs programs are delivered within the stipulated time					
In my NGO the overall objectives are timely delivery of programs					
The resources required to implement our programs are usually obtained on time					
Effort is made in our NGO to timely receive the prerequisite resources					

**Thank you**

### **Appendix III: Introductory Letter to NACOSTI**

Egerton University-Town Campus

P.O Box 536-20195

Nakuru

The Director

Board of Post Graduate Studies

PO BOX 536-20115

Egerton University, Njoro

7<sup>th</sup> June, 2023

**Dear Sir,**

**Re: Introductory Letter to NACOSTI**

I am a student in the School of Post Graduate Studies pursuing an MBA degree in the Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Commerce. I intend to carry out a study entitled: **OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**. I am at the stage of seeking research permit from NACOSTI before embarking on data collection.


I am writing to request you to kindly issue me with a letter confirming that indeed I am a bona-fide and listed student for the MBA program in the Business Administration Department so that NACOSTI may issue me with a research permit to enable me collect data.


Yours faithfully

**LULU AKIRU CHOCHOI**

**CM11/62584/14**


# Appendix IV: Research Permit from NACOSTI

  
**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: **357917** Date of Issue: **02/August/2023**

**RESEARCH LICENSE**




**This is to Certify that Ms.. LULU AKIRU CHOCHOI of Egerton University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nakuru on the topic: OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 02/August/2024.**

License No: **NACOSTI/P/23/28173**

**357917**  
Applicant Identification Number

*W. Mutembu*  
Director General  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &  
INNOVATION**

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**See overleaf for conditions**

## Appendix V: Journal Abstract

International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Social Science  
(IJLRHSS) Volume 07 - Issue 06, 2024  
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# Operational Strategies and Performance of Non-Governmental Organizations in Nakuru County, Kenya

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**Abstract:** Performance is the collective end results of the processes carried out to achieve organizational goals. There are diverse ways of assessing organizational performance; however, in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) performance is measured using both financial and non-financial parameters. In order to enhance performance most NGOs have adopted different operational strategies. These include quality priority and flexibility. This paper examined the effect of quality priority and flexibility on the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County. The analysis was based on causal/explanatory research design and targeted chief officers in 59 NGOs in Nakuru County. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using frequencies, means and standard deviations and the hypotheses tested by the use of simple regression analyses. It is evident that quality priority affected the performance of NGOs in Nakuru County. Hence, a change in quality priority would result into enhanced performance of NGOs. It was also evident that flexibility affected the performance of NGOs. This suggested that the NGOs would register improved performance by being flexible in their operations. The paper concluded that there the relationship between quality priority and flexibility and performance of NGOs in Nakuru County was positive and significant. The study recommends that the management of the NGOs in Nakuru County should incorporate quality priority and flexibility as predictors of performance of the NGOs.

**Keywords:** Quality Priority, flexibility, Impact, NGOs, Operations Strategies, Performance, Relevance, Sustainability, Timeliness