

# EXTERNAL STRATEGIC PLANNING ANALYSIS PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE OF PERFORMANCE OF COFFEE FARMERS SOCIETIES IN BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA

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## Abstract

Cooperative organizations are established to collectively address economic challenges more effectively than individuals can on their own. However, achieving resolutions for farmers' issues through cooperative societies is not automatic due to shared economic factors with other businesses, including international relations and regulatory limitations. Evaluating the equitable distribution of income among members becomes a gauge of their satisfaction with the benefits offered by newly formed cooperatives. The primary focus of this study was to assess the external strategic planning analysis practices on the cooperative society's performance. The study was guided by stakeholder theory, growth theory, human capital theory, and dynamic capabilities theory. This study employed both descriptive and exploratory research approaches. Data collection involved a diverse group of participants, totalling 340 individuals. This group included 40 supervisors, 160 workers, and 140 manufacturing managers representing the cooperative society's management. Questionnaires were administered to 75 plant managers, 21 supervisory managers, and 85 employees, resulting in a total of 181 respondents based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling method. Descriptive data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 28, enabling the examination of both quantitative and qualitative information through coding. To assess the data both descriptively and inferentially, statistical techniques, including means, standard deviations, Pearson's correlation, and regression analysis, were employed. There was a positive correlation between external strategic planning analysis practices and the cooperative society's performance. Based on these insightful finding, the study recommended a more substantial integration of external strategic planning analysis practices in the running of cooperative societies. These implications held value for various stakeholders, including factory management, government entities, researchers, and academics. By providing actionable insights, this research facilitated informed decision-making, ultimately contributing to the enhanced performance of coffee farmers' societies in Bungoma County, Kenya.

Keywords: External strategic planning analysis practices, cooperative society, and performance



### **INTRODUCTION**

Ngibuini (2022) conducted a study in Kenya's Nyeri County to investigate the impact of process innovation on the performance of coffee cooperatives. Employing a descriptive research approach guided by the resource-based theory, the researcher utilized stratified random procedures to select the research population. Structured questionnaires were employed to collect data from respondents. The study established a positive correlation between cooperative society success and innovative processes. Notably, organizational investments in product and marketing innovation were deemed pivotal. In resource-scarce scenarios, process innovation was recommended as a priority over product and marketing innovations. Policymakers were advised to create a conducive environment for process innovation (Ngibuini, 2022). Focusing on coffee societies in Kiambu County, Lucy Waithira (2018) investigated the implications of strategic management techniques, particularly in resource mobilization and communication. The study drew on contingency, resource-based, upper echelon, and agency theories, utilizing a descriptive statistical design and self-administered questionnaires. Findings indicated that inadequate resource mobilization and communication negatively affected the performance of coffee factories in the county. The study emphasized the need for increased support to enhance production and marketing. Recommendations included establishing effective communication channels and structures (Waithira, 2018). Ngibuini (2016) examined the influence of marketing practices on the success of the coffee industry. Using a descriptive design and purposive sampling, the researcher collected data through questionnaires. The study revealed effective and well-utilized market processes with stakeholder approval. Recommendations included government support for farmers and direct auction sales. The association between marketing practices and effectiveness was substantiated (Ngibuini, 2016).

The Annual Meetings of the Inter-African Coffee Organization, which took place in Nairobi, focused on the management of coffee quality in Africa and its contribution to stimulating domestic consumption. The objectives encompassed the integration of coffee research and its practical application across Africa, raising awareness among member countries, and strengthening institutional capabilities for effective leadership and support in the coffee industry's development (IACO, 2019). The findings highlighted limited coffee consumption in Africa due to preference for other beverages, bureaucratic hurdles, challenging geography, and inadequate infrastructure. The need to promote African coffee consumption, leverage the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and formulate coordinated strategies for market growth was emphasized (IACO, 2019). Adeleke (2019) investigated marketing strategies employed by successful Arkansas coffee shop owners. Utilizing the 8Ps marketing mix theory with 12 components, the researcher conducted purposive sampling and semi-structured interviews. The study unveiled that active involvement in daily operations, media marketing, branding, customer-friendly pricing, and location contributed to business success. Enhanced customer service, personalized marketing, and brand distinctiveness were also pivotal. The study's outcomes supported coffee shop owners with effective marketing strategies and contributed to job creation and consumer assistance (Adeleke, 2019).

### Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research approach that encompassed a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies for data collection. This approach was deemed appropriate as complex issues involving multiple causal factors require a comprehensive investigation that cannot be addressed adequately through a singular method (Patton, 2022). The quantitative data was acquired through a structured questionnaire distributed to coffee farmers, supervisory managers, and plant managers. The questionnaire encompassed inquiries about the implementation of strategic planning techniques by farmers, their resultant performance, and their perceptions regarding the efficacy of these techniques. The research design adopted for this purpose aligned with a descriptive survey methodology, commonly employed to collect data pertaining to individuals' attitudes, routines, viewpoints, and potential behaviors (Heppner et al., 2008).

This study was carried out in Bungoma County situated in western Kenya, sharing a border with eastern Uganda. It is positioned north of Kakamega and Busia, south of Trans-Nzoia, and to the north of Kakamega. The county is composed of various sub-counties including Bungoma Central, Mt. Elgon, Bumula, Kimilili, Cheptais, as well as the surrounding regions to its north, south, west, and east. The selection of Bungoma County as the research site was influenced by the significant presence of numerous coffee cooperative societies within its boundaries. Bungoma County was chosen as the research site due to its substantial concentration of coffee cooperative societies, providing a rich and diverse landscape for studying strategic planning practices in coffee farming. Its strategic location within the region and proximity to neighboring areas further enhances its suitability for a comprehensive investigation of the impact of these practices on farmer performance (COSA (2016)

Population refers to the demographic under scrutiny in the research (Son Nghiem, 2018). Consequently, the study centered on examining 20 cooperative societies, with each society having 8 workers, 7 management individuals, and 2 supervisory staff members. The details of these personnel within their respective societies were all duly recorded.

able 1: Target Population						
Category	No of societies	Population size	Target population			
Factory Managers	20	7	140			
Supervisory Managers	20	2	40			
Workers	20	8	160			
Total			340			

Source: Cooperative Society Register (2022)



The term "sampling frame," as defined by Cooper and Schindler (2003), refers to the collection of all potential units within the population from which the sample is selected. As outlined in Table 2, the sampling frame consisted of 340 individuals within each of the three identified categories: senior managers, senior supervisory managers, and cooperative society employees. The process of participant selection involved utilizing a stratified random approach. This method entails the random selection of samples from distinct subgroups, which are established by dividing the population into relevant subcategories, as clarified by Kombo and Tromp (2006). In the context of this research, each individual cooperative society represented its own subgroup. The selection of participants was accomplished through a straightforward random sampling technique. For the purpose of determining the sample population targeted in the investigation, the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample sizes. In this scenario, the resulting sample population is comprised of 181 individuals, sourced from three discrete sampling units. These units encompass a total of 181 respondents, distributed as follows: 75 manufacturing managers, 21 supervisory managers, and 85 cooperative staff members.

### **Table 2: Sample Size**

Category	Target Population	Sample Size
Factory Managers	140	75
Supervisory Managers	40	21
Workers	160	85
Total	340	181

Source: Field Data, (2023)

The study employed questionnaires, encompassing both closed-ended and open-ended formats, to gather primary data, which participants administered to themselves (Sharma, 2022). Questionnaires are widely used due to their effectiveness, cost-efficiency, and ability to reach a larger audience. Different sets of questions were tailored for specific sections; the initial segment addressed participants' background information, while the subsequent section focused on the study's objectives (Aryal, 2022). This approach ensured that every respondent received the precise questions in a consistent sequence. Specifically, manufacturing managers and employees completed the questionnaires, with supervisory supervisors excluded from this process. The utilization of questionnaires allowed for the collection of relevant data from a diverse range of respondents, aligning with the study's goals.

The study assessed the validity and reliability of the data gathering techniques. Validity refers to the degree to which research methods can be supported using three distinct approaches: face validity, construct validity, and content validity. Face validity, as explained by Fiona (2022), ensured that the instruments appeared suitable for their intended purpose, promoting participants' interaction with well-crafted tools for enhanced outcomes. Bhandari (2022) highlighted the significance of construct validity in evaluating the study's concepts and the underlying information by comparing variables like external, internal, and intended management practices with the performance of coffee farmers' societies. This analysis underscored the study's importance and relevance. The validation of research instruments was effectively achieved through the application of expert judgment. The researcher followed experts' instructions to tailor the instrument for a specific objective. Dependability, as outlined by Fiona Middleton (2022), refers to the internal consistency or reliability of a tool. A tool was deemed dependable if it consistently yielded results that demonstrated coherence with one another. The reliability of the surveys was evaluated through the calculation of alpha, where a value higher than 0.7 indicated a strong alignment among the questions (Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

Before distributing the questionnaires, a pilot testing phase was carried out to verify the effectiveness of the questionnaire instrument. This pilot study encompassed a subset of 18 participants, representing 10% of the chosen respondents from the coffee farmers' cooperative society in Busia County. The primary aim of the pilot study was to evaluate the questionnaire tool's reliability. The results of the pilot study were as follows:

Table	3:	Reliability	Results
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Objectives	Alpha value	Number of items
Performance of Coffee Farmers' Society	0.781	4
External strategic planning analysis practices	0.801	4

The results of the pilot study indicated that the coffee farmers' society performance variable had a reliability of 0.781, as determined through the Cronbach's alpha reliability test. Moreover, the external strategic planning analysis practices exhibited a reliability of 0.801. Consistent with Creswell's guidelines (2017), a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable. Notably, all variables within the study showed an alpha value exceeding 0.70, thus confirming the dependability and validity of all survey items for subsequent data analysis.

Data analysis constitutes a vital phase that ensues after the collection, organization, and input of data into the SPSS software, as underscored by Wasiams (2022). This step is integral to deriving meaningful insights. SPSS, renowned for its diverse array of statistical analysis tools, is well-equipped to handle data sets of varying sizes, ensuring comprehensive scrutiny. The study's findings were extracted through descriptive data analysis. Additionally, qualitative data analysis was intended to be implemented to accomplish the research objectives. For analysing interview data, thematic analysis was employed.

To assess the impact of external strategic planning analysis practices on the performance of coffee producer societies in Bungoma County, inferential statistics were used. In parallel, descriptive statistics, encompassing measures such as mean, mode, and standard deviation, were employed to succinctly characterize the amassed data.



Upholding ethical principles played a paramount role in data analysis, interpretation, and dissemination. Integrating both logistical and ethical dimensions within human interactions was essential for maintaining scholarly integrity, as emphasized by Enago (2022). Adhering to ethical standards was indispensable in safeguarding respondents' intellectual and human rights. Ensuring accurate attribution of information sources and authors was imperative. Moreover, all forms of scientific misconduct, including copyright infringements, fabrication, flawed data collection, and misleading citations, were unequivocally prohibited. Research endeavours were executed with the highest degree of professionalism, adhering to empirical and systematic protocols that rigorously avoided biases in technique, data analysis, and design.

### Results

The primary objective of this research was to assess the effects of external strategic planning analysis practices on the performance of coffee farmers' societies in Bungoma County. In pursuit of this goal, the researcher actively solicited the perspectives of the participants to gauge the extent to which these external strategic planning analysis practices contribute to shaping the performance outcomes of these societies. The comprehensive results of this study, which shed light on the relationship between external strategic planning analysis practices, are thoughtfully presented in Table 4.

Statements		SA	А	U	D	SD	Total	Mean	Std Dev.
Reviewing competitors' dynamics	F	43	65	24	13	8	153	3.80	1.047
helps the societies improve product	%	28.1	42.4	15.8	8.6	5	100	76.0	
quality and marketing tactics to									
maintain a successful business.									
That watching for potential changes	F	46	61	22	22	8	153	3.79	1.074
in economic trends such as interest	%	30.2	39.6	14.4	14.4	5	100	75.8	
rates, inflation, trading laws and									
recession levels helps coffee farmers									
societies adapt.									
By reviewing the business industry,	F	34	95	21	3	0	153	4.04	0.342
societies can take proactive measures	%	22.3	61.9	13.7	2.2	0	100	80.8	
to ensure that their business									
continues to thrive, despite climate									
pattern changes made to their									
industry.									
Understanding the society's	F	64	43	26	12	8	153	3.93	0.346
demographics can help businesses	%	41.7	28.1	17.3	7.9	5	100	78.6	
determine if their current products									
and marketing tactics meet the needs									
of their target audience.									

### Table 4: External strategic planning analysis practices

The participants were asked to express their opinions regarding whether reviewing competitors' dynamics aids the societies in enhancing product quality and marketing tactics for maintaining a successful business. The study findings demonstrated that 108 respondents (70.5%) concurred, while 21 respondents (13.6%) held a contrary view. This was confirmed by a Mean of 3.80 and SD = 1.047.

Additionally, participants were inquired about the value of monitoring potential changes in economic trends, such as interest rates, inflation, trading laws, and recession levels, in helping coffee farmers' societies to adapt. The results of the study indicated that 107 respondents (69.8%) agreed with this perspective, as supported by (Mean=3.79; SD=1.074), while 30 respondents (19.4%) disagreed. Furthermore, respondents were questioned about the effectiveness of reviewing the business industry to facilitate proactive measures for ensuring business continuity despite climate pattern changes within the industry. The findings of the study revealed that 129 respondents (84.2%) agreed with this notion, as confirmed by (Mean=4.04; SD=0.342), whereas 3 respondents (2.2%) disagreed. Moreover, the study results indicated that 107 respondents (69.8%) agreed that comprehending the society's demographics can assist businesses in evaluating whether their current products and marketing strategies align with the needs of their target audience. This was affirmed by (Mean=3.93; SD=0.346), whereas 20 respondents (12.9%) disagreed. These findings resonate with the research by Ngibuini (2022), which investigated the effects of process innovation on the performance of coffee societies in Nyeri County, Kenya. Ngibuini employed a descriptive research approach guided by the resource-based theory, using stratified random procedures for data collection and structured questionnaires for respondents. Ngibuini's study indicated a positive correlation between the success of cooperative societies and their innovative processes. Notably, aspects of innovation and numerous cooperative performance outcomes displayed improvements, with organizational investments in product and marketing innovation being particularly influential. In situations of resource scarcity, the findings advised prioritizing process innovation over product and marketing innovations. Additionally, policymakers were recommended to foster an environment conducive to process innovation (Ngibuini, 2022). In another study, Lucy Waithira (2018) examined the implications of strategic management techniques within the context of a coffee society in Kiambu County. The research was rooted in contingency, resource-based, upper echelon, and agency theories, employing descriptive statistical design and diagnostic research methods. Data was gathered through self-administered questionnaires from the management teams



of 10 societies in Kiambu County. The study employed both inferential and descriptive statistical approaches for data analysis.

In a different context, Adeleke (2019) explored marketing tactics employed by successful coffee store owners in Arkansas. Using the 8Ps mix theory with its 12 components, Adeleke framed the study. Purposive sampling and semi-structured interviews were utilized to select participants. In summary, participants' opinions on strategic planning practices and their impacts on coffee farmers' societies' performance were examined using Likert scales. Findings were presented through frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. These results resonated with prior research by Ngibuini (2022), Lucy Waithira (2018), and Adeleke (2019), exploring aspects of innovation, strategic management, and marketing tactics in the context of coffee societies and businesses.

In this segment, the study aimed to examine the connections between the variables under investigation. The researcher employed the Product Moment correlation coefficient to elucidate the impact of external strategic planning analysis practices on the performance of a coffee farmers' society in Bungoma County. The resulting findings were organized and presented in Table 5.

### Table 5: Correlation Analysis

¥		External strategic planning analysis	Performance of Coffee Farmers' Society
		practices	Tanners Society
External strategic planning	Pearson Correlation	1	
analysis practices	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Performance of Coffee Farmers'	Pearson Correlation	.507(**)	1
Society	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0

The research results demonstrated that there existed a statistically significant and positive correlation between external strategic planning analysis practices and the performance of a coffee farmers' society (r=0.507, p<0.05). The findings suggest that the external strategic planning analysis practices are linked to the improved performance of the coffee farmers' society. The positive correlation coefficients and their statistical significance indicate that as these practices are embraced and effectively implemented, the overall performance of the society tends to be enhanced. This aligns with the concept that comprehensive external strategic planning analysis practices can lead to better resource allocation, enhanced decision-making, and goal attainment within the coffee farmers' society. These findings resonate with the broader literature on strategic management and its positive impact on organizational performance (Ogwal, 2018; Wasiam, 2016). It reinforces the idea that a well-structured and well-executed strategic plan can significantly contribute to the success and effectiveness of cooperative societies in the agricultural sector.

To determine how well the model fits the data, the researcher examined the goodness fit in the model summary where the associated regression results obtained during this exercise are shown in Table 6.

### Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.837 <sup>a</sup>	0.701	0.695	0.55264
1. 1.	$(\mathbf{C}, \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{t}, \mathbf{u}) \in \mathbf{C}$		1	

a. Predictors: (Constant). External strategic planning analysis practices

The R square, commonly referred to as the coefficient of determination, serves as a frequently utilized statistic for evaluating the fitness of a model. The results of the regression analysis presented in Table 13 reveal that the R2 value amounted to 0.701 or 70.1%. This outcome indicates that the three some of independent variables under study—external strategic planning analysis practices—account for merely 70.1% of the variance in the dependent variable, which is the performance of the coffee farmers' society. The remaining 29.9% of the variations in performance are influenced by unexamined variables not included in this study. The statistical model portrays that when the interactions between the independent variables (external strategic planning analysis practices,) and the dependent variable (performance of coffee farmers' society) are considered, the model demonstrates a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.837 and a coefficient of determination (R-square) of 0.701. This signifies a positive relationship between the two sets of variables. The findings indicate that while the examined independent variables do contribute to explaining a substantial portion of the variance in the performance of the coffee farmers' society, there are additional factors outside the scope of this study that also play a role in influencing the performance outcomes. This underscores the complexity of the factors at play and suggests avenues for further research to explore the remaining variance and the potential variables responsible for it. This interpretation is consistent with the idea that organizational performance is a multifaceted outcome influenced by a range of internal and external elements (Wasiam, 2016; Maina, 2018).

### Table 7: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	106.504	3	35.501	116.397	.000ª
	Residual	45.507	149	0.305		
	Total	152.011	152			

a Predictors: (Constant), External strategic planning analysis practices,

b Dependent Variable: Performance of Coffee Farmers' Society

The significance of the adopted regression model in the study was evaluated using an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test, as demonstrated in Table 14. The outcome of the ANOVA test revealed an F-statistic of 116.397, which was highly significant at a significance level of 0.000 (p < 0.05). This result indicates that the regression relationship had a strong statistical significance in predicting the influence of external strategic planning analysis practices on the performance of coffee farmers' society. Furthermore, the F critical value at a 5% level of significance was also calculated to be 116.397. This finding reinforces the overall model's significance, indicating that the tested variables effectively fit within the model. This ANOVA result adds robust statistical evidence to the assertion that the combination of external strategic planning analysis practices plays a substantial role in influencing the performance outcomes of coffee farmers' societies. The highly significant F-statistic underscores the validity of the regression model and affirms the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. This outcome resonates with the broader literature on cooperative society performance (Maina, 2018; Wasiam, 2016), which emphasizes the intricate interplay between various factors in shaping the performance dynamics. The ANOVA test outcome provides statistical support for the assertion that strategic planning practices significantly contribute to the performance enhancement of coffee farmers' societies.

Model	Unstandard	ized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Т	Sig.
	В	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.369	0.224		1.648	0.207
External strategic planning analysis practices	0.370	0.026	0.304	6.604	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of Coffee Farmers' Society

The outcomes of the regression analysis are presented in Table 8, showcasing the regression coefficients results. The findings indicate that external strategic planning analysis practices had a positive and statistically significant impact on the performance of coffee farmers' society ( $\beta$ =0.370, p<0.05). These results collectively signify that the adoption of external analysis practices strategic planning framework has a favourable impact on the performance of coffee farmers' societies in Bungoma County, Kenya. The unstandardized beta coefficients, which were measured as .370 illustrate the anticipated enhancement in the performance of coffee farmers' society for every unit standard deviation increase in external strategic planning analysis practices. This implies that a one-unit standard deviation improvement in each of these practices would correspondingly lead to an approximate increase in the performance level of coffee farmers' society by factors of .370, .463, and .231 respectively. These findings align with existing literature (Onchieku and Rangus 2019; Ngibuini, 2022) that underscores the significance of external strategic planning analysis practices the significance of external strategic planning analysis practices the significance of external strategic planning analysis practices and their potential to drive cooperative society performance. The study's focus on these specific strategic planning practices sheds light on their varying degrees of impact, offering valuable insights for coffee farmers' societies

### Conclusion

The outcomes of the regression analysis demonstrated that the effectiveness external strategic planning analysis practices exhibited a significant and illustrative impact on the performance of coffee farmers' society. These practices collectively accounted for 70.1 percent of the variability observed in the performance levels of coffee farmers' society (R2 = .701). Drawing from these findings, the study conclusively determined that the strategic planning practices, namely external strategic planning analysis practices significantly influenced the performance outcomes of coffee farmers' society in Bungoma County. The correlation findings of the study illuminated a statistically significant positive correlation between external strategic planning analysis practices and the performance of coffee farmers' society. Based on this observation, the study arrived at the conclusion that during the execution of external strategic planning analysis practices, strategic planning should particularly address variables like competition dynamics, climate pattern changes, and price fluctuations. Such focused attention on these factors is crucial for enhancing the overall performance of coffee farmers' society in Bungoma County.

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