

Environmental Scanning and Strategy Formulation on Performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital, Nairobi City County

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Abstract

Kenyan health sector is undergoing reformation because of competition, improvement of Kenya's health care system as it relates to the economy, and advancements in health care practices. Nairobi's health strategic and investment plan, which the county has committed to following, offers precise direction on major actions government will take to address health issues. However, city public hospitals are still not operating at their optimal level worldwide despite implementation of such frameworks. The study examined the effect of environmental scanning and strategy formulation on performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital. The study was anchored on Resource-based view theory. Descriptive research design was employed. Target population was management-level employees of Mama Lucy Kibaki hospital. A sample size of 166 was selected using census method. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The study observed that the external environment such as policies of the health sector which are outside its control influence organizational performance greatly. Further, efficiency and quality of service rendered can only be achieved through employees who when involved in strategy formulation will see to it that organizational performance grows overall. In particular, strategy formulation and environmental scanning contribute significantly to the performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital. The hospital must remain proactive and responsive to these external forces to sustain growth. Broader involvement in the process would increase employee buy-in, drive stronger implementation, and enhance the overall effectiveness of strategic management at the hospital.

Keywords: *Hospital Performance, Environmental Scanning, Strategy Formulation*

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1. Introduction

The healthcare sector is a critical component of national development and significantly influences economic growth and social welfare. In addition to providing care for patients, hospitals are essential for research, teaching, supporting the health system, and attracting medical professionals (WHO, 2019). The spectrum of hospitals includes district and secondary hospitals, small, 30-bed rural settings run by general medical professionals, and extremely modern tertiary hospitals with state-of-the-art equipment, cutting-edge medical specializations, and a reputation for training future medical professionals. In comparison to developed countries, hospital performance in Africa is lacking. Take into consideration the ongoing issues that beset Nigeria's healthcare sector. Nigeria's medical facilities are in especially poor shape, and many of the country's hospitals require repair. Regular and recurrent failures of machinery

are caused by misuse and inadequate or nonexistent maintenance. A number of these medical centers are no longer safe to treat patients in due to structural and equipment degradation. The reasons behind health workforce crises, which have received a lot of attention recently, range from several months' worth of unpaid wages to inadequate welfare and an overall feeling of anxiety among healthcare professionals. Strategies for improving systems are not in use at all (Olaitan, 2018).

The same state goes with other African countries, like poor performance of South African public hospitals in all provinces, including poor healthcare service delivery (HSD). The quality of healthcare in health centers and hospitals is declining due to a lack of medical specialists, medications, crumbling infrastructure, malfunctioning equipment, a lack of stationery, and financial mismanagement (Badimo, 2017). In comparison to management procedures at other institutions, Bloom *et al.* (2014) claim that hospital management practices are appalling. It is even worse in public hospitals than in private ones. Organizational performance, according to Namada (2018), is the capacity of an organization to utilize its assets responsibly and effectively to accomplish the objectives and goals it has established. One way to gauge an organization's performance is to look at how well it performs in terms of how well it meets its goals (Katou & Budhwar, 2018). The company must create a range of initiatives to support goal setting and the tracking of the institution's progress toward achieving them to evaluate organizational performance effectively (Marinova, Platenga, & Remery, 2016). Therefore, the administration of healthcare services in hospitals must receive enough attention in the quest for improved healthcare delivery. The firm's effectiveness ratings reflect the decisions and conduct taken by the management (Njenga, 2014).

Strategic management practices help to improve healthcare performance, as stated by Ibrahim and Stephen (2017). The formulation of strategies is intended to improve performance and gain a competitive advantage, which is also necessary for public health institutions. In Kenya's health industry, strategic management practices have not gained ground and have not been properly addressed, as their adoption in public hospitals is quite low as opposed to private hospitals (Juma & Okibo, 2016). Public hospitals have increasingly adopted strategic frameworks, yet performance remains suboptimal. This study explores how environmental scanning and strategy formulation influence hospital performance, with a focus on Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital in Nairobi.

1.1 Problem Statement

In Nairobi, the government established a Health Strategic and Investment Plan, which Mama Lucy Kibaki, one of the groups, offers precise instructions on the major actions the county has promised to take to address health issues. Kenya Health Policy (2014- 2030), Kenya Health Sector Strategic and Investment Plan (KHSSP) 2014-2018, Nairobi City County Strategic Plan (2015-2025), Nairobi City County Health Policy (2015-2020), and other important documents serve as the strategy's guiding frameworks (Nairobi Strategic Plan, 2020). Hospital employees were dissatisfied with the strategies in place, the way they were being implemented and evaluated, delay in beginning procedures, and lack of participation from all parties, particularly personnel, in predicted approaches (Kirimi, 2017). Issues also highlighted an absence of accounting by sections and provinces on difficulties encountered throughout deployment, as well as a shortage of comprehension of the tracking metrics for services provided and managerial backing, which caused variations in knowledge compilation by reported divisions. The absence of consistent performance assessment instruments in the hospital, including regulation systems, has a negative impact on the implementation and evaluation of objectives set on a strategic level, and as a result, affects the provision of high-quality healthcare to

Kenyans (Ayoti, 2016). This study addresses the gap by examining how environmental scanning and strategy formulation affect performance at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Empirical Review

2.1.1 Environmental Scanning and Performance

Kaburu (2018) investigated how environmental scanning affects Momentum Ltd.'s edge over competitors. Research was guided by general systems, resource-based view, and resource dependency theories. The case study method of design was employed. Qualitative analysis was conducted on the generated structured interviews. Interview guide was distributed to five responders. Managers of finance, information technology, human resources, head of commercial department, and corporate strategy. Content analysis method was applied. According to study findings, regular environmental scanning allowed EXP Momentum Ltd to grow into one of Kenya's top experiential marketing firms. The study additionally indicated that EXP Momentum Ltd. responded to stakeholder feedback and concerns in addition to new societal needs. The study concluded that to outperform rivals, EXP Momentum Ltd. should make significant R&D investments to enhance its present environmental scanning strategies and create new, competitive ones. The study specifically looked at environmental scanning and utilized a case study research design; the present study will be looking at strategic management practices, using environmental scanning and formulation as independent variables. Also, this study will be using a descriptive research design.

Okewmba and Njuguna (2021) examined how environmental scanning affected operations of Chemelil Sugar Company. Open system theory was utilized. A descriptive research design was employed. It was intended for sixty people. Respondents were department heads and questionnaires served as research tools. Census sampling was conducted due to the small population size and to ensure accuracy. Purposeful sampling was also employed. It was found that performance is positively and significantly correlated with environmental scanning.

2.1.2 Strategy Formulation and Performance

Nyabinda (2016) studied the process and difficulties involved in formulating strategies within Kenya's Simba Corporation Limited. The goal of the study was to determine Simba Corporation's approach to formulating strategies, as well as challenges the business faced during this process. One of the study's case studies involved interviewing senior employees and employing content analysis to analyze their responses. The inquiry revealed that the company's main tactic in trying to establish itself as a dominant force in Kenya's engine market was diversification. Nonetheless, the study found several obstacles to strategy execution, such as ingrained cultural resistance, conflicts of interest, ideological divides, industry and client expectations, governmental regulations, liberalization of markets, internationalization, morality, poor communication, and insufficient resources. Despite outlining the strategy formulation process and obstacles faced, the study is unable to show how strategy formulation and Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital's performance are related.

Guyo (2020) aimed to investigate how competitive positioning and strategy development impacted deposit-taking SACCOs in Kenya's Marsabit County. Game, contingency, and goal-setting theories served as foundation for the study. With 179 top-level management employees from every SACCO in Marsabit County as target population, descriptive survey research approach was employed. 94 respondents were selected as a sample using a method of stratified random sampling. To gather primary data, semi-structured questionnaires were employed. The

research instrument had been pre-tested. It was discovered that strategy formulation is widely used by businesses and has a significant impact on their competitive position. However, the study focused mainly on Saccos in Marsabit county the current study will focus on Mama Lucy Kibaki hospital in Nairobi.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Resource Based View Theory

Intangible as well as tangible assets that comprise stock of firm-specific elements that can enhance performance are the main emphasis of the RBV perspective (Crook *et al.*, 2008). RBV places significant emphasis on the roles that internal firm resources play in creating strategies that can help establish an edge over others in the marketplace sustainably (Schroeder *et al.*, 2002).

The foundation of RBV theory is management philosophy, which views a firm's internal resources rather than its external positioning as a source of its competitive advantage. Therefore, competitive advantage must be determined by firm-specific assets and skills when conducting business in firms, rather than just evaluating environmental possibilities and dangers (Barney, 1995). RBV states that some resources that companies own and control can provide them an edge over their competitors and enable them to achieve comparatively better results (Ainnuddin *et al.*, 2007). Because businesses that are most fit and adaptable to their surroundings are those that survive, RBV places a strong emphasis on the usefulness of tactics that are quick to adapt to a dynamic and quickly changing environment while also being dedicated and effective in their operational setting (Abdullah, 2010). This assertion is supported by empirical research on relationships between performance and diversification (Wermerfelt & Montgomery, 1988). This theory will support organizational performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital.

2.2.2 Strategic Choice Theory

STC shifts the perspective from organizations as passive reactors to external pressures to active agents making deliberate strategic decisions. It emphasizes that leaders and managerial groups interpret information from environmental scanning through the lens of their own values, beliefs, and institutional histories (Child, 1972). Rather than allowing the external environment to dictate outcomes, SCT suggests that decision makers filter and prioritize information, shaping strategy based on what they perceive as feasible and beneficial within the organization's political and structural context. This positions environmental scanning as an essential input, but one whose impact on performance is realized only through strategic interpretation and action.

SCT argues that outcomes are not solely determined by market conditions or environmental changes, but by the strategic choices organizations make in response to those conditions. These choices are influenced by internal dynamics, historical decisions, and the distribution of power across different levels of the organization (Kochan *et al.*, 1986). The theory's three-tier framework, encompassing strategic, functional, and workplace levels, illustrates how top-level decisions trickle down to affect everyday operations and employee relations, ultimately influencing organizational performance. Thus, SCT reinforces the idea that performance is the result of an interactive process: how well an organization scans its environment, formulates strategy, and mobilizes internal alignment to execute those choices effectively.

3. Methodology

Creswell (2013) describes descriptive design as meticulous measurements along with an account of each component's uniqueness in relation to an occurrence under study, as well as explanations of phenomena, incidents, and circumstances. It was the best design to use because it allows for the observation and description of a subject's actions without any manipulation. It also makes it easier to see the occurrence in its unaltered state (Kothari, 2014). A descriptive research design was utilized. It is appropriate because it allows for the integration of quantitative data collection techniques. It was essential in determining the effects of strategic management' practices on the performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Population refers to a discrete group of individuals, objects, or residences that are the focus of a study that is grounded in research (Ngechu, 2004). Research was conducted at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The population targeted was management level employees of Mama Lucy Hospital. Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital served as unit of analysis, while management level employees served as units of observation. Employees at management level were chosen because they are heavily involved in hospital management activities. Sample describes a portion of population that is utilized to determine population truths (Field, 2009). To save time and money, a small subset of population is chosen for observation and analysis. To collect data from target population, census method will be utilized. Respondents for the investigation was the management from Mama Lucy Kibaki hospital. Sample size of 166 was selected using the census method which allows for the inclusion of all managers as units of observation. Census method is more effective when the sample size is small (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The method is thought to be more appropriate for the study because it is more reliable and accurate because it eliminates errors caused by sampling (Mugo, 2002). Data was obtained, analyzed, cleaned, and inputted into SPSS. Quantitative analysis utilized statistics that are descriptive and inferential. Frequencies, percentage, mean, and standard deviations were the descriptive statistics available. Tables were utilized to present research findings.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the data that was collected among the managers across all levels of operation at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital. The target managers were top level managers who implement strategy, mid-level managers and lower level (operational managers) in this hospital. Primarily, the data was collected through questionnaires, google forms as well as interviews. The study sought to get an in-depth understanding of the influence of strategy formulation on the performance of this hospital. Findings have been presented in a descriptive manner with illustrations and tables used for clarity.

4.2 Rate of Response

Table 1: Table Showing the Response Rate.

Position	Target Population	Responsive	Percentage
Top Managers	32	15	46.88%
Middle Managers	63	44	69.84%
Low Managers	71	54	76.06%
Total	166	113	

4.3 Descriptive Analysis

4.3.1 Environmental Scanning

Table 2: Showing the Results of the Study on Environmental Scanning

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The hospital has placed environment capabilities to boost performance	93	1	19		
Strategies that can help the internal and external factors of the hospital	92	1	20		
The hospital identifies with the key strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats of the hospital environment	92	1	20		
The policies of the health sector help the hospital to be competitive among other hospitals			13	98	2
Scanning allows the organization to detect and address weak signals	93	1	19		
Environmental scanning allows the hospital to perform exceptionally	93	1	19		

Overall, 82.67% of all managers strongly agree that the hospital has placed environmental capabilities to boost performance. Breaking this further, 93.33% of the top managers strongly agree that the hospital has placed environmental capabilities to boost performance showing the confidence that they have in the systems that they have put in place to boost environmental capabilities. 87% of mid-level managers strongly agree that the hospital has placed sufficient environmental capabilities to boost performance with 68% of the lower-level managers believing that the hospital has placed sufficient capabilities to boost environmental performance. A significant proportion of lower-level managers believe that the hospital has room for improvement when it comes to boosting environmental capabilities. This trend was reflected in the variable which sought to find out if environmental scanning allows the hospital to perform exceptionally.

Further, this is reflected in the strategies that the hospital has put in place in helping the internal and external factors of the hospital, with 81% of the managers strongly agreeing that the hospital has placed sufficient strategies to boost performance. 93.33% of the top managers strongly agreeing to this. One top manager agreed but did not strongly agree to this. 85% of the mid-level managers strongly agree that the strategies have been put in place to help the internal and external factors of this hospital. 64.67% of the low-level managers strongly agree that the hospital has put in place strategies to help the internal and external factors of the hospital. This same trend was also seen in the question of the hospital identifying the strengths,

weakness, opportunities, threats of the hospital environment as well as scanning helping the hospital identify and address the weak signals.

4.3.2 Strategy Formulation

Table 3: Table Showing the Results of the Study on Strategy Formulation

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The hospitals take deliberate actions to build strategic plans in form of missions, goals, and vision	93	1	19		
The hospital analyses internal and external environment and formulate goals to help achieve its target	93	1	19		
Managers has responsibilities of identifying measuring indicators for hospital strategic practices	113				
Hospital employees are informed and guided through developed plans for the strategy prior to its formulation	64		5	16	28
The hospital recognizes rivals, ascertains factors contributing to their competitive advantage, and then utilizes this information to formulate a strategy.	93	1	19		
Strategy formulation is essential for performance	113				

All managers strongly agreed that strategy formulation is essential to performance of any organization and especially the organization in focus. This shows the centrality of strategy formulation in helping boost organizational performance. Further, all managers recognize their responsibility top-down in measuring indicators that would be essential for the hospital's strategic practices. 83% of the managers strongly feel that the hospital is taking deliberate actions to build strategic plans in form of missions, goals and vision. This proportion of managers also strongly feel that the hospital has analyzed the internal and external environment in the formulation of goals in helping the hospital achieve its target. This includes the external factors such as competition and policy. In as much as 100% of the top-level managers strongly felt that the hospital is doing sufficiently well in informing and guiding hospital employees through developed plans for strategy prior to formulation, only 63.64%, 39.13% mid-level and low-level managers respectively strongly feeling so. There was a huge proportion of low-level

managers (52.26%) who felt that the hospital rarely involves employees in strategy formulation. This revealed flaws and gaps in the conveyance of information top down. The biggest challenge that was enumerated by most managers is that some employees when involved in policy and strategy formulation tend to exude lethargy as most of them feel that they should not be involved in strategy formulation. They feel that strategy is the work of top managers. Further, due to the bureaucratic nature of the institution, it is very difficult to involve many employees in strategy formulation including a huge proportion of middle-level managers. This challenge was easily evident in the data analyzed for this variable.

4.3.3 Performance

Generally, all strategy objectives influence performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital in Nairobi County. To effectively examine the performance of the hospital, the study focused on efficiency, quality of service and revenue generation. With the recent strategies that have been put in place in the organization, a majority of the managers (73%) strongly felt that efficiency is achieved through strategy implementation. 22% of the managers just agreed that efficiency is achieved with 5% being neutral about efficiency. These are the managers that feel more could be done to achieve efficiency at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital. Since quality of service is influenced by turnaround time, efficiency influences the quality of service rendered. Thus, the trend observed in efficiency was also observed in quality of service rendered. Efficiency and quality of service rendered is faced by the challenge of staff. If staff are not willing to be efficient or see the need for efficiency, then efficiency cannot be achieved and the quality of serviced offered is low. On revenue, a strategy is implemented and developed, 95% feel that this usually has a direct effect on the revenue generated whilst listing several strategies implemented. 5% who were neutral on this felt that there is more to revenue generation than strategy, i.e. employee’s individual effort, economic conditions among other factors.

4.4 Regression Analysis

Table 4: Model summary

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.955523
R Square	0.913025
Adjusted R Square	0.869537
Standard Error	0.4609
Observations	113

The findings showed that the variables had a good association with a coefficient of correlation $r = 0.955523$. The results showed that the coefficient of determination $r^2 = 0.913025$. This implies that 91.3025% of the variation in the model is explained by the independent variables leaving 8.6975% unexplained. Other factors outside the scope of the current study can account for the 8.6975% unexplained. This demonstrates how the various strategy management practices employed, strategy formulation and environmental scanning account for 91.3025% of the performance of this hospital.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	42.628453	10.657113	2.099508	0.000266
Residual	109	40.60804	0.372551		
Total	113	83.236493			

The table reveals that the calculated was $F = 20.99508$ with critical F-value being given by 2.905523 and that the p-value is given by $F = 0.000266$ which is less than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. This shows that the model fits the data well and that all variables in the study are significant to the study.

Table 6: Results of Multiple Linear Regression Modelling

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Intercept	5.2069	0.15397	1.71954	0.004922
SF	0.052929	0.010703	1.494526	0.006342
ES	0.17254	0.0114895	2.853733	0.002091

The performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki hospital and the strategic management practices employed in this hospital are modelled by a multiple linear equation given by:

$$PMLH_i = 5.2069 + 0.052929SF_i + 0.17254ES_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Where:

PMLH= Performance of Mama Lucy Hospital

ES=Environmental Scanning

SF= Strategy Formulation

Holding all variables constant, performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital grows by 5.2069. For every unit increase in strategy formulation, performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital grows by 0.052929. This was found to be statistically significant with $p = 0.006342 < \alpha = 0.05$. For every unit increase in environmental scanning, performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital grows by 0.17254. This was found to be statistically significant with $p = 0.002091 < \alpha = 0.05$. According to the study findings, strategy formulation and environmental scanning have a statistically significant effect on the performance of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital.

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

Effective scanning of both internal and external environments enhances the hospital's performance by aligning strategies with real world challenges and capabilities. Internal strengths are well used, but external policy constraints remain a major issue. The hospital must remain proactive and responsive to these external forces to sustain growth. Strategy formulation is vital for performance but must be inclusive. A disconnect between senior management and lower-level staff reduces the effectiveness of strategic initiatives. Broader involvement in the process would increase employee buy-in, drive stronger implementation, and enhance the overall effectiveness of strategic management at the hospital.

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