

# EFFECT OF OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES ON ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH: A CASE STUDY OF IAKIB COOPERATIVE

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**Abstract:** Growth is the most an important objective of each organization running, especially for a business making profit. Despite the efforts by organizations in Rwanda to be successful through exhibiting growth overtime they are still faced by a myriad of challenges which to some extent has slowed down their growth potential in terms of rate of expansion. As much as IAKIB has managed to grow overtime the rate of growth is still not impressive an indication that there could be some operational strategies challenges faced by the organization. The purpose of this study was therefore to establish the effect of operational strategies on organizational growth, case study of IAKIB Cooperative. Specifically, the study assessed the effect of marketing strategies, communication strategies and human resources development strategies on organization growth. The study used a descriptive survey design where quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection were used based on a target population of 121 from IAKIB Cooperative. A sample size of 92 respondents was calculated using Yamane's formula. Stratified simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the sample. Data was collected using questionnaires as the principal data collection instrument. Data was analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20 for windows with a significance level of 95% ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). The finds were presented in form of graphs and tables. The findings indicated a significant positive effect of operational strategies on organizational growth. The study recommended that IAKIB should organize training seminars, provide study leaves to the members, increase their advertisement on social media and ensure that the top management holds the highest academic qualifications. The findings of this study will be important to IAKIB Cooperative Management in strategic decisions making towards achieving cooperative growth, to the Government through expansion of cooperatives hence employment creation and to the academicians through knowledge addition in the field of organization growth

**Keywords:** operational strategies, Organizational growth, marketing strategies, Human Resource development strategies, communication strategies, IAKIB.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the study:

Growth is an important aspect for any organization. Most firms desire organization growth in order to prosper and not just to survive, Odongo (2015). Organizational growth, however, means different things to different organizations. Indeed, there are many parameters a company can select to measure its growth. The most meaningful yardstick is one that shows progress with respect to an organization's stated goals. The ultimate goal of most companies is profit, so net profit, revenue, and other financial data are often utilized as "bottom-line" indications of growth. Other business owners, meanwhile, may use sales figures, number of employees, physical expansion, or other criteria to judge organizational growth. Many firms desire growth because it is seen generally as a sign of success, progress. Organizational growth is, in fact, used as one indicator of effectiveness for small and large businesses and is a fundamental concern of many practicing managers. (Cole,2002).

Every firm sets its goals to achieve at a predetermined time after which the firm carries out its operations towards achievement of those goals. The success of a firm which may also be perceived as a growth of the firm is measured in terms of how well the firm is able to achieve the set goals. The attainment of a firm's goals and objectives is a sign of success of the organization. However the firms must be able to have key ingredients that are essential for its growth.

One of the key factors for the growth of an organization is the operational strategies that it adopted or practiced within the organization. An operational strategy involves a plan specifying how an organization will allocate resources in order to support infrastructure and production. An operations strategy is typically driven by the overall business strategy of the organization and is designed to maximize the effectiveness of production and support elements while minimizing costs. The operational strategies may thus be composed of how the organization will produce, how it will seek the market for its products and how it will be able control its resources. The operational strategies may be in terms of production strategies, communication strategies, human resources strategies and marketing strategies among others.

Organizations are often faced with a lot of challenges which can be internal or external. Most of the internal challenges revolve around operational strategies and these challenges poses a threat to the success of organizations. To develop a strategic plan, the plan should contain statement of organization mission and goals, strategies for obtaining and utilizing the necessary technological, marketing, and financial and human resources to achieve organization goals. Strategies for manufacturing process and conducting research and development and utilizing organization and employee competencies are very critical for the growth of the organization.

Human resource development is very fundamental for an organization growth. Every organization must have human resource to function and the absence of it culminates to collapse of business or organizations operations. According to Susan, (2012), human Resource Management is the function within an organization that focused on recruitment of, management of, and providing direction for the people who work in the organization. It is also a strategic and comprehensive approach of managing people and the work place culture and environment (Susan, 2012). Effective Human resource management enables employees to contribute effectively and productivity to the overall company direction and the accomplishment of the organization's goals and objectives (Susan, 2012).

Marketing plays a key role in the success of the organization. It is through marketing that an organization's products is get to be known by the customers and hence the customer base increases as more marketing is undertaken by the company or organization. Marketing can take various directions such as low prices, product promotion, packaging and branding among others all these aimed at increasing the customer base hence improved sales of the organization.

Communication is a means of bringing about change. It is the mainstream of any organization growth. There is need for interaction and understanding of management-employee relations.

This will bring about increased performance of all parties involved in the communication process or chain. According to Banihashemi (2011), communication as a medium, a means to

Performance ends, or as constitutive, as the end in itself. Communication is a process of transferring information from one party to another via a communication channel. Without proper communication in an organization, there is lack of cooperation and happiness in the organization, confusion in terms of job description and this is transmitted to the end result of the organizations activities which is success.

Therefore operational strategies are fundamental for the growth of any organizational and account for greater percentage of organization success.

### **1.2 Problem Statement:**

Growth is the most an important objective of each organization running, especially for a business making profit. The survival of an organization essentially depends on their power to participate in the market with other big companies and mostly, growth decreases the possibility of closing small businesses (Rauch & Rijskik, 2013).

Growth depends on the organization's strategies adopted such as product diversification, marketing strategies used. These can result to the However, despite the growing strategies the company has used, the growth is not certain, may be low. The uncertainty and low grow may be the results of some challenges such as the lack of the study of appropriate strategies, lack of operational strategies such as human resources capacities, lack of enough resources, lack of capacity of innovation. The challenges have resulted in low level of growing.

The dairy cooperatives are important to the economic development of Rwanda, and dairy offers a pathway out of poverty for large numbers of households keeping livestock and for those who provide service and value addition throughout the supply chain. The current farm gate value of milk is approximately RWF 79.7 billion (US\$ 129.70 million). The dairy subsector contributes 15 percent to agricultural gross domestic product (AGDP) and 6 percent to gross domestic product (GDP). Dairy's contribution to GDP is likely underestimated when considering ancillary products that can be attributed to dairy, e.g. hides, meat, traction/carting and manure. Dairy is a strategic commodity for Rwanda. (Final Report, April 2013, Rwanda National Dairy Strategy). The dairy cooperatives also offer employment opportunities directly through their staff and indirectly through the supporting farmers to sell their milk.

While the growth of the dairy sector in Rwanda has been impressive and has elevated the country to a level where it can now be considered a significant player in the regional dairy industry, sector performance is still much lower than those of competing countries in the region and there are still many challenges to be addressed, (August 4, 2016, RWANDA DAIRY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT Detailed Design Report) such as costs of production of milk, the marketing costs beyond the farm gate to final domestic consumers which are high, consumer demand for both raw and processed milk is not increasing fast enough to clear the projected supplies of raw milk because of affordability, accessibility and availability of milk. Cooperatives of which IAKIB is included face a number of challenges for example : inadequate extension services among farmers, insufficient knowledge and capacity for value addition (eg cheese etc, lack of managerial skills to effect business transformation, competition from other dairy cooperatives and private businesses, unstable market (IAKIB documentary, 2017). These challenges can be addressed when the cooperatives in dairy sector develop proper operational strategies.

Despite these challenges facing milk cooperatives, few studies exist on the growth of milk cooperatives in Rwanda. These studies have specifically not looked at influence of operational strategies on the growth of cooperative organizations. This scenario has necessitated researcher to carry out this study to assess the effect of operational strategies on organization growth focussing on IAKIB Cooperative.

### **1.3 Research Objectives:**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective:**

The General objective of this study is to assess the effects of operational strategies on organizational growth

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives:**

1. To determine the effect of marketing strategies on growth of IAKIB Cooperative
2. To establish the effect of human resource development strategies on growth of IAKIB Cooperative
3. To determine the influence of communication strategies on growth of IAKIB Cooperative

#### **1.3.3. Research Questions**

1. To what extent do marketing strategies affect the IAKB Cooperative growth
2. How do communication strategies affect the IAKIB Cooperative growth
3. To what extent do Human Resources Development strategies affect the IAKIB Cooperatives

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Empirical literature:**

#### **2.1.1 Marketing strategies and organizational growth:**

According to McCorvey (2012), Marketing is like juggling. Just like the juggler the marketer has to hook his/her audience, gain their attention through several jazzy tricks and hold their attention by still more innovative juggling. All these he has to achieve without losing balance, focus on steadfastness in the art, the industry and in the marketer's product. In other words, marketing is all about alluring, attracting and holding a collection of customers for your Company's welfare (McCorvey, 2012). On several occasions winning a new customer proves to be easier than to retain that customer and therefore the organization has to come up with innovative ways of improving service delivery to its customers, listen carefully to the customers complaints and addressing such complaints as fast as possible since the business world is becoming more competitive day by day and any small slide back can cost an organization heavily.

According to Daunweh (2010) marketing is an organizational function and a set of process for reacting communicating and delivering values to customers and for managing customer relationship in ways that can benefit the organization and stakeholders. Direct marketing provides a good channel for communication between the seller and the buyer by offering direct contact between them (Waithaka, 2014).

Adewale et al (2013) carried out a study on the effect of marketing strategies on business performance in Nigeria. The main marketing strategies considered were the product promotion, price, place, packaging and after sale services. The study revealed that product consideration has impact on business performance in term of profitability, market share, return on investment, expansion etc. This is because customers do really look at product attributes such as quality, features, design and style. The relationship between promotion consideration and business performance is significant, but negative. He attributed this to consumer perception that heavily promoted products could be problematic products – of poor quality, with passed expiry dates and from clearance stocks. Consumers may also perceive that heavier promotions also mean that the products are sold at higher prices, which will turn-off consumers who are in the low-cost segment of the consumer market. Place was significant meaning that the location, accessibility and channel of distribution employed by business organization is a major concern. Price had significant positive impact on business performance since consumers are motivated to buy products at lower prices. The study also revealed that packaging and after sales services was also significant. According to Chaneta,(2012) packaging can increase sales by such promotionally-oriented moves such as offering smaller or larger sizes more multipacks, better pictures of the product itself, illustrations of the product in use and more effective use of colour. Customers are motivated to buy product that has guaranty contract, installation and effective delivery (Adewale et al, 2013).

Waithaka (2014) while studying the effect of marketing strategies on business growth in Kenya found significant impact of marketing strategies on business growth. She recommended that it is not only important that businesses advertise but also be able to choose the right media to reach as many people as possible, the word of mouth could only be effective if the quality of goods is good and that the customers are highly satisfied, the organization should identify mentors that can encourage them to achieve the profitability they desire, the organization should also establish the right contacts that can help the business in its growth and also create a good and a strong customer base and lastly the business must also identify the best social media strategy that is easy to use and one that can easily be accessed at very minimal cost.

In the studies of Colpan,( 2006); Dooleet al., (2006) and Owomoyela et al, (2013) which analyzed pricing as a marketing strategy established a significant relationship between price and business performance. The price set for the product or service plays a key role in its marketability. Pricing for products or services that are more commonly available in the market is more elastic, meaning that unit sales will go up or down more responsively in response to price changes (Jones, 2007). This is due to the products having closer substitutes and the greater percentage of customers having full knowledge of the market hence a slight increase or decrease in price of the product impacts greatly on the sales of the product hence affecting business performance.

It's one thing to have a great product, but it will never be a success unless your potential customers know about it. That's where marketing comes in, (Rosie Niven, 2014). Neil Addley, managing director of used-car website Trusted Dealers, which has grown by 20% over the past year, says the starting point is the same for all businesses. "It all starts with a strategy, whether you're a small business or a much larger one," he says. "Define what you're trying to sell, to whom, where and when, and then work out how best to get to that target with the budget you have available. For the part of its marketing strategy that is aimed at consumers, Trusted Dealers uses online advertising and email. This includes pay per click and paid search – advertising on sites such as Google and Bing – and targeted email marketing. For attracting new businesses, Addley says marketing is focused on email, which is linked to a prospects database. In addition, social media – particularly LinkedIn – is used to identify new potential clients.

### **2.1.2 Communication strategies and organization growth:**

Different scholars defines communication differently such that there is no precise definition of communication but generally in communication there is flow of information from one party to another. Communication refers to the exchange of information between a sender (source) and a receiver (destination) so that it is received, understood and leads to action (Obamiro, 2008). Communication has been widely accepted by scholars and academics as the life hood of an organization because communication is needed for exchanging information, exchanging opinions, making plans and proposals, reaching agreement, executing decisions, sending and fulfilling orders and conducting sales (Blalock, 2005; Alyssa, 2006; Rotler, 2006; amongst others). When communication stops, organized activity ceases to exist, and individual uncoordinated activities return in an organization. So, communication in an organization is as virtual as the blood of life.

Rajhans (2012) opined in a study "effective organizational communication : a key to employee motivation and performance" that organizational communication plays a vital role in employee motivation and performance as real changes are taking place in modern organizations which confront the new reality of tighter staffing , increased workloads, longer hours and a greater emphasis on performance, risk-taking and flexibility. This implies that lack of proper communication within the organization may lead to delays in work execution by employees affecting productivity hence organization performance. Employees are key to organizational performance and their motivation to work effectively depends on among other factors effective communication.

Oyetunde&Oladejo (2012) in a study titled "communication approach and firms performance: appraisal of Nigerian Bottling Company(CocaCola), Ilorin-Nigeria" came up with the following ten recommendations for performance improvement: (i) More clarity of ideas before attempting to communicate;(ii) Better understanding of the physical and human environment when communicating; (iii) A thorough analysis of the purpose of communication; (iv) In planning communication, consultation should both be top down and bottom up, while all facts are rendered implicit and explicit; (v) Consideration should be given to the content and tone of the messages; (vi) Whenever possible, the language or tone should not be only be edifying and elegant, but must be messages the receiver would find valuable; (vii) Communication messages that are precise and are of short run often possess long run importance; (viii) All stakeholders should be encouraged to be good listeners; (ix) Immediate actions must be accompanied and accomplished with communication; and (x) Communication that would be effective require a follow up and effective feedback mechanism process.

Communication is a means of bringing about change. It is the mainstream of any organization growth. There is need for interaction and understanding of management-employee relations as this will bring about increased performance of all parties involved in the communication process or chain (Chidiebere,2015). There is need for every organization to endeavor and make effective communication an essential integral part of its management strategies and map out a strategic ways of storing information for this will reduce loss of essential information and it will help to minimize organizational conflict, less misunderstanding and enhance information management (Chidiebere, 2015). Reduced conflict and misunderstanding within the organization improves the organizations performance and hence growth.

Wanjiku (2014) investigated the effects of communication strategies on organizational performance at Kenya Ports Authority. The study findings indicated that open door policy of communication, group effort, organizational structure and formal communication channels are very influential on organizational performance hence she concluded that communication strategies play a central role in high-performance in organizations.

### **2.1.3 Human resource development strategies and organizational growth:**

Human resource is the set of individuals who make up the workforce of an organization. Human resource development involves improving the skills and efficiency of the workers through training and education of employees. They include activities like training, seminars, group decisions, education etc. (Okoye and Raymond, 2013). Human resource development is very vital to any organizations ranging from small to large scale enterprise since it is well known that no business can exist entirely without human being also that one of the major functions of human resource development is the engagement of people to work in order to achieve sales growth and profitability another finding is that the method of training and development as gathered from interview contracted by the researcher are just by reason of the problems the company has due to lack of fund.

Human resource development is the integrated use of training and development, organizational development and career development to improve individual, group and organizational effectiveness (Okechukwu & Tonye, 2014). The study carried out in Nigeria by Okechukwu and Tonye on the effect of human resource development practices on organizational performance in the Nigerian liquefied natural gas company ltd found a significant relationship between the two. They recommended a review of current training/development procedure, regular appraisal of employees job skill requirements, regular staff training/development, regular improvement of employees' condition of service and sustenance of current team building efforts/ incentive scheme.

The emphasis on human resources in organizations reflects the view that market value depends less on tangible resources, but rather on intangible ones, particularly human resources (Stiles &Kulvisaechana, 2005). Recruiting and retaining the best employees, however, is only part of the human resources development framework. Organizations need to improve the skills and capabilities of its employees by encouraging individuals learning and creating a supportive environment in which knowledge can be created, shared and applied to achieve corporate goals of the organization. Increasing employees' skills and abilities are expected to create future returns through increased productivity and business

performance (Shih, Chiang, & Hsu, 2006). The processes of resourcing and development aimed at increasing employees skills have a direct impact on their attitude i.e. motivation, commitment and satisfaction (Wright et al., 2003). Specifically, a large body of research considers motivation to be a key determinant of employee performance (Hardre, 2003). Employees' attitudes and behaviours generally depend on the HRD policies and procedures the organization is using.

**2.2 Conceptual framework:**

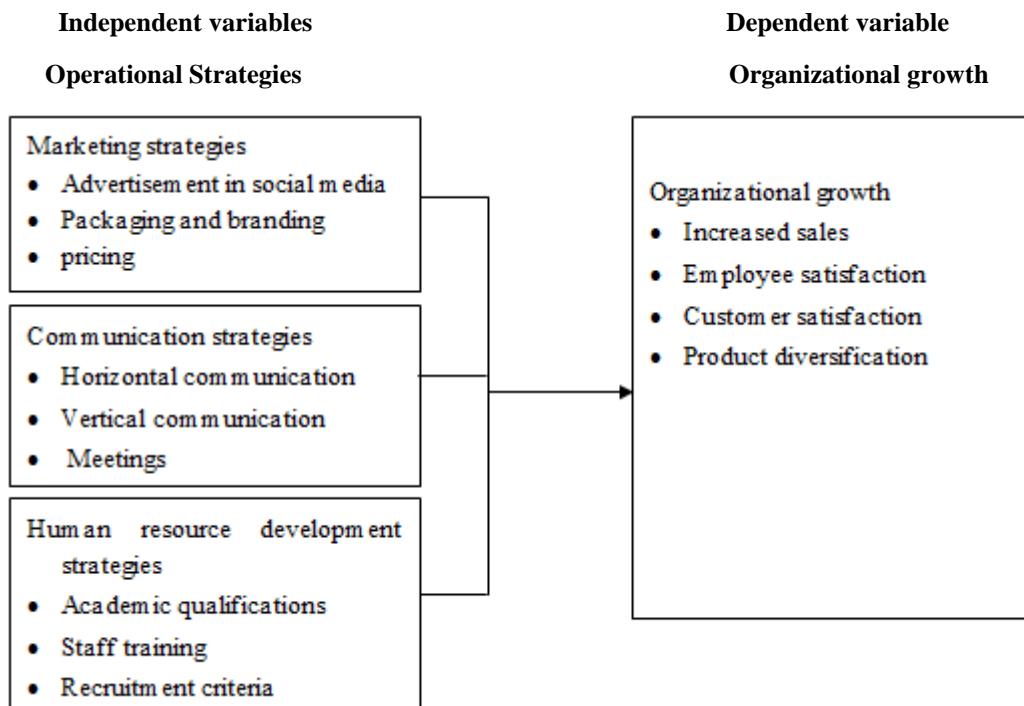


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

**3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.**

**3.1 Research design:**

Research design is a plan for collecting and utilizing data so that desired information can be obtained with sufficient precision or so that a hypothesis can be tested properly. Purpose of research design is to: define, elaborate and explain the research topic, make clear the area of research to other: provide limits and boundaries to a research give the whole scenario of the research, tell the modes and consequences, and ensuring time and resources are properly utilized (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003)

The study used a descriptive survey design where quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection was used based on a target sample population from IAKIB. The researcher would collect data from respondents on their opinions and attitudes. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) assert that a descriptive research design is used when the researcher can engage in field survey by going to the population of interest for the information to explain certain features about the problem under study. This design helped to explore the state of affairs as it exists. Because it is based on fact finding, the study gave a real experience of what is happening in the field.

**3.2 Target population:**

Target population regards a group of members of real set persons, events or objects as to which a researcher is willing to generalize the results of the research study (Cooper and Schindler, 2008)

A population can therefore be regarded as including all people or items with the characteristics one wishes to understand with respect to the research project. The population of the study was found in Rwanda, and then the sample was found at IAKIB. The target population of this study included the General Assembly, Internal Control Committee, Procurement Committee, Management Staff, this implies the entire population under this research was 121 composed 47 General Assembly Members, 3Internal Control Committee, 2 Procurement Committee, 2 Social Committee, 5 Boards of Directors, 4 Management Staff and 58 Members

**3.3 Sample Size:**

According to Grinwell and Williams (1990:127), before a sample can be selected the researcher has to decide on how many people are needed to take part of study. This means that the researcher had to decide on the sample size that would represent the entire population. In this study, in other to manage the time, the researcher couldn't take all of 121 people but applied Yamane' formula to find a real sample size representing those people;

Formula:  $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$

Where;

n = Sample size required

N = Population size= 121

e = Allowable error 0.1

$$n = \frac{121}{1 + 121(0.05)^2} = \frac{121}{1 + 121(0.0025)} = \frac{121}{1.3025} = 92.8992725528 \approx 92$$

$n = 92$

**Table 1: Sampling frame:**

No	Respondent	Number
1	General Assembly	40
2	Internal Control Committee	2
3	Procurement committee	1
4	Social Committee	1
5	Board of Directors	3
6	Management staff	4
7	Members	41
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>

Source: researcher, 2018

**3.4 Data Collection Procedures/ Instruments:**

The main tool for data collection in this study was the questionnaire. The researcher choose this method because questionnaire eliminates interactions between the interviewer and the respondents which reduce biasness. Moreover, the person filling the questionnaire is anonymous and therefore may be willing to give information especially over sensitive issues. It is a useful method particularly when the questions are straightforward enough to be comprehended without verbal explanations (Kothari, 2003). The study used questionnaire, which contained both open and closed questions. The open-ended questions was used because the respondents supplied their own answers without being constrained by a fixed set of possible responses, while closed-ended questions were used because they were easy to analyze and administer since respondents answers were limited to a fixed set of responses.

The first step was to introduce herself, a step which helped the researcher to get information easily. The second step was to distribute the questionnaires to the target respondents. The questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher. The data collection process took two weeks

**3.4.1 Questionnaire:**

Meredith (1996) defines questionnaire as a list of questions generally mailed or handed to the respondents and filled in by her with no help to the interviewer. The questionnaire contained both open and closed ended questions which was addressed to the respondents. With open-ended questions, the respondents gave personal responses or opinions in their own words whereas with close-ended questions, respondents were given different alternatives to choose from.

The researcher preferred this tool because it makes use of large samples over a short time.

This questionnaire had a set of questions in form of open and closed to be responded by a group of people who were asked to provide necessary information on effect of operational strategies on organization growth in IAKIB Cooperative (See Appendices).

### **3.4.2 Validity and reliability:**

The validity of the qualitative design is the degree of congruence between the explanations or interpretations of the phenomena and the reality of the world and the mutual meanings between the researcher and the participants. Validity addresses the question whether the researcher captures what s/he thinks is valid (Schumacher and Millan, 2006)

To ensure the validity of the instrument, researcher advisors and experts checked the questionnaire for the consistency of the items, conciseness, intelligibility and clarity. Their input helped to make necessary adjustments so that the instrument measured adequately what it was intended to measure.

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement, or the extent to which the scores are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasions of data collection. Another way to conceptualize reliability is to determine the extent to which measures are free from error. If an instrument has minimal errors, then it is reliable (Schumacher and Millan, 2006)

The researcher did reset the questions, re-administer the questionnaire to another group of respondents at different intervals and found out whether the same results will be generated, with that the researcher was able to tell if the measurement was reliable after many trials and get the same results.

### **3.5 Data Analysis and Presentation:**

After the data have been collected, the researcher turned to the task of analyzing them. The analysis of data required a number of closely related operations such as establishment of categories, the application of these categories to raw data through coding, tabulation. Data analysis was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. The data were analyzed using Descriptive and Inferential Statistics. Quantitative data will be analyzed through both descriptive statistics (such as frequencies and percentage) and inferential statistics (such as ANOVA and multiple linear regressions) in order to establish the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Qualitative data will be analyzed using content analysis method.

The qualitative data was managed in a manner which ensured that the data will be broken into discernable units to show patterns and trends and the use of SPSS facilitated test of the significant relationship between variables. At the end the researcher analyzed and summarized the findings in accordance with the objectives of the study and research questions.

Descriptive statistics was carried out and Correlation analysis to establish if there is a relationship between Operation function and strategy Implementation. A significant relationship was reported when the P value for the Pearson correlation coefficient is less than 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ). Tables and graphs were used in presenting the results. The regression model presented in the equation below will be used:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3$$

Where: Y = Organization growth

a is the constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$  are Regression Coefficient or parameters of the models to be estimated

X1 is the marketing strategies

X2 is the communication strategies

X3 is the human resources development strategies

## **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Demographic results:**

The questionnaire started with the various demographic information of the respondents including gender, age, education level, marital status and experience level.

#### **4.1.1 Gender of respondents:**

The results indicated that out of the 81 respondents, 49 were male and 32 were female. This means that male respondents accounted for 60.5 while female respondents accounted for 39.5%.



**Table 2: Gender of respondents**

Gender of respondent					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	49	60.5	60.5	60.5
	Female	32	39.5	39.5	100.0
	Total	81	100.0	100.0	

Source: own researcher

#### 4.1.2 Age bracket of Respondent:

The respondents were asked to tick against their age bracket which included 15-20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50 and lastly above 50. These age brackets accounted for 3.7%, 21%, 42%, 23.5% and 9.9% respectively. This implies that most respondents were in 31-40 years age bracket and least respondents were in 15-20 years age bracket.

**Table 3: Age bracket of respondents**

Age of respondent					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-20	3	3.7	3.7	3.7
	21-30	17	21.0	21.0	24.7
	31-40	34	42.0	42.0	66.7
	41-50	19	23.5	23.5	90.1
	above 50	8	9.9	9.9	100.0
	Total	81	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own researcher, 2018

#### 4.1.3 Marital Status of respondent:

The respondents fell into two categories of marital status that is single and married. The married accounted for the highest percentage of 87.7% while the single accounted for 12.3%.

**Table 4: Marital status of respondents**

Marital status of respondent					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	10	12.3	12.3	12.3
	Married	71	87.7	87.7	100.0
	Total	81	100.0	100.0	

Source: own researcher, 2018

#### 4.1.4 Education level of respondents:

The respondents were asked to tick against their highest level of education. The results show that none, primary, secondary and higher level accounted for 4.9, 61.7, 29.6 and 3.6 respectively. This implies that most IAKIB stakeholders have Primary and secondary qualifications as the highest. Primary holders accounted for the highest percentage while higher level qualifications accounted for the least percentage.

**Table 5: Education level of respondents**

Education level of respondent					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	4	4.9	4.9	4.9
	Primary	50	61.7	61.7	66.7
	Secondary	24	29.6	29.6	96.3

	Higher	3	3.7	3.7	100.0
	Total	81	100.0	100.0	

Source: own researcher, 2018

#### 4.1.5 years of experience of respondent

The respondents were asked how long they have spent in or dealt with IAKIB Cooperative within the range below 5 years, 5-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years and above 20 years. The results indicated that 57 respondents which accounts for 70.4% have spent less than 5 years, 13.6% have spent 5-10 years, 11.1% have spent 11-15 years, 3.2% have spent 16-20 years and 1.2% have spent above 20 years. Therefore most of the IAKIB stakeholders have spent in or dealt with IAKIB for less than 5 years while the smallest number have spent in or dealt with IAKIB for above 20 years.

**Table 6: years of experience in IAKIB**

Years of experience of respondent in IAKIB					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 5	57	70.4	70.4	70.4
	5-10	11	13.6	13.6	84.0
	11-15	9	11.1	11.1	95.1
	16-20	3	3.7	3.7	98.8
	above 20	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	81	100.0	100.0	

Source: own researcher, 2018

#### 4.2 Descriptive statistics of the variables:

The measure of central tendency that is mean and median were used to describe the relationship between the variables under study. The results were presented in form of tables.

##### 4.2.1 Marketing strategies and organization growth:

The respondents were asked to give their view on the existence and implementation of various marketing strategies at IAKIB. The scale of assessment was 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 representing strongly disagree, Disagree, Not sure, Agree and strongly agree respectively. The results indicate that generally respondents disagreed that IAKIB advertise its products in social media. Respondents were averagely not sure whether IAKIB products are relatively cheaper compared to competitors. The respondents however averagely agreed that branding style of products is appealing to customers, IAKIB showcase products in shows and exhibitions and that IAKIB advertise its products on TV channels. The minimum preferences for the marketing strategies were 2 and 3 and the maximum was 5. The deviations from the mean were very small with values of less than 1.

**Table 7: Marketing strategies findings**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
IAKIB advertise its products in social media	81	2.00	5.00	2.6259	.44096
IAKIB Cooperative packaging and branding style is appealing to customers	81	2.00	5.00	4.4938	.67312
IAKIB products are relatively cheaper compared to competitors	81	3.00	5.00	3.4568	.54885
IAKIB Cooperative showcase their products during agricultural shows and exhibitions	81	3.00	5.00	4.7037	.48591
IAKIB Cooperative advertise more often in TV channels	81	2.00	5.00	4.2160	.52997
Valid N (listwise)	81				

Source: own researcher, 2018

**Correlation between marketing strategies and organization growth:**

There is a moderate strong relationship between marketing strategies and organizational growth. This is indicated by a Pearson correlation coefficient of the two variables which was found to be 0.57 which is significant at 0.01 level.

**Table 8: Correlation between marketing strategies and organizational growth**

Correlations			
		Marketing strategies	Organizational growth
Marketing strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.570**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	81	81
Organizational growth	Pearson Correlation	.570**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	81	81
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: own researcher, 2018

**4.2.2 Communication strategies and organizational growth:**

The respondents were asked to give their view on the existence and implementation of various communication strategies at IAKIB. The scale of assessment was 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 representing strongly disagree, Disagree, Not sure, Agree and strongly agree respectively. According to the findings, the respondents averagely were of the opinion that communication strategies tested exist at IAKIB. This implies that IAKIB do implement strongly the various communication strategies which are key for the growth of the organization. The deviations from the mean are less than 1 for all the communication strategies shown by the values of standard deviation.

**Table 9: communication strategies**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is strong communication network between the various departments	81	3.00	5.00	4.7778	.50000
There is efficient flow of information from the top to cooperative members as well as staff	81	3.00	5.00	4.0284	.54800
Notice of meetings are communicated in good time	81	3.00	5.00	4.1309	.61413
There is a well-functioning communication department	81	3.00	5.00	4.4198	.66829
Valid N (listwise)	81				

Source: own researcher, 2018

**Correlation between communication strategies and organizational growth:**

The correlation coefficient between communication strategies and organization growth is 0.512 which is significant at 0.000 level. This shows that there is a moderate strong relationship between communication strategies and organizational growth.

**Table 10: correlation between communication strategies and organization growth**

Correlations			
		Organizational growth	Communication strategies
Organizational growth	Pearson Correlation	1	.512**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	81	81

Communication strategies	Pearson Correlation	.512**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	81	81

Source: own researcher, 2018

#### 4.2.3 Human Resource development strategies and organization growth:

The respondents were asked to give their view on the existence and implementation of various human resource development strategies at IAKIB. The scale of assessment was 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 representing strongly disagree, Disagree, Not sure, Agree and strongly agree respectively. The results show that average respondents agreed that staff members receive trainings regularly, staffs are hired based on qualifications, staff are well equipped to handle their duties effectively and that top management have a minimum qualification of bachelor. The minimum values for the human resource development strategies were 2 and 3 and the maximum was 5. the standard deviation values were less than 1 indicating minimum spread from the mean of the data.

**Table 11: human resource development strategies**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The top management have a minimum qualification of a bachelor	81	2.00	5.00	4.2346	.72924
IAKIB staff and cooperative members receive trainings regularly	81	3.00	5.00	4.6049	.60578
Staff are hired based on qualifications	81	3.00	5.00	4.0370	.33333
Staff are well equipped to handle their duties effectively	81	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.22361
Valid N (listwise)	81				

Source: own researcher, 2018

#### Correlation between human resource development strategies and organizational growth:

The correlation coefficient between human resource development strategies and organizational growth is 0.662 which is significant at 0.01 level. This is an indication of a moderate strong positive relationship between human resource development strategies and organization growth.

**Table 12: correlation between human resource development strategies and organizational growth**

Correlations			
		Organizational growth	Human resource development strategies
Organizational growth	Pearson Correlation	1	.662**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	81	81
Human resource development strategies	Pearson Correlation	.662**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	81	81
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: own researcher, 2018

#### 4.3 Regression Analysis Results:

The correlation analysis shows that operational strategies are strongly linked to organizational growth. It shows that there is a positive link relationship between the two variables. To show the magnitude of change of organizational growth due to a unit change in marketing, communication and human resource development strategies, a multivariate regression analysis was computed. The findings are similar to the correlation analysis findings in that it shows a positive relationship between

the variables. Moreover, it indicates positive beta coefficients which imply that if there is 1% increase in marketing, communication and human resource development strategies, organizational growth increases by 24.6%, 23.9% and 69.2% respectively. R squared value is 0.819 which shows that marketing strategies, communication strategies and human resource development strategies account for 81.9% of the variations in organization growth. The F value in the ANOVA table is 114.668 with 3 degrees of freedom at a significance value of 0.000. This is an indication that the model fit is good in predicting the relationship between operational strategies and organizational growth. From the results of the coefficients, a multivariate regression model predicted in chapter three can now be written as;

$$Y = -0.809 + 0.246X_1 + 0.239X_2 + 0.692X_3$$

**Table 13: model summary**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.905 <sup>a</sup>	.819	.812	.22652
a. Predictors: (Constant), Human resource development strategies, Communication strategies, Marketing strategies				

Source: own researcher, 2018

**Table 14: ANOVA Table**

ANOVA <sup>b</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.651	3	5.884	114.668	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	3.899	76	.051		
	Total	21.550	79			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Human resource development strategies, Communication strategies, Marketing strategies						
b. Dependent Variable: Organizational growth						

Source: own researcher, 2018

**Table 15: coefficients of regression**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.809	.333		-2.425	.018
	Marketing strategies	.246	.061	.222	4.057	.000
	Communication strategies	.239	.062	.202	3.821	.000
	Human resource development strategies	.692	.058	.686	11.906	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Organizational growth						

Source: own researcher, 2018

#### 4.4 Discussion:

The main objectives of this study were to analyze the effects of operational strategies on organization growth. The operational strategies considered included marketing, communication and human resource development strategies. The discussions on the findings for these objectives are as follows;

##### 4.4.1 Effect of marketing strategies on organization growth:

Marketing strategies have a positive significant effect on organization growth. The correlation coefficient between marketing strategies and organization growth is 0.57 which is positive. This implies that there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The beta coefficient of marketing strategy in regression analysis is 0.246 which

implies that keeping other factors constant, a unit increase in marketing strategy contributes 24.6% increase in organizational growth. This scenario is due to the fact that aggressive marketing of companies products increases the customer bases as new customers are secured hence increasing the sales of the company. The increased sales have a direct positive impact on company's profits. The increased profits of the company overtime leads to better performance of the company hence its growth. These findings are similar to those of Adewale et al (2013) and Waithaka (2014). Adewale found significant effect of marketing strategies on organization growth in Nigeria while Waithaka found the same results in Kenya.

#### **4.4.2 Effect of communication strategies on organizational growth:**

The second objective of this study was to determine the influence of communication strategies on organizational growth. The findings indicated that there is a positive significant effect of communication strategies on organizational growth. The correlation coefficient between communication strategies and organizational growth is 0.512 which is an indicator of a strong positive correlation. Moreover the beta coefficient for communication strategies in the regression analysis results was found to be 0.239 implying that keeping other factors constant, a 1% increase in communication strategies leads to a 23.9% increase in organizational growth. Effective Communication within an organization is key to the success of the organization since it improves coordination of various departments in an organization and hence easy and faster decision making. Proper definition of roles and communicating at the appropriate time by the top management to other staff members is very essential since each and every staff member is able to play his/her role effectively towards achievement of organization goals. Effective communication also creates harmony and good working relationship among staff members since it eliminates conflict of roles among staff members and provides effective conflict resolution strategies. All stakeholders are therefore able to work hard towards achievement of organization goals of which profitability is one of them. This ultimately leads to organization growth. The findings of this study are similar to those of Wanjiku (2014) investigated the effects of communication strategies on organizational performance in Kenya Ports Authority and concluded that communication strategies play a central role in high-performance in organizations.

#### **4.4.3 Effect of human resource development strategies on organizational growth:**

The last objective of this study was to establish the effect of human resource development strategies on organizational growth. The findings indicate that there is a strong positive effect of human resource development strategies on organizational growth. The correlation coefficient between human resource development strategies and organizational growth is 0.662 indicating a strong positive association between the two variables. The regression results showed a beta coefficient of 0.692 indicating that a 1% increase in human resource development strategies leads to a 69.2% increase in organizational growth. Human resource development is the strongest contributor and influencer of organizational growth among the three strategies discussed in this study. It has the greatest impact on changes in organizational growth. This is because human resource development is the driver of all organization activities and absence of it means the organization stops operation. Human resource development also has spillover effects on the success of other operational strategies and therefore it forms the back bone of organization growth and success. Competent human resource in an organization leads to proper decision making and appropriate policy development aimed at improving organizational performance and growth. Therefore human resource development forms a greatest integral part of organization success. These findings are similar to those of Okechukwu and Tonye, (2014) who found a significant relationship between human resource development and organizational performance in Nigeria.

## **5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusions:**

From the findings, the researcher came up with the following conclusions.

First, there is a strong significant positive association between operational strategies and organizational growth. The two variables move in the same direction such that an increase in one leads to an increase in the other. This is shown by a positive correlation coefficient between the various operational strategies considered and organizational growth. Moreover human resource development exhibits the strongest association with organization growth compared to marketing and communication strategies.

Secondly, operational strategies account for a greater percentage of the variations in organizational growth. This is exhibited by a large value of R squared at 81.9%. The remaining 18.1% is explained by other factors not captured by the study.

Marketing strategies, communication strategies and human resource development strategies have significant positive effect on organizational growth. When an organization improves on its marketing, communication and human resource development strategies it experiences positive growth. Moreover human resource development exhibits the highest impact on organization growth. This implies that human resource is very critical and without it then the organization ceases to exist.

Operational strategies explain the greatest percentage of variations in organization growth. According to this study, operational strategies explain 81.9% of organizational growth. This implies that operational strategies are very critical for the success of the organization.

## **5.2 Recommendations:**

The findings indicated that operational strategies are very important for the success of the organization. They have a positive significant effect on organization growth. From these findings the researcher recommended the following;

Organizations should strive to improve on their marketing strategies for them to experience rapid and permanent growth overtime. Specifically IAKIB should identify the key areas of marketing that it has not exploited in order to increase their growth overtime. They should continue to aggressively advertise in social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and twitter among others. This will mean that more people will know the products they are dealing with and not only depend on domestic market or rather they will be able to also think of global market which will see a rapid expansion in their operations than it currently stands.

Organizations should also focus on enhancing effective communication between the various departments, within the department and from top management to middle level and staff members. Vertical and horizontal communication if adopted by an organization will create a strong communication network which will eliminate misunderstanding and confusion in terms roles allocation. The meetings of the organization both top level meetings, middle level meetings and all inclusive meetings should be communicated and planned in good and convenient time to avoid confusion. These meetings should be carried out more often since it's in these meetings where the staff members are able to address their grievances and interests and amicable solutions found. Specifically IAKIB should continue to strengthen good communication to enhance effective communication among the staff and with the members in order to even do better on their performance. A strong communication department should be set which is solely responsible for disseminating information and organizing all meetings at the appropriate time.

Lastly organizations should aspire to hire qualified staff in management and also hold periodic training and capacity development programmes aimed at improving skills of the workforce hence they are able to offer quality services in terms of product quality, product marketing through hiring qualified marketers, good leadership through hiring qualified and competent personnel with leadership skills. IAKIB should organize for most of her staff to take study leave, encourage them to go ahead and further their education for the benefit of the organization and individual. This will see the top management to even aim for higher education qualifications like masters and PhD.

## **5.3 Area for further research:**

There are many factors that bring about organization growth apart from operational strategies for example government factors, cultural factors, economic factors among others. All these factors also may contribute to organization growth. However the study focused on only operational strategies. More research can therefore be done on these other factors to ascertain the extent of their influence on organizational growth.

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